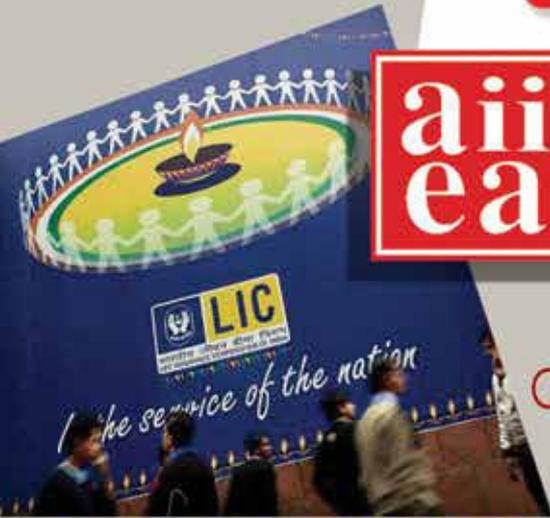


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Challenges have to be met by both LIC and its Workforce together..

DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE MEANINGFUL



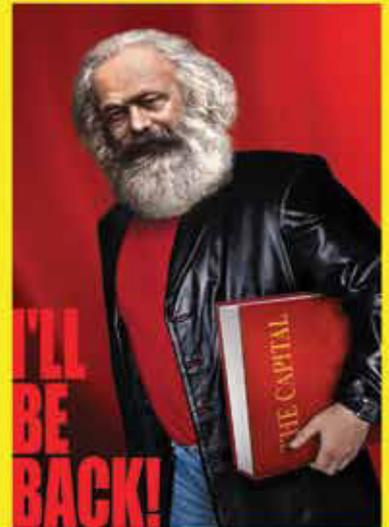
THIS GLORIOUS CALL OF KARL MARX WAS NEVER MORE RELEVANT AS IT IS TODAY

The Workers have nothing to lose, but their Chains. They have a World to win!

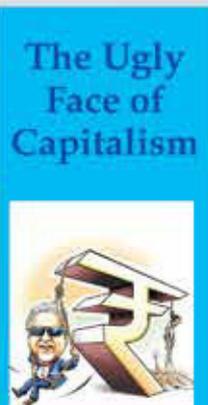
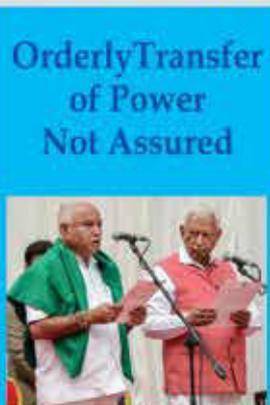
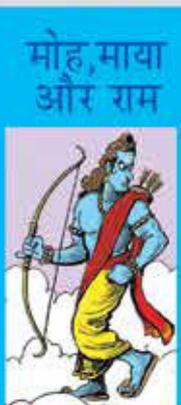
Karl Marx



Happy Birthday, Karl Marx. You Were Right!



Karl Marx 2.00



DR. ASHOK MITRA

Dr Ashok Mitra, a renowned economist and former Finance Minister of West Bengal passed away on May 1, 2018 at the age of 90 at Kolkata.

Dr Ashok Mitra was a great human being and a friend of AIEA. He had an illustrious career. After graduating from University of Dhaka, he earned his Masters in Economics from Banaras Hindu University. He was awarded a doctorate in economics by the University of Rotterdam in Netherlands in 1953. Dr Ashok Mitra for sometime worked with the World Bank. He also served as the Chief Economic Advisor to Government of India.



Dr Ashok Mitra was the Finance Minister of West Bengal from 1977-87 under the Chief Ministership of Com Jyoti Basu. He was a Member of Rajya Sabha in 1990s and served as the Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Industry and Commerce.

He was a multifaceted personality with deep interest and understanding about philosophy, history and poetry. He made immense contribution to the understanding of Indian society and its problems through his writings. He was a regular contributor to distinguished magazines like Economic and Political Weekly. He was a regular columnist in the popular newspaper The Telegraph of Kolkata. Dr Ashok Mitra was deeply committed to the cause of the poor and the working class. He was greatly concerned about the poverty and enormous inequalities that exist in Indian society. He was clear that growth has no meaning unless it improves the life of the poor and the marginalised.

Dr. Ashok Mitra was one of the finest minds of our times. He utilised his knowledge and understanding to work for the betterment of the poor and the working class. The AIEA had a close association with Dr Mitra. He inaugurated the Cuttack Conference of AIEA in 1990. He also guided the 1986 General Conference of SZIEF at Coimbatore He was always available to the AIEA for guidance and suggestions.

The AIEA and Insurance Worker condole the death of Dr Ashok Mitra and shares the grief with thousands of his admirers across the country.

Discussions should be meaningful

The LIC has sent a communication to unions stating that it intends to call them soon for discussions. The Unions have been asked to send the issues on which these discussions be held. This looks a bit strange. The AIIEA has been over the past several months representing issues that need immediate resolution. The overwhelming number of employees at the call of AIIEA went on a protest strike action on 28th March 2018 against the insensitive attitude of LIC and government on four very important issues. The AIIEA had submitted its Charter of Demands to the Chairman of LIC on August 2, 2017. The Charter contains not only monetary issues but also other important issues relating to the service conditions. The Charter of Demands reflects the hopes and aspirations of the employees. Therefore the issues on which we want discussions and resolutions are too well known. It is surprising that rather than responding to these demands through

meaningful dialogue, we have been asked to list the issues once again. It is, therefore, not wrong to conclude that the offer of discussions lack seriousness.

It is our experience that even when discussions are called in the nomenclature of information sharing, what information shared would already be in public domain. This was pointed out to the authorities on numerous occasions. The Corporate guidelines are decided and documents are released with the title We Have Decided and in this entire process even minimum consultations are not made with the representative organisations of the employees. The representatives of the organisations are only asked to support the decisions already taken. In the whole process the most important point missed is that the workforce of LIC has big stakes in the functioning, growth and prosperity of the institution and it is necessary to involve them in the decision making processes.

Happy Birthday, Karl Marx.
You Were Right!

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The AIIEA has always considered meaningful discussions on both the issues of the employees and the road map of the institution basic to industrial democracy. It has never considered discussions as just exchange of pleasantries. Therefore, discussions when called, AIIEA want them to be serious, sincere and an honest exercise to find resolutions to the issues represented.

The LIC has recorded yet another spectacular performance in the financial year 2017-18. It has earned a record new premium both in individual and group businesses. The Total Premium Income is provisionally estimated to be over Rs. 3.17 lakh crore. The total income of the corporation is expected to touch Rs. 5 lakh crore and the assets may be around Rs. 30 lakh crore. The corporation has achieved a very high level of customer satisfaction with a record claim settlement performance. This magnificent performance is a reflection of the commitment of the workforce and their hard work. Having contributed to this record performance, it is natural to expect that their just demands are favourably considered.

The AIIEA strongly demand the opening of negotiations on upward wage revision. Negotiations on this important issue must begin on the basis of the financial strength and unmatched paying capacity of the institution. The external developments should not be imported to influence the course of our negotiations on wages. The demand for a final

option on pension is another issue pending for over a decade now. It is true that pension is no longer an economic but a political issue. But the LIC cannot take refuge under the unwillingness of the government to concede this demand. The LIC has committed to its employees to give a final option and therefore it must assert its rights with the government to secure this benefit for the employees. It is basically the responsibility of LIC to ensure that its commitments are honoured. The LIC must stand up and fight for its autonomy. In this fight they will have the full backing of the entire workforce.

The AIIEA expects serious discussions on both the monetary and non-monetary issues listed in the Charter of Demands. The residual issues of the last wage revision should also find resolutions fast. The LIC must understand that its rich human resources are its greatest assets. This has to be nurtured to meet a very challenging situation that is unfolding. The competition in the market is heating up. The opportunities in the market have to be grabbed. These challenges have to be met by both LIC and its workforce together. Therefore, it is necessary to settle the genuine demands of the employees early and create conditions necessary for the entire workforce to stand unitedly to defend and advance the interests of our great institution. We hope that it is with this spirit and understanding discussions are convened and held.

Karl Marx Remains Relevant

The world is celebrating the 200 birth anniversary of Marx. Karl Marx born on 5th May 1818 in Trier a city of Germany is acknowledged as one of the most influential personalities in the history of human race. Marxism which is a theory of liberation continues to inspire the working class to free itself from the yokes of exploitation.

The greatest contribution of Marx was his brilliant analysis of human society on the basis

of historical development of class relations. He established that the history of mankind was shaped by the struggle between two antagonising classes. Marx spent a large part of his life analysing capitalism. He pointed out that capitalism creates accumulation of wealth on one side and accumulation of misery on the other. Therefore, he was convinced that resistance to capital is inevitable. Marx developed his ideas not as an intellectual

sitting in a lonely place but by constantly connecting his ideas to the logic and history of ongoing struggles. Marx viewed capitalism as a most exploitative system making the life of workers a living hell. He strongly advocated for movements of the workers to uproot capitalism and develop a new society based on human dignity, fairness, equality and justice.

The collapse of the socialist experiments in the latter half of 20th century and the global dominance of neo-liberalism were seen as the death of Marxism. It was proclaimed that history has finally ended and there can be no system better than capitalism. But Marx had asserted that capitalism is incapable of solving any problem of human beings and its ever increasing greed for profits and accumulation will lead to the massive destruction of both the nature and the human race. The apologists of capitalism are now forced to agree that with the unending crisis of the system, they jumped too fast to declare the end of history. Marx and his ideas have come to haunt them as increasing number of people across the globe are looking to Marx and the ideas he developed to find solution to the present day problems.

Today it is being acknowledged that Marx was absolutely right as the world is experiencing the worst phase in the crisis of capitalism. The world was never as unequal as it is today. The unprecedented accumulation of capital has created massive inequalities in the world. The 82 percent of the wealth created in 2017 globally went to the richest one percent of the population while 3.7 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity got nothing. It is amazing that just 8 richest persons own the same wealth as these 3.7

billion global poor. Marx had clearly foreseen such inequalities based on his analysis of the character of capital. He had pointed out that in its infinite greed for profit maximisation and primitive accumulation, capitalism would relentlessly destroy the nature raising questions about the very survival of our planet.

Marx assigned a historical role to the working class as the grave diggers of capitalism. He analysed that working class is the force that is most capable and equipped to dethrone and replace capitalism by a better system. Today the working class across the world is fighting a grim battle to protect itself from the vicious attacks by capital. The working class must realise that it cannot be freed from exploitation and misery by seeking concessions from the system. The struggle has to be towards totally ending the exploitation of capitalism and its replacement by a new society based on dignity of every human being. It is the historical responsibility of working class to defeat capitalism to ensure a future for both the nature and human race.

The Insurance Worker has decided to celebrate the 200 birth anniversary of this great philosopher. In this issue we have brought two articles from eminent personalities on Marx and his work. It is hoped that these articles will provide the necessary insight for our readers to understand the present day problems and the possible solutions.

The glorious call of Marx “**workers of the world unite**” was never more relevant as it is today. It is more so in the case of India where the working class is subjected to vicious attacks by a neo-liberal regime.

विचार-विमर्श अर्थपूर्ण हो

एल.आई.सी. ने यूनियनों को एक सूचना भेजी है कि वह जल्दी ही उन्हें विचार-विमर्श के लिये बुलाएगी। यूनियनों से यह भी कहा गया है कि वे उन विषयों के बारे में सूचित करें जिनके बारे में विचार-विमर्श होना चाहिये। यह थोड़ा सा अटपटा लगता है। ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. पिछले कुछ महीनों से उन मुद्दों को उठा रही

है जिनको हल करने की अविलम्ब जरूरत है। ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. के आवाहन पर बढ़ी संख्या में कर्मचारियों ने इन महत्वपूर्ण विषयों पर सरकार व एल.आई.सी. के संवेदनहीन रूख के विरोध में 28 मार्च 2018 को एक घंटे की हड़ताल में भाग लिया था। ए.आई.आई.ई.ए.ने अपना मांग-पत्र 2 अगस्त 2017 को निगम के अध्यक्ष

को सोंप दिया था। इस मांग पत्र में न केवल मौद्रिक मुद्दों को शामिल किया गया है वरन सेवा-शर्तों से जुड़े हुए अन्य महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दों को भी शामिल किया गया है। मांग-पत्र कर्मचारियों की आशाओं व आकांक्षाओं को प्रतिबिंबित करता है। अतः जिन मुद्दों व प्रस्तावों पर हम विचार-विमर्श करना चाहते हैं, वे सबकी जानकारी में है। यह आश्चर्यजनक है कि उन मुद्दों का अर्थपूर्ण वार्ता से उत्तर देने की बजाय हमसे पुनः मुद्दों की सूची देने को कहा जा रहा है। अतः यह निष्कर्ष निकालना गलत नहीं होगा कि विचार-विमर्श के प्रस्ताव में गम्भीरता की कमी है।

हमारा यह अनुभव रहा है कि जब विचार-विमर्श सूचना साझा करने के लिए होता है तब भी जो सूचना साझा की जाती है वह लोगों की जानकारी में होती है। अधिकारियों को यह बात अनेक अवसरों पर बता दी गयी है। नैगम दिशा-निर्देश तय कर लिये जाते हैं तथा इस शीर्षक से दस्तावेज जारी किये जाते हैं कि 'हमने यह तय किया है' और इस सारी प्रक्रिया में कर्मचारियों के संगठनों के प्रतिनिधियों के साथ न्यूनतम विचार-विमर्श भी नहीं किया जाता है। संगठनों के प्रतिनिधियों से उन निर्णयों का समर्थन करने के लिये कहा जाता है जो पहले से ही ले लिये जाते हैं। इस सारी प्रक्रिया में जो महत्वपूर्ण विषय गायब हो जाता है वह यह है कि एल.आई.सी. की श्रमशक्ति का इस संस्था की कार्यप्रणाली, वृद्धि और समृद्धि में बहुत बड़ा योगदान है तथा उन्हें निर्णय लेने की प्रक्रिया में सम्मिलित किया जाना आवश्यक है।

ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. हमेशा ही कर्मचारियों के मुद्दों व संस्था के लिये रोड-मैप दोनों ही को औद्योगिक जनतन्त्र के लिये मौलिक मानती है। यह विचार-विमर्श को अच्छी बातों का आदान-प्रदान कभी नहीं मानती। इसलिये, ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. विचार-विमर्श को चाहे वह कभी भी हो, हमेशा कर्मचारियों के मुद्दों को हल करने की दिशा में एक गम्भीर, प्रतिबद्ध व ईमानदार प्रयास मानती है।

वित्तीय वर्ष 2017-18 में एक बार पुनः एल.आई.सी. ने बहुत अच्छा काम किया है। कुल प्रीमियम आय प्रावधिक तौर पर 3.17 लाख करोड़ रुपये आंकी गयी है। निगम की कुल आय 5 लाख करोड़ रुपये होने की सम्भावना है तथा कुल सम्पत्ति के 30 लाख करोड़ रुपये के आसपास होने का अनुमान है। निगम ने ग्राहक संतुष्टि का बहुत ऊँचा मानक प्राप्त किया है तथा इसका दावा निपटारे का रिकार्ड शानदार है। यह अच्छा कार्य श्रमशक्ति के अच्छे कार्य के प्रति वचनबद्धता व कठिन

परिश्रम को ही दर्शाता है। इस रिकार्ड कार्यप्रणाली के लिये अपना योगदान करने के पश्चात यह स्वाभाविक ही है कि वह इस तरह की आशा करे कि उसकी मांगों पर विचार-विमर्श किया जायेगा।

ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. वेतनमानों को ऊपर की ओर संशोधित करने के लिये जोरदार मांग करती है। इस महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे पर बातचीत संस्था की वित्तीय शक्ति व उसकी प्रदान करने की अतुलनीय क्षमता के आधार पर शुरू की जानी चाहिये। वेतन पर बातचीत के दौरान प्रभावित करने के लिये बाहर के घटनाक्रम को आयात नहीं किया जाना चाहिये। पेन्शन के अन्तिम विकल्प की मांग लगभग एक दशक से भी ज्यादा समय से लम्बित है। यह सही है कि पेन्शन आर्थिक मुद्दा नहीं रह गया है और वह राजनीतिक मुद्दा ज्यादा हो गया है। लेकिन एल.आई.सी. इस मांग को स्वीकार करने में हमेशा सरकार की असहमति का सहारा नहीं ले सकती। एल.आई.सी. ने अपने कर्मचारियों से अन्तिम विकल्प का वादा किया है तथा इसलिये एल.आई.सी. को सरकार से इस मांग को स्वीकार करने के लिये सहमत होने की मांग करनी चाहिये। यह एल.आई.सी.की मूलभूत जिम्मेदारी है कि वह सुनिश्चित करे कि उसके वादे का सम्मान किया जायेगा। एल.आई.सी. को अपनी स्वायत्तता के लिये संघर्ष करना चाहिये तथा लड़ाई लड़नी चाहिये। इस लड़ाई में उसे सम्पूर्ण श्रमशक्ति का समर्थन मिलना तय है।

ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. यह उम्मीद करती है कि मांग-पत्र में शामिल मौद्रिक व गैर मौद्रिक दोनों ही तरह के मुद्दों पर गम्भीर विचार-विमर्श होगा। पिछले वेतन संशोधन के शेष मुद्दों का भी तेजी के साथ हल निकाल लिया जायेगा। एल.आई.सी. को यह समझना चाहिये कि इसका मजबूत मानव संसाधन ही इसकी सबसे बड़ी सम्पत्ति है। जो स्थिति आने वाली है उसकी चुनौती का सामना करने के लिये मानव संसाधन को पोषित किया जाना चाहिये। बाजार में प्रतिस्पर्धा बढ़ रही है। बाजार के अवसरों पर गिरफ्त बनानी होगी। इन चुनौतियों का सामना एल.आई.सी. व उसकी श्रम-शक्ति दोनों को ही करना होगा। इसलिये कर्मचारियों की जायज मांगों को जल्दी ही स्वीकार किया जाना जरूरी है ताकि ऐसी स्थिति पैदा की जा सके जिसमें सम्पूर्ण श्रम-शक्ति एक होकर खड़ी हो जाये तथा इस महान संस्था के हितों को आगे बढ़ा सके। हम आशा करते हैं कि इस भावना व समझ के साथ विचार-विमर्श आयोजित किया जायेगा व आगे बढ़ेगा।

कार्ल मार्क्स अब भी प्रासंगिक हैं

दुनिया भर में कार्ल मार्क्स का 200वां जन्मदिवस (द्विशती) मनाया जा रहा है। 5 मई 1818 को जर्मनी के ट्रीयर शहर में जन्मे कार्ल मार्क्स को मानव समाज के इतिहास में सबसे प्रभावशाली शख्सियतों में माना जाता है। मार्क्सवाद जोकि मुक्ति का सिद्धान्त है, मजदूर वर्ग को शोषण के जुए से मुक्त कराने के लिए प्रेरणा देना जारी रखे हुए है।

मार्क्स का सबसे बड़ा योगदान वर्ग सम्बन्धों के ऐतिहासिक विकास के आधार पर मानव समाज का उनका अनोखा विश्लेषण है। उन्होंने स्थापित किया था कि मानव समाज का इतिहास दो विरोधी वर्गों के मध्य संघर्ष की शकल अख्तियार करेगा। मार्क्स ने अपने जीवन का बड़ा भाग पूंजीवाद के विश्लेषण में बिताया था। उन्होंने बताया था कि पूंजीवाद एक ओर धन के संचय का निर्माण करता है तथा दूसरी ओर मानव दुर्गति का। इसलिये वे पूर्णरूपेण संतुष्ट थे कि पूंजीवाद का विरोध करना आवश्यक है। मार्क्स ने अपने सिद्धान्तों का विकास अकेले स्थान पर बैठकर एक बुद्धिजीवी की तरह नहीं किया था बल्कि उन्होंने अपने विचारों को निरन्तर दर्शन व आने वाले संघर्षों के इतिहास से जोड़ा था। मार्क्स ने पूंजीवाद को अब तक की सबसे अधिक शोषक व्यवस्था के रूप में देखा था जिसने श्रमिकों के जीवन को नरक बना दिया था। वे पूंजीवाद को उखाड़ फेंकने के लिये श्रमिकों के आन्दोलनों की वकालत करते थे तथा मानव गरिमा, न्याय, बराबरी और अच्छाई पर आधारित एक नये समाज का विकास करना चाहते थे।

20वीं शताब्दी के उत्तरार्ध में समाजवादी गतिविधियों के ढह जाने तथा नव-उदारवाद द्वारा विश्विक प्रभुत्व प्राप्त करने को वे मार्क्सवाद की मृत्यु समझते थे। अनेक विद्वानों द्वारा यह घोषणा की गई थी कि इतिहास का अन्त हो गया है तथा पूंजीवाद से अच्छी कोई व्यवस्था नहीं हो सकती है। लेकिन मार्क्स ने कहा था कि पूंजीवाद मानव इतिहास की किसी समस्या को हल नहीं कर सकता तथा मुनाफों व संचय के लिये इसका बढ़ता हुआ लालच प्रकृति व मानव जाति दोनों को ही भारी बर्बादी के कगार पर ले जायेगा। अब जाकर पूंजीवाद के पैरोकार यह मानने के लिये विवश हुए हैं कि व्यवस्था के खत्म न होने वाले संकट के कारण ही वे इस निष्कर्ष पर कूद पड़े थे कि इतिहास का अंत हो गया है। मार्क्स और उनके विचारों ने उनको सताना शुरू कर दिया था क्योंकि दुनिया में बढ़ती हुई संख्या में लोगों ने मार्क्स और उनके विचारों की तरफ देखा जो उन्होंने विकसित किये थे ताकि वर्तमान युग की समस्याओं को समाप्त

किया जा सके।

आज यह माना जा रहा है कि मार्क्स एक दम सही थे जबकि दुनिया पूंजीवाद के विकास के सबसे बुरे दौर से गुजरने का अनुभव कर रही है। दुनिया कभी भी इतनी असमान नहीं थी जितनी कि वह आज है। पूंजी के अभूतपूर्व संचय ने दुनिया में भारी असमानता पैदा की है। 2017 में पैदा की गई कुल सम्पत्ति का 82 प्रतिशत दुनिया के एक प्रतिशत सबसे धनी लोगों के पास गया है जबकि मानवता के आधे हिस्से अर्थात् सबसे गरीब 3.7 अरब लोगों को इसमें से कुछ भी नहीं मिला है। यह आश्चर्यजनक है कि केवल 8 सबसे धनी व्यक्तियों की सम्पत्ति जनसंख्या के आधे इन 3.7 अरब गरीब लोगों के बराबर है। मार्क्स ने पूंजी के चरित्र के विश्लेषण के आधार पर इस असमानता को स्पष्ट रूप से देखा था। उन्होंने बताया था कि मुनाफे को अधिकतम करने व प्राथमिक संचय के लालच में पूंजीवाद निश्चित रूप से प्रकृति को ही नष्ट कर देगा तथा इससे हमारे ग्रह पृथ्वी के जिन्दा रहने पर भी सवाल उठ खड़े होंगे।

मार्क्स ने मजदूर वर्ग को पूंजीवाद की कब्र खोदने वालों की ऐतिहासिक भूमिका की संज्ञा दी थी। उन्होंने व्याख्या की थी कि मजदूर वर्ग पूंजीवाद को खत्म करके किसी अच्छी व्यवस्था को अपनाने के लिये सबसे मजबूत व शक्तिशाली ताकत है। आज दुनिया वर्ग का मजदूर वर्ग पूंजी के विषेले हमलों से अपनी रक्षा करने का गम्भीर युद्ध लड़ रहा है। मजदूर वर्ग को यह महसूस करना चाहिये कि व्यवस्था से रियायतें प्राप्त करके वह शोषण व दुर्गति से मुक्ति नहीं पा सकता। संघर्ष डरावने पूंजीवादी शोषण के पूर्ण रूप से खत्म करने का होना चाहिये। पूंजीवाद का हराना मजदूर वर्ग की ऐतिहासिक जिम्मेदारी है ताकि प्रकृति एवं मानव जाति दोनों के ही भविष्य की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित की जा सके।

इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर ने इस महान दार्शनिक का 200वां जन्मदिवस मनाने का निर्णय किया है। इस अंक में हम मार्क्स एवं उनके कार्यों के ऊपर दो विख्यात शख्सियतों के लेख प्रसारित करेंगे। हमें आशा है कि प्रस्तुत लेख हमारे पाठकों को वर्तमान समय की समस्याओं और उनके सम्भावित हल को खोजने की शक्ति प्रदान करेंगे। मार्क्स का यह शक्तिशाली आव्हान के “दुनिया के मजदूरों एक हो” कभी भी इतना प्रासंगिक नहीं था जितना कि अब है। यह भारत के मामले में और भी ज्यादा सही है क्योंकि यहां के मजदूर वर्ग के ऊपर नव-उदारवादी शासन द्वारा विषेले हमले किये जा रहे हैं।

A letter to the Finance Minister on Functional Autonomy of LIC and Some Issues of Employees

All India Insurance Employees Union has written a letter on 9th May 2018 to the Finance Minister on the above subject. The letter is reproduced here.

“Our organisation represents over 80% of Class III and IV employees working in LIC. We are playing a very constructive role in the progress of our great institution and helping it to fulfil the objectives for which it was set up. However, for quite sometime now, we are observing that there is a dilution in the functional autonomy of LIC and this is having a serious impact on both the functioning of the Institution and the industrial relations.

Before we express our concerns, we are happy to inform you that LIC has recorded yet another spectacular performance for the financial year 2017-18. The LIC has underwritten a record First Year Premium Income of Rs.1,34,551.68 crore. It has sold 2,13,38,176 new individual policies apart from covering a large number of people through group insurance schemes. We expect LIC to earn a total premium income of over 3.4 lakh crore and continue to dominate the market. The assets under management are set to rise to nearly 30 lakh crore. The LIC is also a stabilising force in the stock markets with an equity holding of over 6 lakh crore. This magnificent progress has been made possible due to the policy initiatives of the LIC Board as also the commitment of the workforce. We may also point out that the productivity of workforce in LIC is ever increasing and the operating expenses of LIC are the lowest in the industry. There is a huge potential for further growth and we hope that the government will help by reconsidering the GST levied on life and health insurance policies.

However, we are disappointed over some developments in the recent past on the long pending issues of the employees. The last wage revision in LIC was concluded in 2015 after three years of intense negotiations. One of the important issues discussed and agreed upon was the introduction of Five Day Week in LIC on the lines existing in the Public Sector General Insurance Industry. The offer was made to the unions after the approval of the LIC Board and the unions accepted it as a part

of the wage agreement. It is unfortunate that after three years, the Department of Financial Services has decided to overturn this

recommendation of LIC Board and a notification is issued on April 23, 2018 declaring the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month as off. The LIC has issued instructions that the remaining Saturdays of the month as full working days on the lines of Banks. This decision has undermined both the process of collective bargaining and the functional autonomy of LIC. We, therefore, request you to reconsider the issue and give your acceptance to the original recommendations of LIC Board.

The second issue which has created industrial unrest is on the demand for a Final Option on Pension. The Pension Scheme was introduced in the year 1995 in LIC in lieu of Employer's contribution towards PF. Since a substantial number of employees did not exercise their option within the stipulated time, another option was given in 1996. Majority of the employees joined the pension scheme and around 12 percent chose to remain in PF. However with some improvements in the Pension Scheme and the change in the interest regime, we raised a demand that a Final Option should be given to those employees who had earlier not exercised the option. This demand was raised during the wage negotiations in the year 2007 and was well appreciated by LIC. The LIC has made recommendations several times to the government that a Final Option can be given and the small cost can be absorbed with increasing volumes of premium income. Unfortunately there is no positive response from the government on this issue. We may bring to your notice that an Option was given to Bank employees in 2010 and four options were given in RBI with every improvement in the Pension Scheme. The Pension Scheme as it stands today has many improvements over the scheme introduced in the year 1995 and therefore it is in the fairness of justice that a Final Option be given to the employees to join or not to join the Scheme. We seek your

intervention and request you to consider this demand of the employees favourably.

The Wage Revision in LIC has fallen due on 1st August 2017. But negotiations are yet to open on the plea that there is no approval from the government. Having contributed to the growth and prosperity of the Institution, the employees are looking for a wage revision commensurate with the paying capacity of the institution. We have already mentioned that the operating expenses and the cost of wages as a percentage of premium income in LIC are the lowest in the industry. We request you to permit LIC to hold discussions and settle the issue amicably at an early date.

Finally, we assure you that our organisation will continue to play a constructive role and help LIC meet the social obligations. We also request you to strengthen the LIC Board and make LIC a truly Board Managed Corporation in the wider interests of the policyholders, employees and the nation as a whole.

We look forward to a positive response from you on the concerns and issues represented."

RBI STAFF AGITATE ON PENSION OPTION

The Parliamentary Committee on subordinate legislation had recommended that RBI should be allowed to decide the service conditions of its workforce and that it should be allowed to offer one more option to join the defined benefit pension scheme to the employees. The RBI had proposed to the government that it should be permitted to offer updating of pension and also give another pension option to its employees and officers through a very convincing letter written by the Governor Sri Urjit Patel on October 9, 2017. The Government unfortunately has rejected both the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee and the proposal of the RBI. The Government through a letter dated 26th February 2018 has informed the RBI that that its proposal for updation of pension and one more pension option is turned down.

The RBI employees and Officers have planned a series of agitational programs protesting against the attitude of the government. The AIIEA extends solidarity and support to the agitation of the RBI employees and officers.

SC Upholds discrimination between Pre- and Post-Nov 2002 Bank Retirees for Dearness Relief

The Supreme Court on 16th May 2018 upheld the distinction between pre-November 2002 bank retirees and post-November 2002 retirees in payment of dearness relief as it said both the categories of retirees stand on different footing and the parameters which govern the computation of dearness relief are also on a different level, while also noting that any stepping up of benefit for a section of employees is bound to inflate the figure of Rs.1288 crores per annum which was set apart for the benefit of the employees vide a 2005 bipartite settlement.

A bench of Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel and Justice Uday Umesh Lalit said so while deciding the appeal filed by the United Bank of India and others against the Calcutta High Court judgment of September, 2016, whereby it was held that there was no justification for making a distinction between pre- and post-2002 retirees and the appellant (bank) must pay dearness relief to all pensioners at the same rate.

The Supreme Court has clearly misunderstood the demand for hundred percent Dearness Allowance irrespective of the date of retirement. DA is compensation against price rise to protect the erosion of real pension or wages. The introduction of full compensation for price rise is a new benefit replacing the earlier graded compensation. Introducing a new benefit with a arbitrary cut off date violates Article 14 of the Constitution. The Bank employees asking for the same level of compensation for everyone against price rise is totally justified. The wage load of Rs.1288 crore agreed for was as on 1.11.2002 and not annually for the duration of the agreement. The Banks had to bear additional cost after the coming into effect of the wage revision for increase in Dearness allowance and increase in other components of wages. Therefore any future payment of dearness allowance as compensation against price rise at an identical rate would not have had any impact on the wage bill as on 1.11.2002. It needs to be seen what the Bank retirees will do next in the circumstances.

Implement the Supreme Court Order on CGIT Award

AIIEA WRITES TO CHAIRMAN ON 15TH MAY 2018

“The Supreme Court through the above Order has directed LIC to consider absorption of the candidates who have been in employment between 20.5.1985 to 4.3.91 as per the eligibility conditions decided by the CGIT.

We have been representing to you that the interpretation of the CGIT Award and the Supreme Court Judgement by LIC is legally not tenable. We had pointed out that the CGIT Award and the subsequent order of the Supreme Court is undeniably applicable to all the workmen as Section 18(3) (d) of the ID Act makes it quite clear that where the party to the dispute is composed of workmen; all persons who were employed in the establishment or part of the establishment, as the case may be, to which the dispute relates on the date of the dispute are covered. The Hon’ble High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad too clearly upheld our contention when it passed orders on 11th July 2017 that:

“Prima facie, sub-Clause (c) in Clause (iv) of Para no.2 of the Central Office Circular dt.16.05.2017 is in contravention of the order dt.18.03.2015 in Civil Appeal No.6950 of 2009 and batch, decided by the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court did not confine it only to persons who are petitioners before the Central

Government Industrial Tribunal and whose names are filed before the said Tribunal by the employees of the organization.

Therefore, there shall be interim direction to respondents to consider absorbing the petitioners in terms of applications submitted by them pursuant to notice dt.21.07.2015 along with others without reference to the aforesaid sub-clause in the Circular dt.16.05.2017 within a period of four (04) weeks from the date of receipt of a copy of the order”.

It is unfortunate that instead of implementing the clear orders of the Supreme Court and the High Court at Hyderabad, the LIC chose to deny the benefit of the judgements by incorporating conditions external to the said orders by prolonging the litigation. The Orders of both the High Court and Supreme Court validate the arguments of the AIIEA. The Supreme Court Order dated 11th May 2018 leaves no scope for any ambiguity on this score.

We, therefore, request you to implement the order of the Supreme Court in letter and spirit by considering the applications of all eligible candidates for absorption. We hope that you will take the issue for an amicable closure without resorting to prolonging the legal battle.”

BANK EMPLOYEES TO STRIKE FOR WAGE REVISION

The Bank employees and Officers have decided to go on a two day strike on May 30th and 31st, 2018 protesting against the paltry offer of two percent wage rise.

The wage revision in Banks fell due on 1.11.2017. Negotiations started much before the due date of the wage revision. After several rounds of discussions, the IBA has offered a wage rise of 2 percent which was rightly rejected by the Bank Unions. The IBA has taken a stand that the increasing non-performing assets and consequent hit on profits or losses for the Banks do not leave any scope for a better offer. The Unions have jointly decided to protest against this unjust stand with a two day strike.

The AIIEA extends solidarity to the Bank employees and officers and supports their just strike on 30th and 31st May 2018.

