

Insurance Worker

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1957
"The Insurance Worker makes its appearance with the indomitable will of the employees to secure justice, with their abiding faith in a future of economic, social and cultural opportunities with their solemn resolve to contribute their mite to the building up of the Corporation and the country....."

1967

1977

1987

1997

2007



On the Diamond Jubilee of the Journal, Insurance Worker commits itself to work to spread the message of love, fraternity, harmony and unity of the working class. It will continue to campaign for a society that is just, fair and equal.

TOGETHER FOR PEACE
Peace, Prosperity & Protection for All

Charlie Chaplin, the People's Artist
MODERN TIMES

Challenges before PSGI Industry



LIC - Sixtyone Years of Service & Challenges



विदेशी राजनयन किसका चमन

INSURANCE EMPLOYEES' UNION BELGAUM DIVISION

GREETS THE READERS
AND ALL INSURANCE EMPLOYEES

60 Years of
Uninterrupted
Publication



ON THE OCCASION OF THE
DIAMOND JUBILEE OF
INSURANCE WORKER

SIXTY GLORIOUS YEARS

It is a matter of great pride and happiness that Insurance Worker has completed sixty glorious years of uninterrupted publication. Insurance Worker began its journey from the city of Calcutta with Com Chandrasekhar Bose as the Editor. Com Rajini Patel, President, AIIEA introduced the first copy of the Journal released in September 1957. Outlining the objective of the Journal, Com Rajini Patel wrote " The Insurance Worker makes its appearance with the indomitable will of the employees to secure justice, with their abiding faith in a future of economic, social and cultural opportunities with their solemn resolve to contribute their mite to the building up of the Corporation and the country and with the determination to create goodwill among other sections of the working people and to strengthen the bonds of friendship with them." Since then month after month, the journal is being brought out without any interruption despite tremendous difficulties. The successful

publication of the journal demanded not only monetary resources but also dedicated and committed team of cadres. Though there were difficulties on many counts, the Journal was fortunate that it was never short of dedicated band of cadres to work for its success. The publication centre was re-located to Chennai after the shifting of the AIIEA headquarters where it remained for a long period. Currently the Journal is being published from Bangalore where it was shifted in July 2011.

In these sixty years, Insurance Worker has become the most powerful instrument of struggle of the AIIEA. It has remained loyal to the original objectives. It continues to forcefully advance the interests of the employees and has made a significant contribution in making the Corporation the finest financial institution in the country. It has worked for the solidarity of the working class not just in India but is also playing a role in development of the international solidarity.

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The Journal has maintained highest standards and an uncompromising editorial policy. It has been imparting education and creating political and class consciousness among its readers. The Journal while discussing varied issues impacting the life and living of the people and not just the insurance employees has always taken the truth to the people. It has always stood up to the power despite tremendous pressures. Talking truth to the power has always remained its uncompromising principle.

Insurance Worker has to pass through great trials and tribulations. It came under attack during the automation struggle. It refused to carry advertisements in support of automation during the gigantic movement against automation. It had to stand up to the savage attacks during the dark days of Emergency when no dissent was permissible. It refused to accept the unkind scissors of the censure during these dark days and carried blank editorial pages as a novel way of protest. This was a powerful protest against the blatant attack on the Indian constitution and democracy. The Journal and the trade union had to face repression due to this defiance but the sacrifices were worth paying for the great cause of democracy. It is not surprising that today Insurance Worker has become one of the most respected Journals in the middle class trade union movement of the country.

The challenges continue even today. These are the days when dissent is seen as treason and criticism of the government is equated as the criticism of the nation itself. Freedom of speech is under vicious attack. Democratic institutions are systematically undermined. Politics of hate has filled the air. The society is being polarised on communal and casteist lines. The syncretism of culture, its diversity and richness is being systematically attacked in the name of uniformity. There is blatant imposition of majoritarian views. The neo-liberal economic policies have made India the second most unequal society after Russia in the

world. The Insurance Worker cannot remain silent to these pernicious developments. It has to raise its voice in protest and mobilise the employees to defend the national unity, communal harmony and to fight against the neo-liberal economic policies. It has been doing this without any fear. This is not liked by the government of the day. This is evident from the fact that LIC has suddenly stopped releasing advertisement to Insurance Worker which it had been doing since the inception of the journal. Despite repeated asking, no reasons are being given as to why the advertisement is stopped. This clearly is a political vendetta. But Insurance Worker cannot be intimidated. For the Insurance Worker advertisement money is no issue at all. It has a deep commitment to the institution and it will continue to promote the interests of LIC and make all efforts to mobilise not just the insurance employees but all progressive sections of the Indian society to defend this great institution from the vicious attacks under neo-liberalism.

The successful journey of Insurance Worker would not have been possible but for the support and patronage of its readers, not just from the insurance industry but from various segments of the trade union movement, prominent citizens and academicians. The number of subscribers of the Journal today has exceeded thirty thousand. We are sure the readership is much larger than this figure. Insurance Worker thanks every single person who contributed to its success. Insurance Worker records its appreciation of the priceless contribution of all the dedicated bands of activists who were primarily responsible for its success. On the Diamond Jubilee of the Journal, Insurance Worker commits itself to work to spread the message of love, fraternity, harmony and unity of the working class. It will continue to campaign for a society that is just fair and equal.

