

**4th Triennial General Conference of ECZIEA at Jamshedpur gives a
Clarion Call**

- **To Strengthen LIC**
- **To Organise the Organisation**
- **Save the Nation**

The 4th Triennial General Conference of the East Central Zone Insurance Employees' Association (ECZIEA) has since been successfully organized during 8-10 December 2016 in the industrial city of Jamshedpur in the state of Jharkhand. The Conference was hosted by Insurance Employees' Association Jamshedpur Division (IEAJD). The conference venue, Michael John auditorium, had been named as "Com. Sanjay Ghosh Manch" in memory of the beloved leader of insurance employees in the state of Jharkhand, late Com. Sanjay Ghosh. Around 300 delegates and observers from across the three states of Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand attended the Conference. Com. Amanulla Khan, President AIIEA attended the conference as the Inaugurator while Com. V. Ramesh, Gen. Secretary AIIEA attended as the Chief Speaker.

The Colourful Rally: A huge and colourful rally, comprising of hundreds of insurance employees, preceded the inaugural cum open session of the conference. Starting from KMPM College campus in Bistupur, the rally covered a distance of about two kilometers and converged at the conference venue. As if to declare our unwavering support to the cause of the downtrodden, especially the Dalits and tribals, the rally was led by a tribal dance troupe of Dumariya, Ghatsila, East Singhbhum. The dance troupe was followed by the women comrades of Jamshedpur division, all draped in sarees of the same colour and texture, to announce the unity of the organization as it were. The dancing of the tribal dance troupe to the beats of drums and cymbals and the spirited sloganeering espousing the cause of the people combined to give rise to a revolutionary ambience in the main thoroughfares of Jamshedpur. The high point of the rally was the warm welcome accorded to it at ten different centres by various fraternal trade unions of the city. Finally, students of Jamshedpur Women's College greeted the rally at the entrance of the conference venue by throwing rose petals on the delegates and observers. The Flag hoisting ceremony followed thereafter.

The Flag Hoisting Ceremony: No sooner did the rally converge at the conference venue than the flag hoisting ceremony started. Com. Shravan Kumar, President, unfurled the red flag of ECZIEA amidst thunderous slogans. The flag hoisting was followed by offering floral tributes at the Martyrs' Column. Apart from the President of ECZIEA, Prof. Dr. Shukla Mohanty, Chairperson of the Reception Committee; Com. Amanulla Khan, President AIIEA, Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary AIIEA, Com. Shreekant Mishra, General Secretary ECZIEA, Members of the ECZIEA Secretariat, Com. Smrutirekha Sahoo, Convener, Women's Sub Committee of ECZIEA and representatives of fraternal trade unions placed floral wreaths at the Martyrs' Column.

Inaugural cum Open Session: The Open Session got off to a start with the rendition of two beautiful songs by the cultural troupe of IEAJD Jamshedpur. After a brief introductory address of the President, the meeting commenced with the welcome address of the Chairperson of the Reception Committee Prof. Dr. Shukla

Mohanty, Principal Jamshedpur Women's College. In her brief but erudite address, Dr. Mohanty gave a bird's eye view of the flora and fauna of the state of Jharkhand, its contribution to India's struggle for independence and contribution in the making of modern India. She commended the role of insurance employees under the banner of AIIEA in protecting the public sector character of LIC and safeguarding the interests of the nation. Com. Amanulla Khan, President AIIEA, inaugurated the Conference and gave a brilliant exposition of the difficult situation in which the conference was taking place. He said that LIC had been able to retain market leadership even in a competitive scenario because of the ideological commitment of the cadres of AIIEA to public sector. He called upon the employees to remain ever vigilant because the government in power at the centre was hostile to the very concept of public sector. Com. Amanulla Khan was critical of the divisive ideology being pursued by the BJP led NDA and urged the gathering to protect the secular, democratic and pluralistic culture of India. Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary AIIEA, complimented the members of AIIEA for solidly standing by the side of the organization in the wage revision struggle and explained the tactical line of AIIEA which helped clinch a good wage revision in a very hostile political environment. Sri Ratnakar Pattnaik, Sr. DM, Jamshedpur division and Com. Rajesh Kumar, General Secretary, All India LIC Employees Federation addressed the open session and wished all success of the conference. A galaxy of leaders of the fraternal trade unions including Com. K.K. Tripathy (CITU), Com. Pintu Rajak (SBI Staff Association), Com. R. N. Thakur (NGEO), Com. Biswajit Dev (FMRAI), Com. Paras Kumar (Loco Running Staff Assn.), Com. Tapas Chhotraj (Railway Men's Union), Com. Anil Gupta (LIAFI), Com. Ashok Bose (BJSGIEA), Com. Ashok Roy (LIC Class I Officers' Federation), Com. Arun Kumar (NFIFWI), Com. D. N. Singh (BEFI) and Com. Lotan Das (All India Kishan Sabha) greeted the conference and wished its all-round success. Com. Shreekant Mishra, General Secretary ECZIEA, proposed the customary vote of thanks. The conference venue, Michael John Auditorium, was almost packed to capacity all through.