Happy Birthday, Karl Marx. You Were Right!

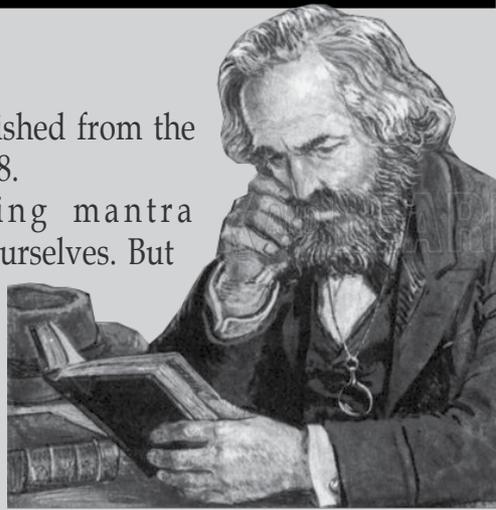
Prof. Jason Barker

(Courtesy: New York Times 30/4/18)

This article appeared in the New York Times, published from the leading country of capitalism today, on 30th April, 2018.

"We have become used to the go-getting mantra that to effect social change we first have to change ourselves. But enlightened or rational thinking is not enough, since the norms of thinking are already skewed by the structures of male privilege and social hierarchy, even down to the language we use. Changing those norms entails changing the very foundations of society"

says the author, who is an associate professor of philosophy at Kyung Hee University in South Korea and author of the novel "Marx Returns."



On May 5, 1818, in the southern German town of Trier, in the picturesque wine-growing region of the Moselle Valley, Karl Marx was born. At the time Trier was one-tenth the size it is today, with a population of around 12,000. According to one of Marx's recent biographers, Jürgen Neffe, Trier is one of those towns where "although everyone doesn't know everyone, many know a lot about many."

Such provincial constraints were no match for Marx's boundless intellectual enthusiasm. Rare were the radical thinkers of the major European capitals of his day that he either failed to meet or would fail to break with on theoretical grounds, including his German contemporaries Wilhelm Weitling and Bruno Bauer; the French "bourgeois socialist" Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, as Marx and Friedrich Engels would label him in their "Communist Manifesto"; and the Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin.

In 1837 Marx reneged on the legal career that his father, himself a lawyer, had mapped out for him and immersed himself instead in the speculative philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel at the University of Berlin. One might say that it was all downhill from there. The deeply conservative Prussian government didn't take kindly to such revolutionary thinking (Hegel's

philosophy advocated a rational liberal state), and by the start of the next decade Marx's chosen career path as a university professor had been blocked.

If ever there were a convincing case to be made for the dangers of philosophy, then surely it's Marx's discovery of Hegel, whose "grotesque craggy melody" repelled him at first but which soon had him dancing deliriously through the streets of Berlin. As Marx confessed to his father in an equally delirious letter in November 1837, "I wanted to embrace every person standing on the street-corner."

As we reach the bicentennial of Marx's birth, what lessons might we draw from his dangerous and delirious philosophical legacy?

What precisely is Marx's lasting contribution?

Today the legacy would appear to be alive and well. Since the turn of the millennium countless books have appeared, from scholarly works to popular biographies, broadly endorsing Marx's reading of capitalism and its enduring relevance to our neoliberal age.

In 2002, the French philosopher Alain Badiou declared at a conference I attended in London that Marx had become the philosopher of the middle class. What did he mean? I believe

he meant that educated liberal opinion is today more or less unanimous in its agreement that Marx's basic thesis – that capitalism is driven by a deeply divisive class struggle in which the ruling-class minority appropriates the surplus labor of the working-class majority as profit – is correct. Even liberal economists such as Nouriel Roubini agree that Marx's conviction that capitalism has an inbuilt tendency to destroy itself remains as prescient as ever.

But this is where the unanimity abruptly ends. While most are in agreement about Marx's diagnosis of capitalism, opinion on how to treat its "disorder" is thoroughly divided. And this is where Marx's originality and profound importance as a philosopher lies.

First, let's be clear: Marx arrives at no magic formula for exiting the enormous social and economic contradictions that global capitalism entails (according to Oxfam, 82 percent of the global wealth generated in 2017 went to the world's richest 1 percent). What Marx did achieve, however, through his self-styled materialist thought, were the critical weapons for undermining capitalism's ideological claim to be the only game in town.

In the "Communist Manifesto," Marx and Engels wrote: "The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers."

Marx was convinced that capitalism would soon make relics of them. The inroads that artificial intelligence is currently making into medical diagnosis and surgery, for instance,

bears out the argument in the "Manifesto" that technology would greatly accelerate the "division of labor," or the deskilling of such professions.

To better understand how Marx achieved his lasting global impact - an impact arguably greater and wider than any other philosopher's before or after him - we can begin with his relationship to Hegel. What was it about Hegel's work that so captivated Marx? As he informed his father, early encounters with Hegel's "system," which builds itself upon layer after layer of negations and contradictions, hadn't entirely won him over.

Marx found that the late-18th-century idealisms of Immanuel Kant and Johann Gottlieb Fichte that so dominated philosophical thinking in the early 19th century prioritized *thinking itself* – so much so that reality could be inferred through intellectual reasoning. But Marx refused to endorse their reality. In an ironic Hegelian twist, it was the complete opposite: It was the material world that determined all thinking. As Marx puts it in his letter, "If previously the gods had dwelt above the earth, now they became its center."

The idea that God - or "gods" - dwelt among the masses, or was "in" them, was of course nothing philosophically new. But Marx's innovation was to stand idealistic deference - not just to God but to any divine authority - on its head. Whereas Hegel had stopped at advocating a rational liberal state, Marx would go one stage further: Since the gods were no longer divine, there was no need for a state at all.



Karl Marx with workers

...Educated liberal opinion is today more or less unanimous in its agreement that Marx's basic thesis – that capitalism is driven by a deeply divisive class struggle in which the ruling-class minority appropriates the surplus labor of the working-class majority as profit – is correct. Even liberal economists such as Nouriel Roubini agree that Marx's conviction that capitalism has an inbuilt tendency to destroy itself remains as prescient as ever.

Karl Marx 2.00

Prof. Amartya Sen

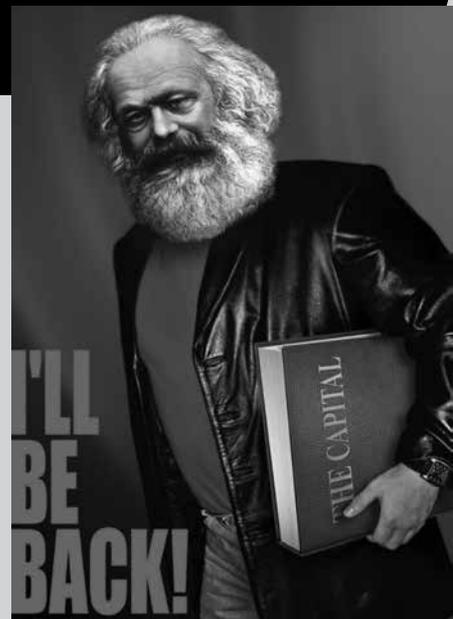
In remembering Karl Marx on his 200th birthday, we not only celebrate a great intellectual, but also one whose critical analyses and investigations have many insights to offer to us today. Paying attention to Marx may be more important than paying him respect....

Marx's philosophy has often been narrowly defined as ideas being determined by material conditions. In the bicentennial of his birth, it is important to recognise his focus on the two-way nature of that relations between ideas and material conditions....

The writer, a Nobel laureate in Economics.

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(Courtesy: Indian Express May 5, 2018)



How should we think about Karl Marx on his 200th birthday? His big influence on the politics of the world is universally acknowledged, though people would differ on how good or bad that influence has been. But going beyond that, there can be little doubt that the intellectual world has been transformed by the reflective departures Marx generated, from class analysis as an essential part of social understanding, to the explication of the profound contrast between needs and hard work as conflicting foundations of people's moral entitlements. Some of the influences have been so pervasive, with such strong impact on the concepts and connection we look for in our day-to-day analysis, that we may not be fully aware where the influences came from. In reading some classic works of Marx, we are often placed in the uncomfortable position of the theatre-goer who loved Hamlet as a play, but wondered why it was so full of quotations.

Marxian analysis remains important today not just because of Marx's own original work, but also because of the extraordinary contributions made in that tradition by many leading historians, social scientists and creative artists - from Antonio Gramsci, Rosa Luxemburg, Jean-Paul Sartre and Bertolt Brecht to Piero Sraffa, Maurice Dobb and Eric Hobsbawm (to mention just a few names). We do not have to be a Marxist to make use of the

richness of Marx's insights — just as one does not have to be an Aristotelian to learn from Aristotle.

There are ideas in Marx's corpus of work that remain under-explored. I would place among the relatively neglected ideas Marx's highly original concept of "objective illusion," and related to that, his discussion of "false consciousness". An objective illusion may arise from what we can see from our particular position how things look from there (no matter how misleading). Consider the relative sizes of the sun and the moon, and the fact that from the earth they look to be about the same size (Satyajit Ray offered some interesting conversations on this phenomenon in his film, *Agantuk*). But to conclude from this observation that the sun and the moon are in fact of the same size in terms of mass or volume would be mistaken, and yet to deny that they do look to be about the same size from the earth would be a mistake too. Marx's investigation of objective illusion - of "the outer form of things" - is a pioneering contribution to understanding the implications of positional dependence of observations.

The phenomenon of objective illusion helps to explain the widespread tendency of workers in an exploitative society to fail to see that there is any exploitation going on - an example that Marx did much to investigate, in the form of "false consciousness". The idea can have many

applications going beyond Marx's own use of it. Powerful use can be made of the notion of objective illusion to understand, for example, how women, and indeed men, in strongly sexist societies may not see clearly enough - in the absence of informed political agitation - that there are huge elements of gender inequality in what look like family-oriented just societies, as bastions of role-based fairness.

There is, however, a danger in seeing Marx in narrowly formulaic terms - for example, in seeing him as a "materialist" who allegedly understood the world in terms of the importance of material conditions, denying the significance of ideas and beliefs. This is not only a serious misreading of Marx, who emphasised two-way relations between ideas and material conditions, but also a seriously missed opportunity to see the far-reaching role of ideas on which Marx threw such important light.

Let me illustrate the point with a debate on the discipline of historical explanation that was quite widespread in our own time. In one of Eric Hobsbawm's lesser known essays, called "Where Are British Historians Going?", published in the *Marxist Quarterly* in 1955, he discussed how the Marxist pointer to the two-way relationship between ideas and material conditions offers very different lessons in the contemporary world than it had in the intellectual world that Marx himself saw around him, where the prevailing focus - for example by Hegel and Hegelians - was very much on highlighting the influence of ideas on material conditions.

In contrast, the tendency of dominant schools of history in the mid-twentieth century - Hobsbawm cited here the hugely influential historical works of Lewis Bernstein Namier - had come to embrace a type of materialism that saw human action as being almost entirely motivated by a simple kind of material interest, in particular narrowly defined self-interest. Given this completely different kind of bias (very far removed from the idealist traditions of Hegel and other influential thinkers in Marx's own time), Hobsbawm argued that a balanced two-way view must demand that analysis in Marxian lines today must particularly emphasise the importance of ideas and their influence on material conditions.

For example, it is crucial to recognise that

Edmund Burke's hugely influential criticism of Warren Hastings's misbehaviour in India - in the famous Impeachment hearings - was directly related to Burke's strongly held ideas of justice and fairness, whereas the self-interest-obsessed materialist historians, such as Namier, saw no more in Burke's discontent than the influence of his [Burke's] profit-seeking concerns which had suffered because of the policies pursued by Hastings. The overreliance on materialism - in fact of a particularly narrow kind - needed serious correction, argued Hobsbawm: "In the pre-Namier days, Marxists regarded it as one of their chief historical duties to draw attention to the material basis of politics. But since bourgeois historians have adopted what is a particular form of vulgar materialism, Marxists had to remind them that history is the struggle of men for ideas, as well as a reflection of their material environment. Mr Trevor-Roper [a famous right-wing historian] is not merely mistaken in believing that the English Revolution was the reflection of the declining fortunes of country gentlemen, but also in his belief that Puritanism was simply a reflection of their impending bankruptcies."

To Hobsbawm's critique, it could be added that the so-called "rational choice theory" (so dominant in recent years in large parts of mainstream economics and political analysis) thrives on a single-minded focus on self-interest as the sole human motivation, thereby missing comprehensively the balance that Marx had argued for. A rational choice theorist can, in fact, learn a great deal from reading Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* and *The German Ideology*. While this would be a very different lesson from what Marx wanted Hegelians to consider, a commitment to doing justice to the two-way relations characterises both parts of Marx's capacious pedagogy. What has to be avoided is the narrowing of Marx's thoughts through simple formulas respectfully distributed in his name.

In remembering Marx on his 200th birthday, we not only celebrate a great intellectual, but also one whose critical analyses and investigations have many insights to offer to us today. Paying attention to Marx may be more important than paying him respect.

The Ugly Face of Capitalism

Dr. M.D. Brahmhatt

Capitalism in the garb of neoliberal globalization has started destroying the moral fibre of Indian society, the youth of India, in particular, being susceptible to the consumerist culture spawned by capitalism and the vagaries of present day market economy.



Cartoon courtesy: Rakiv Kumar- Rakesh Kayastha

The writer is the President, LICEU, Gandhinagar Division

We are well aware of the fact that capitalism is a decadent system. It promotes exploitation of man by man. In the process of generating profits for the capitalists, capitalism does not have any inhibition even when all human values are ruined. There is an old saying 'Money Money Money, Brighter than Sunshine and Sweeter than Honey'. In its eagerness to earn more and more money in the form of profits, capitalism does not bother a wee bit for values and morality. We know that auction of wealth and properties takes place in the world on a large scale and people buy them through bids. However, it is unfortunate that men today bid for men and buy them. The vulgar display of money power and wealth during the auction of cricket players for 20-20 matches is a case in point. This is especially repugnant in a society like India where poverty and inequality exist in plenty.

Pope Francis, the current Pope and sovereign of the Vatican City State is not a socialist. But he made a scathing criticism of the present-day capitalist system some time back. He thundered that capitalism that we see today is nothing but 'idolatry of money'. He was particularly critical of 'autonomy of markets' and 'financial speculation'. According to him, these two are the integral features of contemporary capitalism. It is interesting to note that Pope Francis not only condemns autonomy of markets and financial speculation but calls upon the States to bring about a change in economic policy regime so that the central question of 'poverty' could be addressed with seriousness. The Pope goes on to say that if no solutions are found for the problems of poverty and inequality, humanity cannot hope for any lasting peace.

It is worth recalling here that in the post war

period when decolonization started, capitalism adopted Keynesian demand management measures to increase employment. With increase in employment, output and real wages also increased. However, with the onset of neo liberal globalization process capitalism started showing its ugly face again. The rich went on becoming richer and poor became poorer. Inequality increased by leaps and bounds. With increase in inequality, the value system also underwent a drastic change. New kinds of imagery came to dominate thinking in society. Material prosperity came to be recognized as the only and ultimate identity of an individual's existence in society. This let loose a rat race of acquiring more and more material prosperity even at the cost of morality and societal values.

While capitalism promotes greed and immorality communism extols the virtues of compassion and empathy. A basic principle of communism is "From each according to his ability, To each according to his need". This principle has however been given a silent burial in the present age of capitalist globalization. Marx said prophetically that capitalism not only produces goods, but also it produces the means whereby goods can be purchased. Today with the advent of credit cards, EMI options and all other means of easy credit even the lower middle class has become a big consumer of expensive consumer durables. This again is because of the new imagery; the degenerate values promoted by capitalism. Someone's worth is being judged by whether he owns a Cadillac or a simple car. The consumerist culture spawned by capitalism has led to a peculiar and hitherto unheard-of commodification of women. The youth of India who are nothing but the future of India are particularly susceptible to the

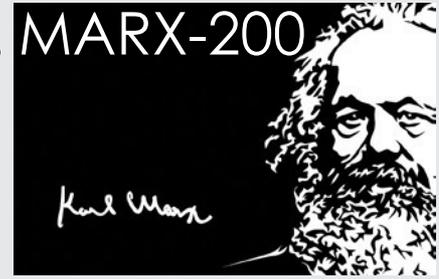
vagaries of present day market economy.

Anyone who visits Gandhi Ashram can see certain things related to Gandhiji's life. His spectacles, footwear, walking stick, utensils etc. All these things were blessed by his touch. Gandhiji was a great and towering personality even while using these simple and ordinary things of life. Our society has to realise that one can be extraordinary even while using ordinary articles. Society must be told in no uncertain terms that what is of utmost importance is not money or wealth or material prosperity but 'strength of character'.

We can cite an interesting example in this context. In Uganda there is the vast freshwater Victoria Lake, which is 18 thousand square kilometers in area. There is plenty of rain, the soil is fertile. But in 1972, a slice of bread cost nearly 500 pounds. There was severe scarcity of food and clothing. Did the lake go dry? Did the soil become infertile? Were the rain gods displeased with the people? No absolutely not. But the then President of Uganda Idi Amin had lost his humanity, character and moral sense towards poor and working people. As a result, the nation had to suffer.

