

EAST CENTRAL ZONE INSURANCE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION
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To, All Members

DECISIONS OF THE ECZIEA WORKING COMMITTEE MEETING AT CUTTACK

The Working Committee of the ECZIEA met at Cuttack on 28-29 July 2018. This meeting took place immediately after the AIIEA Secretariat meeting at Bengaluru on 22-23 July 2018. The primary task before the ECZIEA Working Committee was to take stock of the decisions and deliberations of the AIIEA Secretariat meeting and to frame the response of our zonal organization to meet the emerging challenges in the days to come.

The Working Committee of ECZIEA unanimously agreed with the understanding of AIIEA secretariat that working-class movement throughout the world was passing through very difficult times. Neo liberal globalization had ruined the lives of millions of workers across the globe. While policies of liberalization had served to increase corporate profits, workers' share in the value added was progressively declining. Inequalities therefore were increasing by leaps and bounds. The meeting felt that the Indian economy had gone into a tailspin in the last four years. Interestingly, growth of the Indian economy was faltering at a time when most of the economies of the world including that of the US were registering higher growth and oil prices were unusually low. India's exports have come down from \$314.4 billion in 2013-14 to \$302.8 billion in 2017-18! As a percentage of GDP, they are now down from 17.2 per cent to 12.4 per cent. While exports are on the decline, Imports have grown from \$450 billion to \$460 billion in the four years, despite unusually low prices of oil in the international market. It is because of this development that the Indian Rupee is losing its value with each passing day. The exchange rate of the Rupee has declined from 59 Rupees a Dollar in 2014 to 68 Rupees a Dollar now! Now that oil prices in the international market are increasing, nobody knows how and when the slide of the Rupee will end, wondered the Working Committee.

The Working Committee agreed with the assessment made by AIIEA secretariat that the trade wars in goods and services and currency wars currently underway at the global level was nothing but the beginning of end of globalization. It was interesting that those espousing the virtues of free trade in the past were now resorting to higher tariffs to impede free trade. The meeting expressed its concern over the growing influence of the right-wing forces in India and abroad. Condemning the spate of mob lynching and moral policing incidents taking place in many parts of India, the meeting felt that the lawless elements should be brought to book and efforts be made to establish rule of law in the country.

The meeting of the Working Committee discussed at great length the performance of and challenges before LIC. The meeting noted with satisfaction that LIC was doing spectacularly well even in a competitive scenario. The total premium income and total income of LIC stood at Rs.3,18,000 crore and Rs.5,17,000 crore respectively at the end of March 2018. LIC commanded a market share of around 70 per cent even after two decades of competition. The meeting felt that the

performance of LIC in the last financial year would have been still better if the government had not played spoil sport by imposing an unjustified 18 per cent GST on insurance premium. Expressing concern over the declining trend in renewal premium collection and relatively low market share in regular premium policies, the meeting called upon our units at all levels to talk to the respective managements and request them to take remedial measures on the above scores. The Working Committee also felt that our agents and development officers should be talked to and necessary confidence be given to them by our units to tide over the temporary problems.

There was a dispassionate discussion on the issue of the proposed LIC-IDBI deal. The meeting appreciated the fact that AIIEA had conveyed its concerns to the LIC management on the issue of LIC's proposed investments in IDBI. The meeting felt that since there was an element of risk in all investments, a detailed cost benefit analysis should be made by LIC before parking any huge sum of money in any particular institution. Returns to policy holders and security of their policy monies should be the overriding concerns, felt the meeting and called upon the government of India to concede functional autonomy to LIC in the best interest of the institution. The meeting took a firm resolve to stand by the side of the IDBI officers and employees in their fight against privatization and to launch campaign and struggle for protecting and strengthening LIC in the public sector.

The meeting drew satisfaction from the fact that workers' movements against the ruinous policies of neo liberal globalization were gaining momentum all over the world including India. The Working Committee congratulated the peasants and workers of India for their valiant fight against the anti worker, anti-people policies of the NDA government. The meeting concurred with the understanding of AIIEA Secretariat to coalesce the struggle of insurance employees with other sections of the toiling people and decided to join the following struggles:

1. To hold lunch hour demonstrations on 9th August 2018 (Quit India Movement Day) in front of all our offices in solidarity with the "Jail Bharo Satyagraha" of CITU and AIKS.
2. To participate wherever possible in the "Ratri Jagaran Abhiyaan" on 14th August 2018 (day prior to Independence Day) against the disastrous anti people policies of the government.
3. To hold lunch hour demonstrations on 5th September 2018 in front of all our offices expressing solidarity with the "Mazdoor Kissan Rally" in New Delhi.
4. The working committee endorsed the views of AIIEA secretariat on the question of one more option for pension and the demand for scrapping of the NPS Scheme applicable to employees recruited after 01.04.2010. The meeting endorsed the decision of AIIEA to join the broader struggle of central government and state government employees on this issue by going on two hours walkout strike on the day the central and state government employees go on one day strike.
5. The meeting expressed its absolute unanimity with AIIEA on the question of wage revision, pension option and recruitment and reassured its unflinching commitment to all future struggles in this regard.

Apart from the all India issues enumerated above, the working committee of ECZIEA discussed in great detail employees' problems in the zone. To cite a few examples, problems related to Pay fixation of Ex-Servicemen employees, nonchalant attitude of the TPA in settlement of Mediclaim Bills, inordinate delay in upgradation of some RPT employees of Bhagalpur and Begusarai divisions taking

the alibi of pending legal problems, problems related to educational advance to NPS optees, modernization/ remodernisation and upkeep of office buildings, problems related to purchase of lands for LIC, possibilities of a new divisional office at Balasore etc. were discussed threadbare. The organization will place these issues before the appropriate authorities at appropriate time and try to resolve the issues.

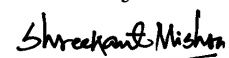
In fine, the working committee underscored the importance of the organization as a tool in our class struggle. Since Trade Unions are nothing but an instrument to facilitate democracy and secularism in our society, the meeting called upon the members to strengthen the organization on all fronts. The meeting felt that under the NDA regime at the centre, the very idea of India and its liberal, secular values are under attack. Since the attack was ideological, our units must be equipped with necessary ideological orientation to counter the attacks, felt the meeting. In this context, all units were called upon to increase the subscriber base of Insurance Worker, form Insurance Worker Readers Forums, organize trade union classes at regular intervals and leave no stone unturned to strengthen the organization.

Our comrades of Cuttack Division Insurance Employees' Association (CDIEA) organized the entire event in a spectacular manner. Right from receiving the delegates at the railway station till up to seeing them off, everything was perfectly planned and flawlessly executed. An inspiring employees' meeting took place in the evening of 29th July in front of LIC Divisional Office, Cuttack which was attended by hundreds of employees, retired employees, officers and members of fraternal trade unions from banks, general insurance, state and central government employees etc. The successful conduct of the working committee and the inspiring employees' meeting together spoke eloquently of a very good organization, that is, CDIEA.

We call upon our units and members to implement the decisions of the working committee in letter and spirit.

With Greetings,

Comradely Yours



General Secretary