The Delegates Session: The delegates session commenced on 9th of December with the placing of the Report of the Working Committee by the General Secretary of ECZIEA. The Report covered a wide gamut of issues starting from the international scene to the local issues of the zone. The issues covered in some detail in the international section of the report were the elusive recovery at the global level, the worsening unemployment position, alarming rise in inequality levels, the political backlash of growing economic burdens in terms of growth of the right wing political forces, the sham of democracy and democratic norms in the US, implications of Brexit (Britain's exit from European Union), turbulence in the Middle East and West Asia, new and ugly dimensions of terrorism, the situation in Latin America and also the obtaining position in some of our neighbouring countries. The National part of the report dwelt at length on the duplicitous stand of the Modi government on very many issues including the much publicized demonetization issue, agricultural distress and distress in job market, growing authoritarianism, poor human development record, brazen manifestation of communal politics, unabashed love for FDI, flagrant violation of democracy and democratic norms etc. Growing attack on workers' rights and the equally increasing resistance of the workers also found a special mention. The interplay between neo liberal capitalism and communalism in the three states of Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand also found adequate mention in the report. The industry section of the report covered the wide range of issues that have been clinched recently and gave a detailed account of the challenges confronting nationalized life insurance. The report discussed at some length the glorious journey of LIC during the last sixty years. The Organisation section of the report made a dispassionate analysis of the strengths and pitfalls of the organization and asked the cadres to remain ideologically equipped to meet the

future challenges. The report also outlined a broad contour of the tasks to be undertaken in the future. Com. Sudhanshu Shekhar Singh, Treasurer ECZIEA, placed the audited statements of accounts for the three years ending 2015.

The debate on the Report that ensued thereafter was quite lively and illuminating. Com. Ashis Ranjan Mohapatra of Sambalpur divisional unit initiated the debate and made a brilliant exposition of the issues confronting insurance employees' movement and that of the working people in general. A total of 28 comrades participated in the discussion and expressed their full agreement with the basic formulations of the report. The discussion on the report was enriched with the participation of three lady comrades viz; Com. Smrutirekha Sahoo (Convener, Women's Sub Committee), Com. Purobi Ghosh (Jamshedpur) and Com. Sanghamitra Sarangi (Sambalpur).

The delegates session had the privilege of listening to both the President and General Secretary of AIIEA. Intervening in the debate, Com. V. Ramesh, Gen. Secretary AIIEA spoke at length about AIIEA's determined efforts to resolve the pending issues like five-day week notification, one final option for pension, accumulation of PL up to 270 days, regularization of the residual RPT employees, early clearance of the Ex-gratia in lieu of bonus, transfer mobility policy etc. Appreciating the overall improvement in the organization over the last ten years, he made an impassioned plea to upgrade the ideological orientation of the cadres so as to prepare them as future leaders of the organization. Com. Amanulla Khan, President AIIEA, also intervened in the debate. He pointed out that the strength of the industry and strength of AIIEA were primarily responsible for the material improvement in the lives of insurance employees. It is however an irony that now the industry is being sought to be weakened by the ruling classes under the pretext of neo liberal reforms; at the same time attempts are also being made to weaken the organization by disrupting the unity of the workers through communal and divisive policies. He made a fervent appeal to preserve the hard-earned unity of the working class by protecting the syncretic culture of India and cited several examples to elucidate his point. He implored the members to work for strengthening LIC in the public sector by making common cause with other stake holders in LIC and the broader democratic movement. Com. Amanulla Khan called upon the members to spread AIIEA's message of love and goodwill in every nook and corner of the country and concluded by quoting the famous lines of Bashir Badr: "*Jis din se chala hun meri manzil pe nazar hai, aankhon ne kabhi mil ka patthar nahin dekha*".