Capitalism in the garb of neoliberal globalization has started destroying the moral fibre of Indian society. Globalisation has not only benefitted the corporate-financial elite in India. A section of the urban middle class has also benefitted a lot from the outsourcing of service sector activities from the developed countries. Not that the whole of the middle class has benefitted. Only the upper strata of the middle class have benefitted. But looking at them and their material prosperity, the lower strata also feels that their condition can only improve under globalization. They therefore throw their weight behind globalization and capitalism. But when they find that material progress still eludes them and even a meaningful employment is also beyond their reach, they end up in frustration. The vicious cycle thus goes on. People must be made to realise the ugly face of capitalism and every effort be made to unite them in the struggle for changing the exploitative social order.

KARL MARX-200



In the first place, Marx regards the striving for the fulfilment of

man's material wants as the basic aspect of the functioning of human social formations. These wants are met by production, which can only take place when men and women live in societies. "The mode of production of material life", says Marx, "conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life" (Preface to Critique of Political Economy). This concept is basic in Marx; it is why his entire view of history is known as historical materialism, in contradiction to the view of idealist philosophers, to whom history appeared as the unfolding of the idea, or divine ordinances, or, at a more vulgar level, of an innate religious or national genius. ...

.....Marx emphasized the crucial role of ideas, and worked so hard to elaborate the most rigorous philosophical and economic theory, out of an extensive critique of contemporary bourgeois thought. The heritage he has left us is not only his splendid revolutionary theory, but also a methodology for following in his footsteps and analysing with equal rigour and vision our own past and present circumstances,

-Prof. Irfan Habib,

Karl Marx and his conception of history

Marx's contribution to the understanding of capitalism can be usefully seen through two profound insights that he had into this system. The first concerns the origin of surplus value. In a world of commodities where exchange between commodity-owners, among whom are also the workers, occurs voluntarily and at equivalence, without any swindle, how can surplus value arise?

The solution to this riddle that Marx discovered lies in a distinction between labour and labour-power. What the workers sell is not their labour but their labour-power, i.e. their capacity to work, which becomes a commodity.....

This fundamental insight into the nature of exploitation under capitalism and the fact that the system reproduces its exploitative nature and the contradictions arising from it, through its own operation, was integrated in turn into his insight into a basic characteristic of the system, namely that it is a spontaneous system. While it functions through the actions undertaken by a host of individual entities, these individuals act the way they do because they are coerced by the system into doing so.

-Prof. Prabhat Patnaik, Marx and Capitalism

See the following links for these articles in full.

<https://newsclick.in/karl-marx-and-his-conception-history>
<https://newsclick.in/200th-anniversary-marx-and-capitalism>



India Can No Longer Take the Orderly Transfer of Power for Granted

Sushil Aaron

The BJP's fear of losing in 2019 is taking India's democracy into dangerous terrain. The last few days in Karnataka politics the BJP's tactics offered a snapshot into how quickly political institutions can be degraded with one stroke ...also showed us that an orderly transfer of power after the Lok Sabha elections in 2019 can no longer be taken for granted...



Courtesy: The Wire, 22nd May 2018

Vladimir Lenin famously said that "there are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen".

The last few days in Karnataka politics saw opposition unity in India accelerate by months, ahead of the 2019 elections, while the BJP's tactics offered a snapshot into how quickly political institutions can be degraded with one stroke into a future which may otherwise take years to materialise.

Following B.S. Yeddyurappa's resignation, the opposition has reasons to celebrate. Several parties came together in the attempt to counter the BJP's strong-arm tactics. The Congress and Janata Dal (Secular), or JD(S), were supported by Mamata Banerjee, the BSP's Mayawati, Telangana's K. Chandrashekar Rao, Chandrababu Naidu, the RJD's Tejashwi

Yadav, Sharad Pawar, Sitaram Yechury and others.

Regional parties have evidently wised up to the reality that the BJP is now the Walmart of Indian politics – a monopolistic giant that seeks to take over the high street peopled by smaller entities. Opposition unity in the past has usually been a languid, uncoordinated process where no one really takes charge of the matter; it meanders through gestures ahead of general elections and peters out because of irreconcilable turf battles. That will likely change now as the BJP's ambitions and methods focus the minds of everyone else in the political arena.

This week also showed us that an orderly transfer of power after the Lok Sabha elections in 2019 can no longer be taken for granted. Yeddyurappa was sworn in without showing demonstrable proof of having the support of 112 MLAs. The governor of Karnataka rejected the JD(S)-Congress claims and the BJP reversed the arguments it made in the case of Goa that post-poll alliances can be invited to form governments.

We were reminded this week that Manipur has been the scene of brazen constitutional subversion wherein eight Congress MLAs, who joined the ruling BJP, do not sit on the treasury benches during assembly proceedings to avoid invoking the anti-defection law. All sorts of methods were used to engineer defections in Karnataka. H.D. Kumaraswamy alleged that Rs 100 crore was on offer for



Cartoon courtesy: E P Unny,
Indian Express

each MLA. The Congress has released tapes of conversations where money is discussed freely. Aircraft chartered to fly out its MLAs were allegedly denied permission by civil aviation authorities.

Spurious legal reasoning was deployed too. The Attorney General of India argued before the Supreme Court that the anti-defection law does not apply to MLAs who have not yet taken their oath – an argument the court termed as “preposterous”.

All this is worrying because it is one more attempt by the BJP to weaken the checks and balances in the political system. Consider the state of other institutions that are meant to scrutinise government narratives and policy. The mainstream media, for one, now operates under great duress. Dissenting faculties and students in universities are subject to regular intimidation. Parliament is supposed to be a check on executive power but no longer works as one; its deliberative side has suffered especially. Lok Sabha speaker Sumitra Mahajan resolutely refused to table a no-confidence motion against the government in the last session of parliament.

If government formation in states is to be added to this list and gamed through money, muscle and control of media, then there would be (a) no assurance about the transfer of power nationally and (b) state assemblies would stop becoming spaces for contesting political ideas and policy. Such a turn for our institutions will dramatically alter the functioning of parliamentary democracy and force opposition politics off the halls of power to protests on the street. This would, at India’s scale, set the stage for great instability which the country cannot afford. Cooler heads in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) would need to

weigh the costs of such an approach – they would have to consider whether precipitating popular action and such confrontation is worth risking the gains they have made in state institutions so far.

It’s worth assessing why the BJP went down this desperate route in Karnataka, as the reasons may hint at its appetite for similar adventures in the future. Several factors may have influenced the decision. The BJP wants to maintain the veneer of dominance – taking Karnataka would have been a useful signalling device to the political class in south India and elsewhere that its advance is inexorable. The BJP spends heavily in campaigns; its politicians must also feel the pressure of securing returns on investment.

There is also the Narendra Modi factor. The Karnataka elections showed that he is not big enough to conquer South India all by himself. In some ways, the aftermath of the verdict was one big distraction from discerning the limits of his appeal. Large swathes of South India are evidently still impervious to his charm, even as youth reportedly gravitate to him.

Note that the BJP threw everything into the campaign and yet its vote share is less than that of the Congress. There were full length advertisements in newspapers and many rallies. Fake news campaigns proliferated. The Reddy brothers were given a clutch of seats. Modi himself gave provocative speeches and got himself the wall to wall coverage that his party wanted, and yet it fell short. The BJP finds itself in a situation where Modi can no longer assure it of victory and yet the party

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Cartoon courtesy: Gokul, Deccan Chronicle



needs to appear dominant – a scenario where the temptation to use other methods is great. If Modi remained the figure he was in 2014, the BJP wouldn't be regularly needing governors now.

There is one more reason why the BJP is inclined to subvert norms and institutions in an effort to stay on in government. The BJP's governance style has been such that it has put itself in a situation where it cannot afford to lose power next year. Modi's tenure has been marked by serious political and ideological overreach – the last thing the party can countenance is the full story of its stint in power unfolding in public after 2019 through inevitable bureaucratic leaks.

The Indian public knows very little about how decisions were made on the big stories in the last four years such as demonetisation, the handling of the Reserve Bank of India, the targeting of Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Aam Aadmi Party government in Delhi, changes in textbook materials, the extent of RSS influence on institutions, the Goods and Services Tax and its awful aftermath, policies in Kashmir, the pricing of Rafale aircraft, and generally how the centralisation of power in the PMO played out in these. There will also be the fear of score settling by opposition parties in the future. There is plenty to hide and thus plenty incentive to try unscrupulous methods. India's democracy may not be out of the woods just yet.

The opposition, however, know that they are not bereft of options. They've just got new gust in their sails because of Yeddyurappa's resignation. The Congress-JD(S) alliance is not expected to be smooth but they will be mindful of the costs of losing in 2019. A major task of the opposition nationally is to project order from diversity to ensure they are believable to the media. The BJP should, in its own interest, downsize its style of politics and genuinely recommit to the norms of parliamentary democracy but there are few indications that it is willing to do so. More dramatic times lie ahead.

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He tweets at @SushilAaron.*

मोह, माया और राम हमारी राजनीति का यथार्थ है। म.प्र. के कम्प्यू? टर बाबा ने नर्मदा सफाई में हुए भ्रष्टाचार को लेकर रथयात्रा निकालने का ऐलान क्या किया कि म.प्र. की भाजपा सरकार ने 5 बाबाओं को राज्यमंत्री का दर्जा दे, घोटाले का मुद्दा नेपथ्य में धकेल दिया। 'मामा तेरी नर्मदा मैली' का नारा बाबा भूल गये। यह है भ्रष्टाचार से मुक्ति और राजनीति के शुद्धिकरण के साथ आध्यात्मिक आर्शीवाद प्राप्ति का मायावी रास्ता। सत्ता का मोह, माया की चकाचौंध और आध्यात्मिक भ्रम के लिये राम का सहारा आज की हमारी राजनीति का केन्द्र है। इनमें मोह माया तो हं? ठगी और लूट के हथियार जबकि 'राम' तो सपना है जो जनमानस में 'रामराज्य' की परिकल्पना को बनाये रखने के बतौर दिखाया जा रहा है। सरकार की विफलताओं को ढाकने और बार-बार जनता के असल मुद्दों की बातें जब जोर पकड़ने लगती हैं तभी कोई न कोई धार्मिक राग छेड़ दी जाती है और आस्था का भूत हमारे आज पर भारी हो जाता है। वर्ष 2014 के आम चुनावों में जनमानस के आम सरोकारों को नारों में बुनकर भुनाने के लिए न केवल 'सबका साथ सबका विकास' का नारा दिया गया बल्कि चुनाव परिणाम अपने पक्ष में आते ही बड़ोदरा की विजय रैली में 'अच्छे दिन' आ गये, का नारा खुद प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने लगवाया।

इस दरम्यान मोदी शासन का जो कार्य प्रदर्शन सामने आया है, वह दावों के ठीक उल्टा है। कुछ बड़े धनवान चहेतों का विकास और बाकी बहुमत का विनाश और तरह तरह से आम जन की नीतिगत लूट ही अर्थव्यवस्था के परिवेश में छाया हुआ है। ऊपर से वोट के लिए राम के नाम उल्टे कर्म करके रामनवमी के दिन जानबुझकर की गई साम्प्रदायिक दंगों की एक नई त्रासदी सामाजिक तानेबाने और भाईचारे को तबाह किये हुए है। ये पहले मोदी और फिर योगी के सत्ता में आने के बाद से उनके संघी सहोदर कथित गौरक्षक, बजरंग दल, रामसेना, हिन्दुसेना, रोमियो स्क्वाड आदि भिन्न-भिन्न नामी सेनाएं बनाकर कानून को हाथ में ले जनमानस के गले की फांस बने हुए हैं। ये संविधानेतर उत्पाती शक्तियां ही आज सत्ता की असली संचालक हैं। प्रधानमंत्री और उसके मंत्रीमंडल के मौन के बीच हमारा धर्मनिरपेक्षता और समाजवाद के प्रति प्रतिबद्ध संविधान इनके हाथों बंधक सा बन गया है और समाज के भीतर खाई दर खाई बढ़ती जा रही है। यह खाई चाहे वैमनस्य की हो या आर्थिक विषमता की हो या सामाजिक भेदभाव की वह निरन्तर गहरी होती जा रही है। किसान को दाम नहीं, मजदूर को काम नहीं, महिला और छात्र को सम्मान नहीं, समाज में सब्राव बिना भला ये कैसा है साथ और किसका है विकास?

मोह, माया और राम

रामचन्द्र शर्मा

In 2014 general elections, to draw the suffering masses subjected to the neo-liberal attacks, the slogan of “sab ka saath, sab ka vikaas” was coined, subsequently came ‘acche din’. Now, after 4 years, no remunerative prices for the peasants, no jobs for the workers and youth, no respect for women and students, no social amity—who are taken along? development and good days for whom? As unrest spreads among the people, the mask of religion and spiritualism comes into play, to cover up these failures.



Cartoon courtesy: Satish Acharya

बड़े निर्णायक प्रधानमंत्री और 56 इंची सीने के बहादुरीपूर्ण प्रचार के बीच निर्णय क्षमता की गलत दिशाएं अर्थव्यवस्था को निरन्तर कभी लकवाग्रस्त तो कभी व्याधिपूर्ण बनाये हुए हैं। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के आश्रय में ऐसी राजनीतिक संस्कृति आकार ले रही है जो शानैःशानै भारत की पहचान को खत्म कर रही है। वे सेना का आधुनिकीकरण कम राजनीतिकरण ज्यादा कर रहे हैं। सरकार के “बोल” भले आक्रामक हैं, पर एक्शन में फिसडुडी। न घुसपैठ घटी, न सीमा पर गोलीबारी। शांति, न सीमा पर है और न देश के भीतर। सामरिक तौर पर भारत आज जितना भेद्य हो गया है, उतना पहले कभी नहीं था। “सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक” के बहुप्रचारित शोर के बीच सीमा पर गोलीबारी निरन्तर जारी है। जिसमें हमारे सैनिक ही शाहीद नहीं हो रहे बल्कि आम नागरिक भी आये दिन अकाल मौत के मुंह में जा रहे हैं। प्रतिरक्षा क्षमता मोदी के जमाने में बढ़ी नहीं, कम हुई है। “मेक इन इंडिया” हो या अंग्रेजी नामी अन्य योजनाएं, धरातल पर नहीं उतर पायी हैं। एक ऐसी फिजा सी बन गई है जब चुनाव से पहले सभाओं में “राज्य” को प्रलोभन बतौर नीलामीपूर्ण झांसे, कोई और नहीं बल्कि खुद प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी देते हैं और जीत के बाद हाथ झाड़ लेते हैं। ऐसे राजनीतिक संस्कारों की जयजयकार की जा रही है, जहां सरकार बनाने के लिये जरूरी बहुमत कैसे भी जोड़तोड़ से बना लेने में कोई हिचक नहीं रह गई है। चुनाव आयोग की स्वायत्त स्थिति और पहचान वापस टी.एन.षेण के काल से पूर्व की तरह छिप गई है।

चुनाव आयोग ही नहीं लोकतंत्र के महत्वपूर्ण पाये लोकसभा, राज्यसभा ही नहीं न्यायपालिका तक की पहचान डावाडोल हो रही है। राष्ट्रीय महत्व के गंभीर मुद्दों पर जरूरी बहस टाली जा रही है। भ्रष्टाचार पर जहां मौन धारण है वहीं लोकपाल लाल बस्ते में बंद है। लोकतंत्र की अनेक संस्थाएं लकवाग्रस्त हो गई

हैं। एक तरह की सोच सबको घेरे हुए है। निष्पक्षता और न्याय भी दमतोड़ रहा है। देश के इतिहास में पहली बार शीर्ष न्यायपालिका के 4 न्यायमूर्तियों को इस दमघोट माहौल के बीच मीडिया में आकर फैसलों के गढ़ने के बनाये जा रहे तंत्र के खिलाफ तथा न्याय और लोकतंत्र की रक्षार्थ आवाज उठानी पड़ी। अदालतों में नियुक्ति के लिए सरकार और न्यायपालिका के बीच खंचतान चैराहे पर है। जबकि देश को एक रखने के लिये स्वायत्तता सम्पन्न मजबूत और न्यायपूर्ण संस्थाओं की जरूरत है। गुणवत्ता और दक्षता का चाहे जितना शोर मचा लो, वास्तव में “राज्य” की क्षमता कमजोर हुई है। कृषि मंत्री राधामोहन सिंह ने सवाल का जवाब देते हुए ससंद में यह तो माना कि उनके शासनकाल में 3 साल के भीतर 36000 से ज्यादा किसानों ने आत्महत्या की परन्तु उनकी इस दुर्दशा की जिम्मेदारी लेने और समाधान देने की बात नहीं की।