शानदार 60 वर्ष

यह बहुत गर्व व खुशी की बात है कि इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर ने बिना किसी रूकावट के अपने प्रकाशन के शानदार साठ वर्ष पूरे कर लिये हैं। इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर ने काँ. चन्द्रशेखर बोस के संपादक के रूप में कलकत्ता शहर से अपनी यात्रा शुरू की थी। ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. के अध्यक्ष काँ. रजनी पटेल ने पत्रिका के पहले अंक का परिचय देते हुए सितम्बर, 1957 में इसकी पहली प्रति

को रिलीज किया था। पत्रिका के उद्देश्यों को रेखांकित करते हुए काँ. रजनी पटेल ने लिखा था, “कर्मचारियों द्वारा न्याय पाने की अदम्य इच्छा, आर्थिक, सामाजिक व सांस्कृतिक अवसरों के भविष्य में स्थिर विश्वास, उनकी यह गंभीर प्रतिज्ञा कि वे निगम व देश का निर्माण करने में अपनी शक्ति का उपयोग करेंगे तथा यह संकल्प कि अन्य तबकों में वे सद्भावना पैदा करेंगे और उनके साथ

मित्रता के बंधन को और अधिक मजबूत करेंगे, इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर का जन्म हुआ था।”

उसके बाद महीने दर महीने यह जर्नल भारी कठिनाइयों के बीच बिना किसी रूकावट के प्रकाशित होता रहा। पत्रिका के सफलतापूर्वक प्रकाशन के लिये न केवल मौद्रिक संसाधनों की जरूरत थी बल्कि समर्पित कार्यकर्ताओं के एक दल की भी आवश्यकता थी। यद्यपि अनेक मोर्चों पर कठिनाइयां थीं परन्तु पत्रिका इस मायने में भाग्यशाली रही कि इसे उसकी सफलता के लिये कभी भी समर्पित कार्यकर्ताओं की कमी नहीं रही। ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. के मुख्यालय के चेन्नई स्थानान्तरित होने के पश्चात प्रकाशन का स्थान भी चेन्नई स्थानान्तरित हुआ जहां यह लगभग दो दशकों से भी ज्यादा समय तक प्रकाशित होता रहा। इस समय यह पत्रिका बंगलोर से प्रकाशित हो रही है जहां जुलाई 2011 में इसके प्रकाशन का स्थान बदल दिया गया है।

इन 60 वर्षों में इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर ए.आई.आई.ई.ए. के संघर्षों का सबसे शक्तिशाली हथियार बन गया है। यह अपने मूल उद्देश्यों के प्रति वफादार बना रहा है। यह शक्तिशाली तरीके से कर्मचारियों के हितों को आगे बढ़ाने का काम करता रहा है तथा इसने निगम को देश का सर्वश्रेष्ठ वित्तीय संस्थान बनाने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान किया है। यह मजदूर वर्ग की एकजुटता के लिये काम करता रहा है और केवल भारत में ही नहीं बल्कि अन्तरराष्ट्रीय एकजुटता के विकास में भी यह भूमिका निभाता रहा है। पत्रिका ने उच्चतम मानकों व समझौता-विहीन संपादकीय नीति को बनाए रखा है। यह शिक्षा प्रदान करता रहा है तथा अपने पाठकों में राजनीतिक व वर्गीय चेतना पैदा करता रहा है। पत्रिका ने केवल बीमा कर्मचारियों के ही नहीं वरन आम लोगों के जीवन व जीवन पद्धति पर प्रभाव डालने वाले विभिन्न विषयों पर विचार-विमर्श करते हुए सच को उन तक पहुंचाया है। भारी दवाबों के बावजूद यह सत्ता के सामने खड़ा रहा है। शासन के सामने सच को लाना ही हमेशा इसका समझौता-विहीन सिद्धान्त रहा है।

इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर को अनेक कष्टों व मुसीबतों से गुजरना पड़ा है। ओटोमेशन संघर्ष के दौरान इस पर हमला हुआ। ओटोमेशन के बड़े आन्दोलन के दौरान इसने ओटोमेशन के समर्थन में दिये गये इशतहार को निकालने से मना कर दिया। इस पत्रिका को आपातकाल के काले दिनों के विरुद्ध भी अमानवीय हमलों का सामना करना पड़ा जब किसी असहमति की आज्ञा नहीं थी। उन काले दिनों में उसने सेंसर की कड़ी कैंची सहन करने से इन्कार कर दिया था तथा प्रतिरोध के रूप में संपादकीय का पन्ना खाली छोड़ दिया था। यह भारतीय संविधान व लोकतन्त्र पर हमले के खिलाफ शक्तिशाली प्रतिरोध था। पत्रिका व ट्रेड यूनियन को इस प्रतिरोध के लिये दमन का भी सामना करना पड़ा परन्तु लोकतन्त्र की रक्षा के लिये यह मूल्य चुकाना वाजिव था। इसमें कोई आश्चर्य नहीं कि आज इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर देश के मध्य वर्गीय ट्रेड-यूनियन