The General Secretary of ECZIEA, Com. Shreekant Mishra, summed up the debate and appreciated the absolute unanimity of opinion expressed by all the delegates who spoke in the conference and pointed out that this was reflective of the unity that has been brought about throughout the zone. Following this, the Report along with the Audited Statements of Accounts were unanimously adopted by the house.

Call of the Conference: Given the mood of the delegates and observers and the guidance of AIIEA leadership, the 4th General Conference of ECZIEA gave a clarion call to "**Strengthen LIC, Organise the Organisation and Save the Country**". Without indulging in mere rhetoric, the conference felt that this was the time to walk the talk. The conference therefore decided to put the call of the conference into praxis and called upon the members to assiduously take up three primary tasks: **A) Each One Buy One:** every member should try to purchase at least one LIC policy for herself/himself or for any of her/his family member. The task should be completed by all divisional units before going to AIIEA's 24th Conference in Ernakulum from 21-25 January 2017. **B) NEFT Data Capturing Drive by all units:** NEFT mandate being an important aspect of policy servicing in LIC, the conference gave a call to go for a massive data capturing drive and get closer to our policy holders by giving prompt and efficient servicing. **C) Regular Interface with**

Agents: The conference noted the seminal importance of our tied agency force in the matter of bringing new business and underscored the need to augment the knowledge base of our agent friends. Accordingly, our units have been called upon to execute this programme by taking the agents' organisations into confidence at all tiers of the organization. The Conference gave a call to keep the organization organized at all levels and strive to protect the secular and democratic structure of India's Constitution.

Resolutions: While exuding confidence that all divisional units would take effective steps to implement the calls of the conference, the conference also unanimously adopted the following eleven Resolutions:

- Resolution against imperialist globalization
- Resolution demanding reversal of the neo liberal economic policies
- Resolution demanding merger of public sector general insurance companies
- Resolution against communalism and terrorism
- Resolution demanding empowerment of women
- Resolution against LIC's Transfer and Mobility Policy
- Resolution demanding recruitment to Class III & IV cadres in LIC
- Resolution against LIC's new Sports Policy
- Resolution demanding One more option to join the Pension Scheme
- Resolution demanding withdrawal of service tax on life insurance premium
- Resolution demanding Recognition to AIIEA

Election of Office Bearers: The Conference unanimously elected a 50 member Working Committee with Com. Pradip Kumar Mukherjee as President, Com. Shreekant Mishra as General Secretary and Com. Sudhanshu Shekhar Singh as Treasurer.

Release of Souvenir: The Reception Committee of the 4th Triennial General Conference of ECZIEA had brought out a Souvenir to commemorate the historic occasion in the city of Jamshedpur. Com. Amanulla Khan, President AIIEA, released the Souvenir and handed over the first copy of the Souvenir to Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary of AIIEA.

ECZIEA Website Inaugurated: It was a dream come true when the Website of ECZIEA was inaugurated during the conference by Com. Amanulla Khan, President AIIEA. Comrades of SDLIEA Sambalpur had taken great pains to develop the site. Speaking on the occasion, the President and General Secretary of AIIEA advised the members to make judicious use of technology in the cause of the organization. The web address of ECZIEA is: www.ecziea.org

Red Salute to IEAJD Jamshedpur: IEAJD Jamshedpur organized the conference in a befitting manner. Right from receiving the delegates and observers at the railway station through the commodious accommodation, sumptuous catering, hassle free transportation, richly entertaining cultural evenings to an emotional send off, everything was executed with flawless perfection. One would be failing in one's duty if some words of appreciation were not heaped on Jamshedpur comrades for their tremendous solidarity and camaraderie with other fraternal trade unions. This was abundantly visible during the rally, as also in the free Medical Camp put up by comrades of FMRAI for the entire duration of the conference. Red Salute comrades of Jamshedpur divisional unit for the overwhelming success of the conference.

With Revolutionary Greetings and Best Wishes for a Happy and Purposeful New Year to all our comrades and their family members.

Comradely Yours

Shreekant Mishra

General Secretary