हमारी इस साल की सकल राजस्व प्राप्ति 24 लाख करोड़ रु. आकी गई है। उसके बराबर या उससे थोड़ी ही कम 22 लाख करोड़ रु. की राशि करमाफी और कर्जमाफी के बतौर गत 4 साल में इन बड़े कारोबारियों को दी जा चुकी है। बैंकों की हालात डूबत ऋण के चलते पतली हो गई है, जबकि उससे ऋण लेकर न चुकाने वाले देश-विदेश में मजे कर रहे हैं। अमीरों की संपत्ति जिस अनुपात में बढ़ रही है, उस अनुपात में उनसे कर नहीं लिया जा रहा है। सकल घरेलू उत्पाद का करीब तिहाई हिस्सा जिन बड़े धनिकों की जेब में जा रहा है उसकी तुलना में कर वसूली बेहद कम है और यह हमारे सकल घरेलू उत्पाद के मुकाबले मात्र 13 प्रतिशत के करीब है। यदि आय और संपदा के अनुपात में करवसूली हो, तो हमारा राजस्व दुगना हो सकता है और उसका अभावग्रस्त तबकों के बीच न्यायसंगत वितरण विकास को सही दिशा दे सकता है। किसानों का आज तक

का सम्पूर्ण कर्जा माफकर लाभकारी मूल्य सुनिश्चित किया जाकर खेती और किसान की हालात सुधारी जा सकती हैं परन्तु सरकार की सोच उल्टी दिशा में है।

मंत्रालयों और नौकरशाही का आत्मविश्वास चुक रहा है। विश्वविद्यालय जैसे उच्च शिक्षण संस्थाओं की स्वायत्तता वित्तीय स्वायत्तता से बांधी जा रही है। यदि उनको अपने स्तर पर निर्णय लेने या कुछ करने की छूट चाहिये तो संस्थान को चलाने के लिये जरूरी वित्त का इंतजाम भी खुद करो और सरकारी अनुदान से मुक्ति पाओ। है, न गजब की शर्त। वहीं दूसरी ओर बैंक-बीमा जैसे देश के महत्वपूर्ण सार्वजनिक वित्तीय संस्थान जो सरकार ही नहीं बल्कि देश की अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए वित्तीय संसाधन जुटाते हैं कि प्रबंधकीय स्वायत्तता वित्त मंत्रालय के अफसरों की डोर से बांध रखी है, को देने को तैयार नहीं। यहां तक की नोटबंदी का फैसला और उसकी घोषणा भी भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक का गर्वनर नहीं, खुद प्रधानमंत्री करते हैं। स्वायत्तता की दुर्दशा का इससे बड़ा उदाहरण और क्या होगा? पहली बार बैंकिंग साख प्रणाली पर गहरे सवाल खड़े हुए हैं। दोष सरकारी नीति का और बदनामी का ठीकरा बैंकों के सिर पर। सरकारी नीति दोष के खिलाफ जहां बैंक कर्मियों ने जंतर-मंतर पर डेरा डाल विरोध जताया वहीं बीमाकर्मियों ने 28 मार्च को एक घंटे का कार्य-बहिष्कार कर रोष जताया। रक्षा उत्पादन से जुड़े सार्वजनिक संस्थानों के रक्षाकर्मी भी विदेशी निवेश के खिलाफ सड़कों पर उतरे और पूरे देश के कामगार उनके समर्थन में खड़े हुए। बावजूद इसके हाल ही अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्राकाश ने 17 अप्रैल को जारी अपने द्विवर्षीय विश्व आर्थिक दृष्टिकोण में भारत सरकार को सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के बैंकों के कामकाज को सुधारने के नाम पर आमूल बदलाव लाने की बात करते हुए नौकरियां पैदा करने के लिए वही घिसापिटा फार्मूला श्रम कानून में लोचता लाने का दोहराया है।

कई चहेते और सत्ता के नजदीकी की पहचान रखने वाले बड़े पूंजीपति बैंकों का भारी धन डकार कर देश से फुर्र हो गये हैं। कालाधन न विदेश से ला पाये और न नोटबंदी से। लगभग सभी स्वतंत्र संस्थाओं पर किसी न किसी रूप में हमला हो रहा है। यहां तक की लोकतंत्र का चैथा पाया कहलाने वाली मीडिया भी एकआध अपवाद को छोड़कर अब "गोदी" बन गया है। उनकी स्वतंत्र आवाज ही खो गई है। उन्हें गढ़े गये समाचारों का वाचन-लेखन-दर्शन थोपने का तंत्र चहेते कॉरपोरेट मीडिया के हाथों विकसित हो गया है। तंत्र और संस्थानों का खोखलापन "लोक" की आफत बन गया है। लोक सुनवाई के केन्द्र दफन से हो गये हैं। भाईचारा और साझी संस्कृति की विरासत साम्प्रदायिक शक्ति के हाथों निचुड़ती जा रही है। सरकारी ईच्छाशक्ति के अभाव में संविधान कागज

की पोथी में बदल रहा है। संविधानेत्तर शक्तियां राम के नाम मनचाहा फरमान दे रही है।

रामराज्य की परिकल्पना और "सबका साथ सबका विकास" का उद्घोष मोदी के 4 साल के शासन में कोरा जुमला बन कर रह गया और उनकी सरकार "लीक" और "वीक" बन कर रह गई। प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं के पेपर तो पहले ही "लीक" हो रहे थे अबके तो सी.बी. एस.ई. द्वारा ली गई 10वीं और 12वीं के गणित और अर्थशास्त्र के पेपर भी लीक हो गये। जे.एन.यू. के आंदोलनकारी छात्र पहले ही "देशद्रोही" से लालित थे, अब फिर 23 मार्च को संसद मार्च में पुलिस द्वारा फिर पीट दिये गये। स्त्री और दलितों के साथ घट रही असम्मान और घोर अपमान की बढ़ती घटनाएं आर. एस.एस. भाजपा सरकार को कतई कचोटती ही नहीं है। सनातनी संस्कृति के यशोगानी और "बेटी बचाओ, बेटी पढ़ाओ" के कथित परोकारों ने पहले बनारस और अब दिल्ली में आंदोलनकारी छात्राओं के साथ महिला पत्रकार तक को नहीं बक्ष्सा। कठुआ और उन्नाव में बलात्कार पीडिताओं को कानूनी संरक्षण देने के बदले दबंग आरोपियों को बचाने की भाजपा शासन की भूमिका ने देश को शर्मसार किया और संयुक्त राष्ट्र तक को इस बर्बरता की कठोर निंदा करनी पड़ी। यहां तक की अमेरिका के प्रमुख अखबार न्यूयार्क टाइम्स ने भी इस घटना का संज्ञान लेते हुए भाजपा सरकार की संवेदनहीन कायशैली पर कड़ी टिप्पणी की है। रामनवमी पर बिहार, बगाल और उड़ीसा में हथियारों के साथ दंगों की रणनीति खुलकर चली। 21 मार्च को सुनवाई की आस लेकर संसद मार्च में पहुंचे दलितों का नहीं लिया कोई संज्ञान और 2 अप्रैल के भारत बंद में जमकर सींचा जातीय क्लेश समाधान तो दूर की कौड़ी, सुनवाई की कोई पहल नहीं। ये देश को गृहयुद्ध की ओर ले जाने के हालात नहीं तो क्या है?

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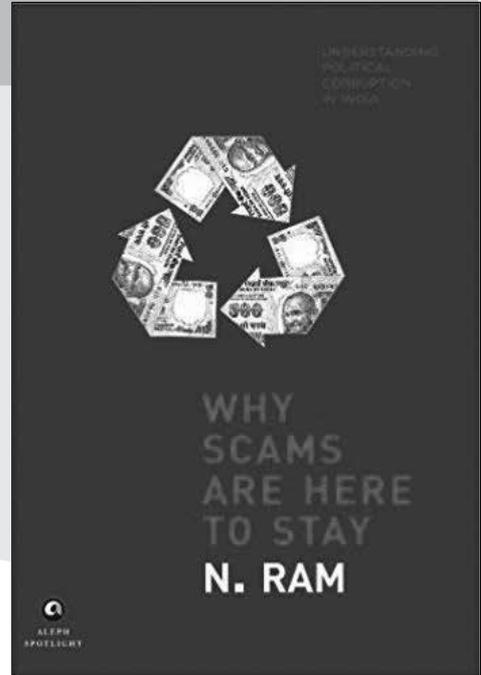
Cartoon courtesy: Sandeep Adhwaryu, Times of India

Political Corruption in India in the Neo-liberal era

S.Sivasubramanian

In a scenario when this country is faced up with scams one by one recently, the reading of this book by N.Ram, "Why Scams Are Here To Stay" will give the reader an understanding of political corruption in India in the neo-liberal era.

The writer is Vice-President, SZIEF



"Corruption is an insidious plague that has a wide range of corrosive effects on societies. It undermines democracy and the rule of law, leads to violations of human rights, distorts markets, erodes the quality of life and allows organized crime, terrorism and other threats to human security to flourish... This evil phenomenon is found in all countries – big and small, rich and poor – but it is in the developing world that its effects are more destructive. Corruption hurts the poor disproportionately...Corruption is a key element in economic underperformance and a major obstacle to poverty alleviation and development."

The then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan

Neo liberalism has come to stay in India during the last more than 25 years. There is ample evidence of a substantial increase in private profitability, corporate savings and private wealth since the launch of liberalization. A feature of the new liberalized economic environment is an increase in the instances of scams and corruption.

In his book, 'Why Scams Are Here To Stay', Shri N.Ram, Chairman of Kasturi& Sons Ltd., and former editor in chief of The Hindu and Frontline Magazine, attempts to get a measure of 'Political Corruption' in contemporary India, and explains why it has become an intractable problem. It must be remembered here that in the 1980s, it was ShriN.Ram and

his team of journalists who were instrumental in unearthing independent India's grand corruption scandal 'Bofors'.

The author says that with deregulation and liberalization, the state has played a different kind of role to the one it played earlier, providing access to scarce public resources as part of a process of promoting private sector led growth at any cost and supporting without inhibition the omnipresence and play of private interests within the public sphere; and there is plenty of evidence to show that corruption tends to be greater when pro-business strategies of governments bring on or facilitate crony capitalism and when there is a state engineered redistribution of wealth in favour of a few and at the explicit or implicit expense of the many.

On the Laws to tackle the menace of scams and corruption he says, the Prevention Of Corruption Act, 1988 supplanted India's first direct and consolidated law to tackle corruption among Public Servants, the PCA 1947, making 'effective provision for the prevention of bribery and corruption' among public servants. The 1947 Act had been amended and a Central Vigilance Commission

was created in 1964 on the basis of the recommendations made two years earlier by the Committee on Prevention of Corruption headed by K.Santhanam. A close analysis by PRS Legislative Research of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 2013, which is pending in Parliament reveals that in significant respects the original anti-corruption law is being diluted rather than strengthened.

The Preliminary findings released in 2016, of a study by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) of what happens to corruption cases across India reveal a shocking picture of the political legal system's apathy towards these offences. The research, covering the period 2001-2015, drew on data published by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB). The CHRI study revealed that over the fifteen year period corruption cases accounted for a near invisible 0.06% of 9.1 million registered criminal crimes, including murder, kidnapping and abduction, and robbery. Only 54, 139 cases of corruption were registered compared with 1,16,010 reports of bribes paid posted on just one website 'Paid a Bribe'. A comparison of the NCRB datasets revealed that ten cases of murder, eleven cases of kidnapping or abduction, and six cases of robbery were registered across the country for one registered case of corruption. This comparison, the CHRI report comments, seems to indicate severe lack of public confidence in the ability of the anti-corruption agencies to investigate a complaint of corruption, collect evidence, and put the case up for trial.

In the post liberalization era in India, he refers to various scams and corruption cases in India to substantiate his claim that liberalization has resulted in scams and corruption unbridled. He makes an analytical study of the Scams in all their ramifications in the neo-liberal background and he never fails to put in his opinion candidly on those scams.

To quote an example, on Vyapam Scam he has the following to say: "Vyapam involves a set of ingeniously devised criminal services provided, on a rate card basis, by the racketeers to students and job seekers to cheat their way in to state run medical

colleges and government jobs. Vyapam is a deadly criminal enterprise, involving blackmail, intimidation, and violence, and resulting in the 'unnatural deaths' of several suspects, accused persons and victims. Vyapam is an example of the systematic subversion of a state's administration and, even more damagingly, its system of medical education and medical practice. Vyapam is the cynical exploitation of a situation of high unemployment and the desperate search for jobs. It has brought suffering, hardship, anxiety and demoralization to large numbers of young men and women seeking educational opportunity and advancement, and ensnared in to crooked ways by the racketeers." The author has dealt with two case studies also in this book. Those are 1. Bofors Scandal and 2. The Scientific system of Political Corruption in Tamilnadu.

The author has categorized what can be done to combat corruption under nine broad heads; "1. Action needed on legislative front 2. Action needed to overcome the lack of enforcement capacity 3. The need for stricter, cleaner and more effective regulation 4. Raising the visibility of corporate and private sector fraud 5. Reforming and cleansing political finance and electoral funding 6. The need for judicial accountability in adjudicating corruption cases 7. The need to develop capabilities to anticipate and prevent corruption in, and exercise systematic vigilance over, high risk, vulnerable sector 8. What journalism can do for the fight against corruption and 9. Political education and mobilization is the key."

In a scenario when this country is faced up with scams one by one recently, the reading of this book by Shri N. Ram, "Why Scams Are Here To Stay" will give the reader an understanding of political corruption in India in the neo-liberal era.

The book has been published by the ALEPH BOOK COMPANY which is an independent publishing firm promoted by Rupa Publications India. The Book is priced at Rs.399.



13th Biennial conference of NERGIEA

The 13th Biennial conference of North Eastern Region General Insurance Employees' Association (NERGIEA) held at Lakhiram Baruah sadan, Guwahati on 23-24 February 2018. The conference commenced with Com. A.B.Kumar, President NERGIEA hoisting the flag of NERGIEA amidst thunderous slogans.

Com. Sanjay Jha, Secretary, Standing Committee, inaugurated the conference. He said that we welcome the proposal for merger of the three public sector General Insurance Companies. Our organisation has been advocating the consolidation of PSGI companies for the past several years and we hold a firm opinion that a single public sector unit in general insurance industry would be best suited to carry out the social obligation and responsibilities expected of a state undertaking. Hence we demanded to the government to take holistic view and create a single public sector general insurance company by including the New India Assurance Company also in the planned merger. He also reaffirmed that while appreciating the proposal of merger, we disagree with the proposal to list the consolidated entity in the market. He also urged upon the members and employees of PSU general Insurance Companies, to carry out the campaign programme to defend the Public sector Insurance Industry.

Com Satanjib Das, Vice president AIIEA gave a brilliant analysis of the present situation. He mentioned the multidimensional challenges confronted by the working class in the neo liberal regime of the present government. He also described the role of AIIEA to defend the

public sector insurance industry though the disinvestment has taken place in general insurance and appealed all to develop political awareness to restore the economic bankruptcy of the country. Com Surajit Das, General Secretary, EZGIEA said that AIIEA is continuously fighting for the betterment of the service condition of the employees and defending the public sector Insurance industry. He pointed out that AIIEA through a strike action has pressed for the opening of demands wage negotiation, one more option for pension, graduation increment for class III employee etc. He urged upon the members to carry out the campaign programme amongst the employees for the demands. Com. Gautam Maitra, prominent leader of the Zone and insurance movement, greeted the conference. The leaders of the fraternal trade union of GDIEA, NFPE, All Assam State Employees Federation, Joint Council of Trade Unions, Assam also greeted the conference.

In the delegates session, Com. S.R.Dev, Jt. Secretary, NERGIEA, presented the working committee report and Com. Chapal Bhattacharjee presented the accounts report. After lively discussions on the reports by members and summing-up the report was unanimously adopted. A number of resolutions relating to the industry and the national issues were also adopted.

The conference elected a new committee unanimously for the ensuing term with Com Chapal Kanti Bhattacharjee, as President, Comrade S.R.Dev as General Secretary and Com. Chandra Bahadur Chetry as treasurer. The conference came to successful close with vote of thanks by Com. S.R.Dev.

43rd Conference of Kerala State Gen.Ins.Employees



The 43rd State Conference of Kerala State General Insurance Employees Union, was held on April 28 and 29, 2018, at Com N M Sundaram Nagar(Women's Association Hall), Ernakulam. The Conference got off to a spirited start, with the hoisting of the Flag by Com C B Venugopal, President of the Union, who also presided over the conference.

The Obituary Resolution was presented by Com.P K Selvaraj, Joint Secretary KSGIEU.

Com. C B Venugopal in his presidential address dealt with the political, economic and social situation in the country. He spoke on how the economic reforms of the past twenty five years have ruined the economy and pointed out how communalism is today destroying the secular fabric of the society. Communal forces were using social media to create "post truth society" he added. He said, with the State Conference, Union should transform to fight and overcome the threat of disinvestment and privatisation of public sector general insurance.

The delegate session was inaugurated by Com Sanjay Jha, Secretary, Standing Committee(General Insurance), AIIEA. Com M U Thomas, General Secretary presented the organisational Report before the house. Accounts statement was presented by Com Viju Paul, Treasurer. Twenty delegates participated in the ensuing discussions on the Report and adopted by the house.

The session was also addressed by Com. S V Shankar, Vice President, GIEA(SZ), who said building up a strong organisation that was capable of fighting the anti-worker and anti-people policies of the government was the union's top priority. He expressed confidence that AIIEA could protect the public sector insurance and secure best wage revision. Com. K G Prabakaran (AIIPA) highlighted

the issues of the pensioners and stressed the need to strengthen the public sector general insurance industry.

Com. K Joy Paul, Vice President, KSGIEU, welcomed the gathering and Com. M J Varghese, Joint Secretary, proposed vote of thanks.

At the open session, on the concluding day, Com. P R Sasi, President, GIEA(SZ),

summed up the discussion on the Conference report, for the house.

Com. Sanjay Jha addressing the session said the hostile situation prevailing in the country should not demoralise us but make us more determined to struggle and secure our just demands. He said AIIEA was campaigning for the merger of public sector general insurance companies. These companies competing among themselves for the same business would not make any sense, he added. He said the threat of disinvestment need to be met by strengthening the organisation numerically. That would make the AIIEA in a better position to achieve the fair and just demands of the employees, he said.

Com. M B Rajesh, Member of Parliament, who inaugurated the session criticised central government's pro-corporate policies that resulted in social inequality and communal tension in the country. He said the Indian economy was going through a period of prolonged crisis. He said liberalisation policies worked in favour of the rich and the privileged, at the cost of the poor and vulnerable. Liberalisation period had witnessed massive increase in wealth and its concentration, he added. He said the central government has put the sale of public sector units on fast track. The demonetization and GST, he said, were measures to kill the informal sector and transfer the wealth from the poor to the rich on an unprecedented scale. He said, last few years also witnessed undermining of democratic institutions in the country.

He spoke on the deepening crisis in agriculture and welcomed the unity and struggle of the farmers organisation. He said the Long March in Mumbai, had served as a warning to the central government that it must honour

it election promises and bring out a policy to make agriculture sustainable.

Com. G Anand, Secretary, GIEA(SZ) said there was urgent need to campaign about the issues of merger of three companies and its consequences. He highlighted the importance of including The New India Assurance Company to create a monolithic corporation like LIC. He said, AIIEA would resist the government decision to disinvest the merged entity. He said promotion policy need further fine-tuning to remove some anomalies that create disadvantage to employees. He said more vacancies need to be declared in the

lower category. He said, to achieve all these goals, union has to be strengthened and made active by campaigns and related activities.

Felicitations were offered by Com. P BBaburaj (LICEU), Com. P S Peethambaran (BSNLEU), Com. O C Joy(CONFEDERATION), Com. K N Anwar(FESTO); Com. Anwar Pasha(AIIPA) on the occasion.

Conference elected thirty five member new State Committee with Coms. Viju Paul, M U Thomas and M S Manzoor as President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

Com. P. Mohanabalan, Joint Secretary, proposed vote of thanks.

21st Annual General Meeting of LIC Pensioners' Association, Kolkata MDO 1

The 21st Annual General meeting of LIC Pensioners' Association, KMDO 1 was held on 17/03/2018 and it was presided over by Com. Anilesh Majumder, President. Health constraints and personal problems could not dampen the spirit of aged persons, as evident from the considerable attendance. At the outset, floral tribute was placed on Martyr's column and silence was observed to pay homage to Com. N.M. Sundaram for his stellar role in Insurance employees' movement as well as in the struggle for the achievement of pension, and also to pay homage to other luminaries who have left us in the meantime. The Annual Report covering international, national and industrial scenarios was presented by Com. Himadri Mohan Roy, General Secretary. He also submitted the audited accounts.

Com. Chandrashekhar Bose, the vanguard of Insurance employees movement initiated the deliberation. While endorsing the formulations on the report submitted, he focussed on the impending danger the pensioners would confront due to the economic policy pursued by Central Govt. He expressed his apprehension that our existing right to pension would be at stake. He urged upon the pensioners to participate more actively in the agitational programs and stand resolutely against the anti-working class policy to protect pension and achieve legitimate demands.

Thereafter, Com Amitesh Sarkar, Gen. Secy., KDLIEA Com. Jayanta Mukherjee, Gen. Secy., EZIEA participated in deliberation.

Both of them were critical of the political and socio-economic policies of the Central Govt. that caused wide disparities among various sections of people. They exhorted the pensioners to stand guard against the ill-conceived policy of the Central Govt. to attack the public sector insurance industry and the rights won through years of struggles and take more active part in all agitational programs chalked out by AIIEA and AIIPA from time to time.

Com. Mohan Ganguly, Secretary, Pensioners' Association, Howrah, Com. P Bagchi, Jt. Secy., AIIPA, Com. Bimal Kr. Das, AIIPA, Central Committee member, and Com. Subhas Mitra, Vice President, AIIPA greeted the Conference and joined the deliberations. They were unanimous on the formulations made in the report and urged upon pensioners for united protracted movement to achieve our demands.

After summing up by the General Secretary, the report and audited accounts were adopted by the house. As many as 14 resolutions on different issues were passed. The meeting gave a clarion call for united struggle and protracted movement in collaboration with all democratic organizations and working people.

Com. Narayan Bhattacharya, Com. Himadri Mohan Roy and Com. Amit De were elected President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The meeting ended with Vote of thanks proposed by Com. Tarak Banerjee.

Annual Meeting of LIC Pensioners of Kolkata Sub Division

The 22nd Annual General Meeting of the LIC Pensioners' Association –KSDO, was held on 25th March, 2018. A number of aged pensioners participated in the General Meeting ignoring the hot and humid weather of the city and their physical difficulties to encourage and acknowledge the contribution of the organization to develop the movement of the pensioners' for their just demands. Their auspicious presence including Com. Chandrashekhar Bose, the doyen of Insurance Employees movement, graced the occasion. Almost 50 delegates were present in the AGM.

At the outset, Com Asish Basu Roychoudhury, the General Secretary of LICPA-KSDO welcomed the delegates and guests,. A presidium was formed to conduct the proceeding of the meeting headed by Com. Sachindralal Bhattacharya, the president of the organization. Com Suibhash Mitra, the Vice-president of AIIPA was the main speaker. Com Haridas Saha , the president of KSDIEA and Com Anilesh Majumder, on behalf of Kolkata Division Pensioners' Association greeted the house.

Com C.S.Bose, in his usual eloquent deliberation mesmerized the audience and explained the gruesome picture of unemployment situation of the country especially amongst skills and unskilled youth. Com Subhash Mitra, the main speaker said that the government of India is not only attacking the senior citizens of India who depends mainly upon the interest of deposits in Banks which has been continuously decreasing jeopardizing the economic life of the aged citizens of India but also they are pursuing doggedly the neo-liberal



economy, the root of all problems of social and economic life of common people. He stressed to fight the economic policy of the govt and the ill motive of the saffron brigade to destabilize the unity of the people as well.

Com General Secretary placed the Report of the Executive Committee for the year 2017 and Com Treasurer placed the Accounts before the house. Three delegates participated in the discussion supporting the Report and after brief submission of the General Secretary both Report and the accounts were passed unanimously by the house. The Meeting elected a 27 member Executive Committee for the year 2018 and Com Sachindralal Bhattacharya, Com Asish Basu Roychoudhury, Com Shibapada Sarkar were elected as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The Annual General Meeting came to an end with the presidential speech.

21st Conference of ICREA, Visakhapatnam

The 21st annual General conference of Insurance Corporation Retired employees Association, Visakhapatnam Division was held on 30th, April, 2018 at Visakhapatnam. 60 members attended the conference enthusiastically braving the scorching heat. Com. B L Narayana presided over the meeting after the conference was inaugurated by com. P V Subba rao, CC member AIIPA. Com. Subbarao explained the legal aspects of our court case and argument of AIIPA's council that the stand taken by the LIC amounts to abrogation of article 14 of the constitution of india (discrimination) and LIC is a state

under article 12 of the constitution and should not be allowed to escape from the statutory obligations towards its pensioners.

Com. N Ramana Chalam, Gen.Secretary, ICEU greeted the members and extended all the support from AIIEA for realisation of pensioners' demands.

The Secretary's report and audited statements of accounts were adopted by the house unanimously.

A new Executive committee of 16 members was elected with Com. N.Krishnamurthy as President, Com. R.Pandurangan a General Secretary and Com. MVAS Prasad as treasurer.



127th Birth Anniversary of Dr. BR Ambedkar at Hyderabad

The 127th Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. BR Ambedkar was celebrated befittingly on 14.04.2018 jointly by ICEU, Hyderabad and Secunderabad Divisions and HRGIEA. Over 600 employees enthusiastically participated in the seminar on the topic, “Ambedkar’s Ideals – Present Situation”. The program began with a welcome address by Com. N Adhish Reddy, General Secretary, ICEU, Hyderabad who also threw light on the importance of celebrating Ambedkar Jayanthi in the present situation.

Com. V Ramesh, General Secretary, AIIEA while inaugurating the seminar, ridiculed the efforts of the present rulers trying to appropriate Dr Ambedkar after humiliating him for decades. This new found admiration is a political posture in the face of increasing assertion of Dalits for dignity. Dr. Ambedkar stood for the unity of the Nation and people, without any scope for differences on the lines of caste, creed, region, religion and language, he said. It is unfortunate that the forces that are leading the present government at center, are trying to divide the people exactly on these lines. Dr. Ambedkar, strongly advocated for the building-up of Public Sector in the country and was instrumental for the formation of RBI, he highlighted. Today, the same Public Sector is sought to be dismantled by the present dispensation at center and these retrograde policies of the government have to be defeated by united struggles, he said.

Prof. K Nageshwar, ex-MLC said that the notion of Babasahib belonging to certain community only is wrong and the ideals set by Dr. Ambedkar are for all the people to follow. Babasahib strongly advocated for the

welfare of women and their empowerment. He aspired for the creation of an exploitation free society. Ambedkar strongly believed that “political democracy cannot be total, without social democracy’ and it is not just sufficient to achieve ‘one vote – one man’, without achieving ‘one value for each man’. It is highly unfortunate that attacks and atrocities on dalits are on the rise in a country which has a dalit as President, he lamented. It is also a shame that attacks and atrocities on women, whom Ambedkar held in highest esteem, are also on the rise and there is no safety to the life of women in the country. He emphasized the need to broadening the unity of the people to resist and fight against attacks on the ideals of Dr. Ambedkar.

Com. Clement Das, General Secretary, SCZIEF informed that AIIEA stands for a casteless and classless society. The organization is taking utmost care in ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of the employees belonging to SC/ST Communities, he said. But today attempts are being made to create divisions in the unity brought about by AIIEA. Such efforts would damage the interests of all sections of employees. These attempted have to be defeated and the organization should take up the issues of caste oppression along with class exploitation to cement the unity of workers.

Com. Y Subba Rao, General Secretary, HRGIEA while greeting the seminar, called for furthering the Lal-Neel Unity, in future.

Com. K Syamprasad, General Secretary, ICEU, Secunderabad Division proposed the vote of thanks.

Srinagar Division: Seminar on “Life & Mission of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Northern Zone Insurance Employees’ Association Srinagar Division held a seminar on the topic “THE LIFE AND MISSION OF BABA SAHEB DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR” at Jammu on 21ST of April 2018. The programme was organized to celebrate the birth anniversary of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar to motivate the people to follow the teachings of the great legend. Speaking on the occasion, Comrade Pawan Gupta, Divisional Secretary NZIEA said that Dr. Ambedkar fought a big struggle against untouchability and caste discrimination. He had definite views on minorities, women, working class and other deprived sections of the Indian society. Dr. Ambedkar was the architect of the Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar wrote in the constitution that the state must reorganize the economic system in a way to avoid concentration of wealth in few hands. He was absolutely clear that excessive concentration of wealth would lead to greater inequalities and Dalits and weaker sections of society will suffer most. He had a very clear view that casteism always leads to division of labourers, and so class struggle must be effective to overcome



the adverse effects of the casteism. It was pledged to pay real tribute to Dr. Ambedkar by strengthening the struggle against the forces of neo liberalism, globalization, communalism, and by integrating the class struggle with the struggle against caste exploitation by building the broadest possible unity of Dalits and all toiling masses in a struggle for economic emancipation as well as social emancipation.

Others who spoke on the occasion were Comrade Romesh Chand , Com. Rajesh Gupta ,joint secretaries of NZIEA Srinagar Division, Com. Raj Kumar Sharma, Com. ,Com Rajesh Kumar, Com. Neelam Sharma –women convener, Com. Alkiya Sharma, Com. Vijay Kumar ,Com. Karan Kumar and Com. Kishore Lal.

At Vizag: Seminar on ‘Increasing Attacks on Dalits’

ICEU Visakhapatnam Division organized a seminar at Visakhapatnam, on “ Increasing Attacks on Dalits” to commemorate the 127th birth anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar. Com K Lokanadham, KVPS leader was the chief guest. Addressing the seminar, Com K Lokanadham said today the BJP is trying to appropriate Dr Ambedkar while undermining all the democratic institutions and the principles laid in the constitution. Dr Ambedkar advocated constitutional methods to secure both political and economic justice but his idea to achieve a casteless and exploitation free society still remains a distant dream. Even the judiciary today is not allowed to question.

Babasaheb had said that democracy prevails only where freedom of expression is protected. But today the freedom of expression is being curtailed. There is an attempt to dilute the SC/ST prevention of atrocities act, as is the case with the domestic violence act in case of women. There is a rising dissatisfaction and a demand to revisit the judgement of



Seminar at Belgaum: 'Vision of Dr. B R Ambedkar and Present Developments'

Commemorating the 127th Birth anniversary celebrations of the architect of the constitution of India, Dr. Babasaheb Ramji Ambedkar, a seminar on the topic 'Vision of Dr. B R Ambedkar and the Present Day Developments', was organised on 22nd April 2018 by Insurance Employees' Union, Belgaum Division. The seminar commenced with a revolutionary song, 'onde onde' signifying the importance of unity among all the people. Com. P A Joseph, General Secretary, IEU Belgaum Division, welcomed the gathering.

Introducing the subject, Com. N. Vijaykumar, President, ICEU, Mysore Division, delved deep into the topic of societal undercurrent, social engineering and impending transformation. Com. Vijaykumar made critical analysis of changes in society through the means of both revolution and evolution; Dr. Ambedkar, he averred, chose the path of evolution so that changes could take place with understanding and in a consensual manner. Hailing Dr. Ambedkar as a role model and a champion of the workers' rights, he said, benefits like fixed working-hours, concept of wage revision and periodical updation of dearness allowance, maternity leave for women workers were espoused by him. Licians should be beholden to Dr. Ambedkar as he was a vociferous and passionate advocate of public sector insurance as he often stated that land and insurance should be under state control. Thus Dr. Ambedkar provides us with an inspiration to campaign for public sector insurance.

Dr. S. Tukaram, Director, State Resource Center, Karnataka, progressive writer having a huge body of work on the issue of empowerment of dalits and backwards communities, in his key-note address, made incisive analysis of the role of Dr. Ambedkar and his everlasting contribution to the nation. He spoke extensively on the evils of caste system, genesis of Hindu code bill, importance of education and organisation. Dr. Tukaram said that it is a matter of pride for all Indians that Dr. Ambedkar's birthday is being observed as 'World Knowledge Day'. At the same time, Dr. Tukaram, bemoaned the fact that even after 70 years of independence the divisiveness in the Indian society remains and communal forces are gaining ascendancy. He very rightly pointed out that this communalisation of the society can be pushed back if good people raise their voice and take up a progressive stand; an equitable society in all respects can be realised if harmony and unity become the watchwords. Dr. Tukaram's speech was multi-dimensional in nature and threw light on various aspects of the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar.

Com. G V Kulkarni, President, IEU, Belgaum Division in his submission called upon the comrades to imbibe the teachings of Dr. B R Ambedkar so that our movement could move forward in proper direction. Com. S K Kulkarni, Jt. Secretary, IEU Belgaum Division proposed the vote of thanks and the seminar concluded with a revolutionary song 'Victory shall be ours' by our women comrades.



the supreme court is fully justified. Babasaheb had advocated a strong public sector, for the

development of all regions of the country and all sections of the people, but Modi says public sector has to perish. All clashes, crimes are more due to the lack of development he said. He appealed to the LIC employees to contribute to the social struggles, carried out to eradicate the social evils.

Com G Vijaykumar, General Secretary, SC/ST welfare association also addressed. The meeting was presided over by Com M Kameshwari, President, ICEU and Com N Ramanachalam, General Secretary, proposed a vote of thanks.

All the 22 units of ICEU Visakhapatnam division have paid tributes to Dr Ambedkar at their offices.

Hundreds of Employees Take Part in Protest March in Kolkata



The ghastly incidents of gang rape –torture-murder of an eight –year-old girl in Kathua in the state of Jammu & Kashmir and the rape of a teenager in the Unnao district of Uttar Pradesh have stirred the conscience of all the progressive and secular minded people of this country. When the Women Sub-Committee (WSC) of Kolkata Division Life Insurance Employees' Association (KDLIEA) met at KDLIEA Office on 17th April, 2018 to concretise some tasks they had already undertaken, they took almost no time to decide that a strong protest action must be lodged in order to express anger against the gory incidents at Kathua and Unnao. The protest action, it was decided, would condemn the attempts of the Hindutva forces to communalise the Kathua rape case, to shield the perpetrators of these heinous crimes both at Kathua and Unnao and demand a speedy trial and exemplary punishment to the culprits. The WSC meet also decided to raise its voice against the

growing incidents of crime against women in the state of West Bengal as also in the country as a whole. So, the WSC, in consultation with the Secretariat of KDLIEA, decided to organise a Protest March during the lunch period on 23rd April, 2018 and called upon the employees to join the Protest March. There was a massive response to the call. More than five hundred employees, many of whom were women, took part in the Protest March that moved along the Chittaranjan Avenue, one of the main

thoroughfares of Kolkata, Madan Street and Chowringhee Square. Then after turning back to Chittaranjan Avenue the Protest March culminated in front of LIC's Eastern Zonal Office at Hindusthan Buildings where a brief meeting was held. The good number of placards and banners displayed in the Protest March attracted the attention of many eyes. Comrade Ramkrishna Datta, President, KDLIEA addressed the gathering.



International Women's Day observed :

The Women Sub-Committee, this year, had undertaken two programmes to observe the International Women's Day in a befitting manner. It was decided to hold a seminar on the topic "The origin of International Women's Day and its relevance to the contemporary world" on 10th March, 2018. The other decision that was taken was to donate some useful materials to the needy school children on the occasion of International Women's Day. On 10th March around 250 employees, a large number of women employees included, gathered at the LIE Sports Club situated on the 5th floor of H. B. Annexe Building at the close of office hours to attend the seminar. Professor Nandini Mukherjee who teaches at Jadavpur University was the sole speaker in the seminar. Her erudite but lucid lecture on the subject earned the admiration of all. Before Prof. Nandini Mukherjee was invited to speak, Com Shyama Bhattacharya, Joint Convenor, WSC, briefly addressed the gathering. Comrade Saswati Kundu, Joint Convenor, WSC, presided over the entire proceedings.

Park Institution for Girls is a school run under the Rashtriya Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan. Situated in North Kolkata the school had enrolled 220 girl students (class V to class X) from the destitute in the neighbourhood. On 24th April, 2018, as per the pre-fixed schedule, a team comprising WSC members and Secretariat members of KDLIEA visited the school to donate school bags and pens to each student and some reference books and story books for the students. A brief function was organised by the teachers on that occasion. After the introductory speech by the Headmistress, Smt. Bhaswati Bhattacharya, Com. Amitesh Sarkar, General Secretary, KDLIEA and Com Saswati Kundu, Joint Convenor, WSC briefly addressed the gathering of students and teachers of the school. The gesture of the WSC was highly appreciated both by the students and teaching staff of the school.



Seminar at Satara on Bank Frauds

Insurance Employees Union Satara Division (WZ) along with other progressive forums organised a seminar on "Modus operandi of Nirav Modi & Co" on 27th April 2018. Mr. Shekhar Sonalkar a renowned Chartered Accountant and expert in forensic audit who has assisted government of Maharashtra in investigation of many financial crimes was main speaker. Comrade Vasant Nalawade, President WZIEA presided over the Seminar.

Mr. Shekhar Sonalkar explained the concept of forensic audit of financial transactions, which involves unearthing the trail of transactions till the suspicious source is detected. He forcefully argued that it is not possible that high offices of that bank, RBI & government have no means of detecting such huge irregularities. He further pointed out that it is very difficult to believe that none of auditors i.e the internal, external and statutory failed to notice the irregularities. The PNB or Nirav Modi scam could not have taken place without deliberate neglect with indirect support from authorities. He also expressed serious concern over the functioning of regulatory authorities for banking and financial institutions. Mr. Sonalkar appreciated the role played by AIIEA in opposing disinvestment.

Madurai: Field Survey Report of GWECA released

The Gender Justice We Care, GWECA, an initiative of ICEU, Madurai Division conducted a survey covering 100 sample institutions inclusive of both public and private in the districts of Madurai, Dindigul, Theni, Virudhunagar, Sivagangai and Ramanathapuram to find out if Anti Sexual Harassment Committee exists in work places. This work was taken up at the request of the AIDWA. As per the Act 2013 it is mandatory that all government and private institutions having more than 10 women workers have to form Internal Complaints Committee. The findings of the survey suggest that Internal

Complaints Committees have not been constituted in 51% of institutions. Many government offices, corporate hospitals, jewellery and textile shops were found guilty of not having such committees. The survey also found that awareness levels, adherence to legal provisions were also faulty.

The Survey Report was released to the public on 20th May 2018 at Madurai by Com Vasuki, a senior leader of AIDWA. She thanked and complimented the insurance employees for the efforts put in to bring out the Report.

Protest at Hyderabad against Rape incidents

Insurance Corporation Employees' Union (ICEU), Hyderabad Division organized a 'Candle Light Vigil' on 23.04.2018 condemning the brutal attack on 8 year old innocent girl 'Asifa', in the Kathuva district of Jammu & Kashmir and demanding immediate punishment to the culprits. Over 200 employees, including a large number of women and officers participated in the program.

Com. N Aruna Kumari, Convenor, WWCC (SCZIEF), Telangana State narrated the details of the tragic incident, with anguish. The inhuman attack on Asifa, forced every right thinking Indian to bow their head in shame, she stated. She demanded justice to Asifa by punishing the guilty without delay. It is a sad augury on the situation in the country that as many as 8 incidents of atrocities on women were reported on the same day the cabinet approved a new ordinance, she informed.

Com. K Jayatheerth, Joint Secretary, SCZIEF condemned the insensitive attitude of the government and the Prime Minister in not responding promptly to such a heinous act. He criticised the comments of some of the BJP parliamentarians, on the incident and expressed his anger over the actions of some leaders who have



participated in the rallies organized in support of the accused. The attacks and atrocities on women are taking place unabated, ever since the present dispensation came to power, he noted with concern. 33 countries all over the world and the UN have condemned the incident, he informed.

Com.N Adhish Reddy, General Secretary, ICEU, Hyderabad Division condemned the attempts by some sections, to paint religious colour and communalise the incident. He called upon all the employees to raise voice unitedly, carry on the fight until the guilty are punished and justice is rendered to Asifa.

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COM R.L.KATARIA RETIRES

Com.R.L.Kataria, Divisional Treasurer, NZIEA, Karnal Divisional Committee retired from the Services of the Corporation after putting in 39 years of yeoman services to the Corporation & the AIIEA. He served the organization in various capacities including as Assistant Divisional Treasurer and Treasurer. He was also actively associated with Credit & Thrift Society, Karnal for over 10 years.

A Felicitation Function was organized by NZIEA, Divisional Committee, Karnal on 28/4/2018 in honor of his Services rendered to

the Organization. Com. Anil Bhatnagar, President, NZIEA alongwith Com. Ravinder Sharma, Chief Treasurer, NZIEA, besides Sh.Jogender Kumar, SDM , LIC, Karnal Division graced the occasion with their presence. Felicitation Function was attended by Comrades from different Branches of Karnal Division, Class-I Officers, retiree Comrades & relatives of Com.R.L.Kataria. Com Kataria thanked the employees for the love and affection bestowed on him. He donated Rs.21000 to Karnal Divisional Committee, Rs.2100 each to Insurance Worker, Bima Mazdoor and Branch Committee. Insurance Worker wishes Com Kataria a healthy, active and purposeful retired life.



Seminar at Madurai on Pension as Social Security

LICPA and GIPA Madurai jointly hosted a seminar on Pension as Social Security as per the call of Nagpur conference of AIIPA. The sweltering heat of temple city had failed to dampen the enthusiasm of pensioners on 22.4.18. The leaders of Co-ordination committee of Madurai District Pensioners, comprising of TNGEA, BSNL, EB, Teachers, TNSTC and CITU attended the seminar. The seminar attended by 82, pensioners was presided over by Com.V.Ramasamy, President, LICPA. Com.C.Chandrasekaran, Secretary, welcomed the gathering. Com. N.Suresh Kumar, Vice-President, ICEU, Madurai in his address stressed that the seniors who had contributed to the growth of Insurance Sector deserve more in pensionary benefits.

Com.K.Swaminathan, Vice President of SZIEF gave special address on **“Pension-History-Challenges- and Future”** He complemented the vision of AIIEA for its whip to opt for pension. Bismark had to offer pension, hither to unknown, only when the tides of socialism raised high in Germany.

He also narrated as to how Soviet Revolution subscribed to hike in Pension. While Nakara verdict offered steam to the claim of pension, the chicanery of Globalisation has led to defined contribution from defined benefit.. The PSU, and the social and pensionary benefits would thrive so long as Economic nationalism is safeguarded. We shall have to struggle jointly with the people to thwart the slogans of nationalism raised in the name of Cow, Religion, War and Cannons to retain the hard earned rights.

The chief guest also replied elaborately to the questions and doubts raised by the audience. Com.A.Deivasigamani the senior most pensioner and the fraternal TU leaders were honoured. Resolutions on formation of CMB, against soaring atrocities on SC/ST, on withdrawal of NPS, and on improvement in pension scheme moved by Com.T. Kumararaja, Treasurer were adopted unanimously. Com. Ramasubramanian, President GIPA offered vote of thanks

TRADE UNION CLASSES AT VIZAG

ICEU Visakhapatnam Division has organised trade union classes at Srikakulam and Narasannapeta Base units on 15.04.2018. The current political situation and impact on working class was dealt by Com G Varapasad, Joint Secretary, ICEU. He dealt at length on the issues confronting the working class, the growing unemployment and agrarian crisis, and the anti working class policies of the Modi government, the impact of the policies on LIC employees.

A questionnaire was given to all the members regarding their opinions on the functioning of the union and their political affiliations. Basing on the replies of the members in the questionnaire, the class on organisation was dealt by com N Ramanachalam, General Secretary, ICEU. Com Ramanachalam dealt in detail on the management attitude towards the employees, the disciplinary aspects of the employees while in office, clarified certain doubts of the employees regarding request transfers, promotions, the necessity of solidarity actions with fraternal trade unions,



and other matters.

Com T Achari, rural vice president, ICEU acted as the principal, and the entire team of ICEU attended the U classes. The classes evoked good response and the employees were enthused.

On an earlier date, Trade Union classes were organised at Palasa Base Unit. Com Ramanachalam dealt on the subject of the policies of the government and organisation. Com KV Ramana Murty, vice president, ICEU, acted as the principal.

GREAT ACHIEVEMENT – CONGRATULATIONS



Shreya Singh, daughter of Manoj Kumar Singh, a dedicated comrade belonging to Dhanbad Branch – 4 under Hazaribagh Division has secured Rank 538 in the Civil Services Examination 2017 conducted by UPSC. Shreya has an excellent academic track record with securing 92.5% in Class X (2010) and 90.5% in Class XII (2012). Further, she achieved Rank 9 in All India Law Entrance Test (NLU, Delhi) in 2012. Further, she cracked Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) in same year in 2012 and pursued five year integrated B.A.LL.B. from National Law University, Jodhpur. She took up Civil Services Examination in 2017 and became successful in her first attempt. She is a keen reader of our house magazine, INSURANCE WORKER, to whom she credits for giving her rational insights.

Insurance Worker congratulates her on this great achievement and wishes her a successful career dedicated to the welfare of the people.

Special Convention to commemorate “General Insurance Nationalization Day”

As per the call of the Standing Committee of General insurance, a ‘Special Convention’ was jointly organized by the “Erode-Tiruppur District Committee of CRGIEA (Coimbatore region General Insurance Employees’ Association)” and “LIAFI” on 12th May in Gobichettipalayam to commemorate the General Insurance Nationalisation Day. Com Thillaikumar, Secretary, ICEU, Gobi Unit welcomed the gathering. Mr.Muthukumar, LIAFI presided over the Convention.



Mr.S.Thiagarajan, All India EC Member of ‘LIAFI’ spoke on the “Role of Agents in the growth of Public Sector Insurance Industry”. Com M.Girija, Jt Secretary, AIIEA spoke on the vital subject of “Why the nationalized insurance industry should be protected”. Both the topics proved to be very essential in today’s context and were well received by the gathering numbering about

80, including some new recruits.

In the Covention, 5-Agents of long standing in the insurance field giving business to LIC and the 4 Public Sector General Insurance Companies were honoured.

Com R.Babu, Jt. Secretary, CRGIEA as well as the Dist. Secretary of ‘Erode-Tiruppur District Committee’ proposed Vote of thanks.

मोह, माया और राम

Continued from Page 20

सभ्यता का ढोंग और दुषित मानसिकता का पर्दाफाश करती घटनाएं चाहे कठुआ के रसना गांव की हो या उ.प्र. के उन्नाव की या गुजरात के सूरत की या जयपुर के आमेर कुड़ा की रोजाना के तौर कहीं न कहीं से आती मानवता को शर्मसार करती ऐसी घटनाएं कानून के राज का मखौल उड़ाती नजर आती हैं। खुद जज तक को न्याय न मिलने की खबरें सत्ता संग अपराधी गठजोड़ की बनी गहरी पैठ को स्वतः उजागर कर रही हैं। सत्ता संचालन में ताकतवर बनी गिरोहबंदी पीड़ित के लिये न्याय प्राप्ति को दुर्लभ किये हुए हैं। जो बिना किसी पूर्वाग्रह के निरपेक्ष भाव से न्याय की षपथ लेते हैं, वे जानते हुए भी इस बंधन को तोड़ नहीं पा रहे हैं। स्त्री और दलित के प्रति दोग्य भाव की बसी मनुवादी सत्ता मानसिकता इनके साथ न्याय नहीं कर रही है। उदाहरण तौर पर राजस्थान प्रदेश में इस वर्ष 31 मार्च तक के 3 महीने यानी 90 दिन के भीतर महिलाओं के साथ दुष्कर्म के मामले दर्ज हुए हैं यानि हर दिन 10 से अधिक महिलाएं शिकार हो रही हैं। बहुत सी न दर्ज होनेवाली घटनाएं इसमें



शामिल नहीं हैं। ये धटनाएं देश को कितना शर्मसार कर रही हैं, इसकी झलक देशव्यापी हुए विरोध प्रदर्शनों के साथ प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के लंदन दौरे में भी साफ नजर आई है। जब वे “भारत की बात सबके साथ” के प्रस्तोता, गोदी मीडिया और केन्द्रीय फिल्म प्रमाणन बोर्ड के अध्यक्ष प्रसून जोशी के प्रायोजित कार्यक्रम में शामिल होने गये थे तब उसके बाहर लंदन की आम जनता ने सड़कों पर उतरकर “मोदी नॉट वेलकम” के बैनर लेकर आ गई और उन्नाव तथा कठुआ के दुष्कर्म तथा देश के अन्य हिस्सों में धर्म और जाति के नाम होनेवाले भेदभाव के खिलाफ नारों की गूंज लंदन में सुनाई दी। लोग सवाल कर रहे थे कि मोदी अपने संघियों के नफरती एजेन्डे के बीच श्रेष्ठ और समृद्ध भारत दावे कैसे पूरे करेंगे?

Insurance News in brief

■ A.M.KHAN, DHARWAD

Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company plans to open 1000 virtual sales offices in next 12 to 18 months. The virtual offices will have sales officers who will be provided with a device which can do all services relating to customers. The company which has 631 branch offices claims that its growth rate has been the highest among the top 10 private life insurers in the country.



This year's Indian Premier League witnesses an increase in the loss ratios for specialized insurance policies provided by insurance companies to companies taking part in the IPL by 150 to 200 percent from 80 to 90 percent last year. The insurance coverage this season amounts to Rs.23 billion which was Rs.18 billion last year.



Taking shelter under the comparative figure of insurance penetration between that of India and the average of the world, which is 3.4 % (India) and 6.2 % (world average) Government is considering allowing 100 per cent FDI in insurance intermediaries. This it says will give a boost to the insurance sector and will attract more funds. Government also puts forth the plea by private companies which say that the insurance sector is being impacted due to weak distribution networks and the increase in FDI would help in strengthening the distribution networks.



The Central Government's ambitious Pradhan mantri Fasal Yojana (PMFBY), floated in 2016, which replaced all other crop insurance schemes, had come under fire due to almost nil claim settlements. For almost two years only private insurance companies were allowed to give the crop insurance cover. The companies garnered huge amount of the premium but the claims preferred by the farmers were not settled due to faulty technical reasons put forth by the insurers. This has put many farmers in huge loss. The high powered-panel instituted by the government to pacify the angered farmers has in its report, though reluctantly, said that the delayed and non-payment of claims is the reason for the resentment of the farmers.



IRDA grants special approval for 16 Cross Border Reinsurers (CBR) for the year 2018-19. CBRs are those reinsurers who do not have physical presence in India and do reinsurance business with Indian insurance/reinsurance companies. The 19 CBRs include Republican Unitary Enterprise, Belarus; Asian Reinsurance Corporation, Thailand; HDFC International Life and Re Company Ltd., UAE; and

Iran Insurance Company.

Shortage of actuaries makes IRDA to ease norms for their empanelment by insurance companies. It now allows them to undertake valuation of more than one insurer every quarter. Actuaries for life and general insurers will continue to remain separate. Non-life insurance premium sees a growth of 16.9 percent in the year 2017-18 with a total premium collection of Rs.1,33,348.33 crore. Public Sector non-life insurance companies register a growth rate of 12.78 percent garnering a premium of Rs.67,920.17 crore for the FY 2017-18 which was Rs.60,218.49 crore for the year 2016-17. With this the market share of the four public sector general insurance companies stands at 45.07 per cent. Of the 4 public sector general insurance companies New India's market share is 15.06 percent. This is followed by Oriental General Insurance Company which has a market share of 11.48 percent.



Life insurance sector in India has registered 10.8 per cent growth in new business premium. Total new business premium collected for the year 2017-18 is Rs.1,93,866.24 crore which was Rs.1,75,022.50 crore the previous financial year. During the year 2017-18 LIC collected a business premium of Rs.1,34,551.68 crore, an increase of 8.16 percent, from Rs.1,24,396.27 percent of the previous year. With this LIC's market share is at 69.40 per cent. Total premium garnered by the private life insurance companies is Rs.59,314.55 crore during the year 2017-18 which is Rs.8,688.32 crore more than that of previous year. Market share of LIC in terms of number of policies stands at 75.67 percent.



International Group of P&I Clubs, an umbrella organization whose members cover 90 percent of the global tanker fleet against risks including oil spills, is nervous on US threatening fresh sanctions against Iran. When the U.S. had imposed sanctions on Iran in 2012, accompanying European measures also restricted the International Group — which is based in London — from providing cover for Iranian shipments.



Fear of losing business due Brexit, Lloyd's of London, AIG, Allianz and other insurers, ignoring various assurances arising out of a "standstill" transition agreement between Britain and the European Union which took place in March 2018, are establishing new hubs in Britain and European Union to ensure access to customers.

Working Class Struggles

■ S.SRIDHARA, MYSORE

CHINESE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AND CRANE OPERATORS PROTEST:

On May 1st across China, rallies and strikes occurred. Over 10000 crane operators protested in CHENGDU, demanding a larger salary and improved labour conditions.

SOUTH KOREAN WORKERS PROTEST:

Thousands of workers rallied in central SEOUL on May 1st demanding a higher minimum wage and improved working conditions. The rally was organized by the KOREAN CONFEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS. Workers are denounced the restructuring of the shipbuilding and car industries, which are being sold off and closed by piecemeal.

PROTEST IN HONGKONG:

Hundreds of workers in different areas of Hongkong on 1st May demanding standard working hours and opposing Government proposals to access employees' pensions. Other demands from workers included the introduction of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave.

PAKISTAN:

Young Doctors Association members in Government Hospitals in Lahore demonstrated on May 3rd over delays in the implementation of the service structure and time scale promotions. They also demanded higher pay packages for house officers, Medical officers and opposed privatization of healthcare services.

SRILANKAN RAILWAY WORKERS DEMAND SALARY RISE:

Railway workers from 11 grades including station masters, Engine drivers, guards and superintendents began a National strike from May 9th for higher pay and other demands.

THOUSANDS OF AUSTRALIAN WORKERS PARTICIPATE IN 'CHANGE THE RULES' PROTESTS:

More than Lakh of workers took part in protest in Melbourne on 9th May called by Australian Council of Trade Unions as part of its bogus 'Change the Rules campaign'. An estimated 3000 participated in Brisbane Rally on 7th May, and similar protest witnessed in Sydney, Adelaide, Perth and Regional Centre across the Country.

BUS DRIVERS IN RURAL NEWZEALAND TOWN:

Hundreds of Bus drivers struck work on 8th May in Rural town in the North Island's Waikato Region. The Drivers are demanding living wages. The Union organized strike earlier in April in Auckland for 3 days demanding improvement in wages and working conditions.

DOCK WORKERS STRIKE PARALYSES SUDAN'S PORTS:

Twenty thousand SUNDANESE Port Workers brought

DOCK operations to a stand still in a nine hour strike on May 2nd to oppose privatization. The workers are opposing the formation of holding companies- which hold state assets in preparation for privatization -fearing major job loss.

SOUTH AFRICAN TEACHERS DEMONSTRATE OVER WAGE AND SERVICE CONDITIONS:

South African Teachers attended a protest outside the KWAZULU-NATAL Provincial Parliament in Pietermaritzburg on 9th May. These Teachers demanding 2016 wage agreement to be implemented. The Teachers are not paid March-April salary.

PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS IN GREECE TO HOLD NATIONAL WIDE STRIKE:

From 30th May, they are opposing Government's evaluation of all Public Sector Jobs as it enforces its austerity programme.

ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT SACK THREAT IF TEACHERS STRIKE:

The Government has threatened teachers who plan to strike with same treatment meted out to nurses. In April the Government sacked 5000 of 16000 nurses striking for better pay and conditions were sacked.

AIR FRANCE STAFF REJECT OFFER AS AIRLINE AND RAIL STRIKE CONTINUE:

Air France ground and cabin crew workers began a 48 hour strike from 7th May. Their action overlapped with French Railworkers strike. They are opposing plans by the French Government to Privatise the services and attacks on jobs and service conditions.

14000 AT&T MIDWEST WORKERS STILL WITHOUT A CONTRACT:

The communication workers of America(CWA) is forcing 14000 AT&T workers in the Midwest United States to remain on the job more than three weeks after the April 14 expiration of their labour agreement. AT&T which is the world's largest telecom company, continues to demand sweeping concessions from workers regarding healthcare, pensions and further jobcuts. The CWA is defying the overwhelming strike authorisation vote by AT&T Midwest workers who operate in Ohi, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. Workers of AT&T Legacy T who work nationwide are also working without a new contract.

May Day 2018:

Millions of people around the world participated in protest marches and strikes to mark the holiday that celebrate the history, struggles and demands of the international working class. Mass protest against the austerity and war took place across the world.

Economic Tid Bits

■ J.SURESH, MYSORE

- ▶ **The unemployment rate of India is at 6.23%.** In India nearly two-thirds of our population is under 35 years of old. In 2014, BJP came to power with a promise of providing 10 million jobs every year. The BJP government says, between 2014 and 2017 14 million jobs were created in four key sectors – IT-BPM, retail, textiles and automobiles. The government also claims that the tourism industry is growing at 16% annually, adding three to four million jobs every year. However, these claims are fake and bogus. The claim of creation of 14 million jobs is actually based on the projection made by the National Skill Development Corporation in 2015. This is just a prediction and there is no evidence of actual creation of jobs. On tourism, foreign tourist arrival is growing at 7%. As per the World Travel and Tourism Council, the number of jobs directly created by the tourism sector in 2017 in India is half a million and not three to four million as claimed by the government. This clearly exposes the claim of the government on job creation. In February 2018, 31 million people in India were seeking jobs, which is highest since October 2016. According to ILO report, in India the number of unemployed persons is expected to rise from 18.3 million in 2017 to 18.6 million in 2018 and 18.9 million in 2019.
- ▶ According to a report, **India is the sixth wealthiest country with a total wealth of \$ 8,230 billion while US is the richest country with a total wealth of \$ 62,584 billion.** China is the second wealthiest nation with \$ 24,803 billion followed by Japan with \$19,522 billion. "Total wealth" refers to the private wealth held by all the individuals living in a country. It includes all their assets (property, cash, equities and business interests) less any liabilities and it excludes government funds. Globally, the total private wealth held amounts to around \$ 215 trillion and there are around 15.2 million HNWI's in the world, each with net assets of \$ 1 million or more. There are about 5,84,000 multi millionaires in the world, each with net assets of \$ 10 million or more and 2252 billionaires each with net assets of \$ 1 billion or more. Global wealth is expected to rise by 50% in the next ten years reaching to \$ 321 trillion US \$ by 2027.
- ▶ In the midst of financial volatility across the world, **a massive flight of financial capital took place in the first week of May from weaker and emerging economies** as speculators converted their investments into US dollar dominated securities. The flight of capital was triggered by the US Central Bank to incrementally raise domestic interest rates. The currencies of largest economies in Latin America – Mexico, Brazil and Argentina – suffered drops in value of 5.25%, 4.83% and 8.26% respectively. Argentina was the most affected and in an attempt to avert a collapse of Peso, the Argentine Central Bank fed the dollar buying frenzy, selling six billion US dollars from its reserves (roughly one-fourth of its total dollar reserves). The Argentinean government also raised the interest rate for short-term government and bank bonds, three times over the span of several days to 40% to avoid repeat of 2001 collapse. The poverty rate of Argentina is at 30% and the budget deficit is 5.5% of its GDP.
- ▶ **According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the income share of the poorest 5% of the population is 0.23%, a sharp fall from the 2010 figure of 0.78%.** In contrast, the richest 5 percent's income share rose from 27.89%, up from 24.61% in 2010. The top 10 percent's income share rose from 35.84% to 38.16%, whereas the bottom 10% saw their income share have from 2% to 1.01%. The average national monthly income was 15,945 taka (\$ US 192) barely above the average monthly expenditure of 15,175 taka. For poor and working-class families, more than 98% of income was spent on the minimum daily necessities of life. The national literacy rate is just 65.6%, one of the lowest in South Asia. Rural literacy rate is only 63.3%. Only 15.44% of the total population who required some form of medical attention was treated by a qualified doctor. Another 22.51% received care from individuals without official qualification. The unemployment rate of Bangladesh is at 4.1% and the graduate unemployment rate is at alarming 47%.



For our Field Force

■ ARIVUKKADAL, THANJAVUR

All time high

LIC has collected an all-time high first-year premium income of Rs.1,34,551.68 crore in FY18, a growth of 13.46% from Rs.1,24,451.42 crore in FY17. LIC continues to retain its market leadership with a market share of 69.40% in terms of first-year premium income and 75.67% when it comes to number of new policies sold. LIC also did well on group and pension scheme, notching up Rs.82,807.83 crore in new-business premium income, securing 81.38% market share.

No agents

The private life insurance industry lost 23,500 individual agents in FY18. Data from the Life Insurance Council said that the private companies had 9,57,341 agents in the beginning of the year, that dropped to 9,33,857 agents by the end. LIC on the other hand, added almost 18,000 agents into the system. Among the private sector life insurers, Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance is the only player that doesn't have any agents. They sell purely through bank branches of Canara Bank, HSBC and Oriental Bank of Commerce.

Rs.25K Cr profit

LIC has booked record equity trading profits of Rs.25,000 crore in 2017-18, up from Rs.19,000 crore a year ago. Record profit booking by LIC will mean the insurer will not only be able to credit better bonuses to with-profit type of policy holders and pay better dividends to the government, but also be able to pump in more money into the markets. And, if LIC invests more money into the market, it improves the liquidity and the market goes up—which, in turn, improves the NAV for unit-linked investment policy (ULIP) holders (of all companies!).

LIC is always wise

LIC has once again proved that it is a master of contrarian stock picking. The insurer increased stake in Tata Consultancy Services every quarter between March 2015 and December 2017 — at a time when most Indian fund managers were underweight on the IT sector. LIC bought 3.6 crore share of TCS at an average of price of Rs.2,376 per share amounting to Rs.8,476 crore and made a notional gain of 45% on its investment in TCS during the said period.

Rs.15 Lakhs in PMVVY

The government has recently approved raising the investment limit under the Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY) to Rs.15 lakh from Rs.7.5 lakh. It has also extended the last date for subscription till March 2020.

Health data privacy

A draft bill prepared by the health ministry aims to maintain electronic health data privacy, confidentiality, security and standardization. "Digital health data, whether identifiable or anonymized, shall not be accessed, used or disclosed to any person for a commercial purpose and in no circumstances be accessed, used or disclosed to insurance companies, employers, human resource consultants and pharmaceutical companies, or any other entity as may be specified by the Central government," the draft says. "Insurance companies shall not insist on accessing the digital health data of persons who seek to purchase health insurance policies or during the processing of any insurance claim."

New IRDAI Chairman

Former Karnataka Chief Secretary Subhash Chandra Khuntia, a 1981-batch IAS, has been appointed as Chairman of IRDAI. The appointment is for a period of three years, from the date of assumption of charge, or till the age of 65 years, or until further orders.

BSE to sell insurance

BSE(Bombay Stock Exchange) is in the process of applying to IRDAI seeking necessary approvals for insurance distribution. BSE had entered into a joint venture agreement with Nasdaq-listed Ebix Inc for setting up a subsidiary company for the distribution of insurance products of life, non-life and health insurance companies.

FreeCharge in insurance

Axis Bank owned FreeCharge Plans to enter into Lending and Insurance business. It will leverage the services of its parent entity and launch these services within next four months.

Black list warning

Keeping in view the delay in distribution of crop insurance amount to drought affected farmers, the Chhattisgarh State Government has warned IFFCO-Tokyo insurance company of black listing it if it fails to deposit the due crop insurance amount.

100% FDI

The government is considering allowing 100% FDI in insurance intermediaries with a view to give a boost to the sector and attracting more funds. Intermediary services include insurance broking, third party administrators, surveyors and loss assessors. The FDI policy, at present, allows 49% foreign investment in the insurance sector, which includes insurance intermediaries.

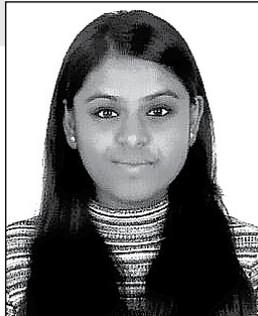


CONGRATULATIONS

Ms. TN Aishwarya, D/O Com. TVNS Ravindranath, Joint Secretary, ICEU, Hyderabad Division had the honour of receiving her BDS Degree Certificate from the hands of Hon'ble Vice-President of India Sri M Venkaiah Naidu. Sri M Venkaiah Naidu was the Chief Guest for the Convocation Function of Degree Students of Malla Reddy Institute of Medical Sciences, held in the JNTU Auditorium, Hyderabad, on 21.04.2018 and awarded degree certificates to the top 5 rankers in the streams of MBBS and BDS courses. Ms TN Aishwarya got this distinct honour for having achieved Gold Medal in the 3rd year of BDS course and for standing 3rd in the overall ranking. Insurance Worker congratulates her and wishes her many more successes in life.

WELL DONE

Kum Vaishnavi V daughter of Coms V.Vasu and H.V.Savithamma both working in Bangalore Divisional Office II has secured 4th rank in Karnataka State PU Board Examination 2018 in the Commerce stream with 98.66% and securing centum score in Business studies and Accounts. She is topper in CMR PU College, Bangalore. Insurance Worker congratulates her on this great achievement and wishes her many more successes in her academic career.

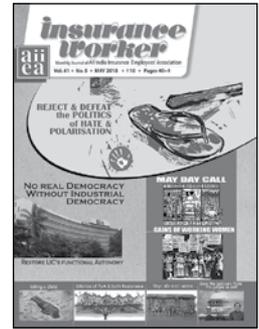


DONATIONS

| | |
|---|----------|
| Com. S.Vijayalakshmi, CBO 1, Madurai Division | Rs. 2000 |
| Com,T Arun Kumar, CBO1, Madurai Division | 2000 |
| Com. M Dasarathan, Vellore Division | 5000 |
| Com. A Murugaswamy, Pondicherry Br. 1 | 2000 |
| Com. RVasantha, Ranipet Branch | 1000 |
| Com. P Shivakumar, Cuddalore Branch | 1000 |
| Com. T Pitchaimanimani, Periakulam Branch | 1000 |
| Com.G.Periyaswamy, CBO II Madurai | 1000 |
| Com.Joys George, Jt.Secy, LICEU, Kottayam | 10000 |

Insurance Worker thanks these comrades for their love and affection towards their journal

Responses



This refers to editorial "LIC Board's autonomy" "In spite of bureaucratic interference, LIC has built a asset base of Rs. 30 lakh crores. Against all odds, LIC has done it again. It has moved far ahead by capturing 72 per cent of FPI and 75 per of number of policies leaving our rivals far behind. Without bureaucratic control it would have fared much better. Truly speaking we have not heard for a long time about industrial democracy. Now it seems we have realised the importance and raised the demand for industrial democracy.

The second editorial "politics of hate" is deeply distressing. The mindless and cruel act of violence on our children, women and poor defenceless peoples is condemnable and has to be fought.

K.Narayana Rao,
Bangalore

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

| Month | Base 2001 | Base 1960 |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| July 2017 | 285 | 6505.38 |
| August | 285 | 6505.38 |
| September | 285 | 6505.38 |
| October | 287 | 6551.03 |
| November | 288 | 6573.86 |
| December | 286 | 6528.21 |
| January 2018 | 288 | 6573.86 |
| February | 287 | 6551.03 |
| March | 287 | 6551.03 |

Base 1960=Base 2001x22.8259



DHAKA, Bangladesh



HAVANA, Cuba



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