आन्दोलन की सबसे सम्माननीय पत्रिका बन गई है।

आज भी चुनौती जारी है। यह ऐसा समय है जब असहमति को देशद्रोह समझा जाता है तथा सरकार की किसी आलोचना को स्वयं देश की आलोचना के बराबर रख दिया जाता है। अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतन्त्रता पर कपटपूर्ण हमले हो रहे हैं। लोकतान्त्रिक संस्थाओं को सुनियोजित तरीके से कमजोर किया जा रहा है। घृणा की नीतियों से पूरा वातावरण भर गया है। समाज का सांप्रदायिक व जातिवादी आधार पर धुवीकरण हो रहा है। समानता के नाम पर संस्कृति, विविधता और समृद्धि की समन्वयता पर योजनाबद्ध तरीके से हमले हो रहे हैं। बहुसंख्यकवाद का दृष्टिकोण जबरदस्ती थोपा जा रहा है। नव-उदारवादी आर्थिक नीतियों से भारत रूस के बाद दुनिया का दूसरा सबसे बड़ा असमान समाज हो गया है।

इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर इस हानिकारक घटनाक्रम पर चुप नहीं रह सकता। इसे राष्ट्रीय एकता, सांप्रदायिक सौहार्द तथा नव-उदारवाद की आर्थिक नीतियों के विरुद्ध प्रतिरोध की आवाज उठानी पड़ी और कर्मचारियों को एकजुट करना पड़ा। यह बिना किसी डर के ऐसा कर रहा है। आज की सरकार को यह पसंद नहीं है। यह इस तथ्य से यह ज्ञात होता है कि एल.आई.सी. ने इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर के लिये एक विज्ञापन देना अचानक बंद कर दिया जोकि वह इस पत्रिका को प्रारम्भ से देता आ रहा था। लगातार पूछने के बाद भी इस विज्ञापन को बंद करने के कारण नहीं बताये गये। स्पष्ट रूप से यह राजनीतिक बदले की कार्यवाही थी लेकिन इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर को परेशान नहीं किया जा सकता। इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर के लिये विज्ञापन के धन का कोई मुद्दा नहीं है। इसे अपने संस्थान के प्रति गहरा लगाव है और यह उसके हितों को आगे बढ़ाने के लिये काम करता रहेगा तथा नव-उदारवाद के कपटपूर्ण हमलों से अपने संस्थान की रक्षा करने के लिये केवल बीमाकर्मियों को ही नहीं बल्कि भारतीय समाज के सभी प्रगतिशील वर्गों को एकजुट करने के लिये सभी प्रकार के प्रयास करता रहेगा।

इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर की सफल यात्रा पाठकों के समर्थन व संरक्षण के बिना संभव नहीं हो सकती थी जिनमें केवल बीमा उद्योग में काम करने वाले लोग ही नहीं वरन अन्य ट्रेड-यूनियनों के विभिन्न वर्गों के लोग, विशिष्ट नागरिक व प्रबुद्ध वर्ग के लोग भी शामिल हैं। इस पत्रिका को नियमित चंदा देने वालों की संख्या अब 30 हजार के पार चली गई है। हमें पूरा यकीन है कि पाठकों की संख्या इस अंक से भी ज्यादा होगी। इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर उन सभी को धन्यवाद देता है जो इसकी सफलता में सहयोग करते हैं। इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर कार्यकर्ताओं के उस समर्पित दल के प्रति आभार प्रकट करता है जो मुख्य रूप से इसकी सफलता के लिये जिम्मेदार रहे हैं। पत्रिका की हीरक जंयती के अवसर पर इन्श्योरेन्स वर्कर प्यार, भाईचारा, सद्भावना व मजदूर वर्ग की एकता का संदेश फैलाने के लिये अपने को प्रतिबद्ध करता है। यह पत्रिका निष्पक्ष, न्यायोचित व बराबरी के समाज के लिये अपना अभियान जारी रखेगी।



AIIEA Submits Charter of Demands to LIC and GIPSA managements

AIIEA submitted the Charter of Demands for revision of wages and improvements in other service conditions to the managements of both GIPSA and LIC on 2nd August 2017. A delegation of AIIEA consisting of Comrades Amanulla Khan, President; V.Ramesh, General Secretary; K.V.V.S.N. Raju, Vice President and Sanjay Jha, Secretary (Standing Committee), General Insurance submitted the Charter of Demands to the Chairman GIPSA and CMD of New India Assurance Co Ltd., Sri G. Sreenivasan at Mumbai on 2nd August 2017. The delegation of AIIEA demanded a wage revision of 40% effective from 01 August 2017 and substantial improvements in the amenities and non-monetary benefits for the employees. The Chairman GIPSA appreciated the rationale behind AIIEA's demand for 40% wage revision and sought AIIEA's help in successfully meeting the challenges before public sector general insurance industry.

In the afternoon, the AIIEA delegation consisting of Comrades Amanulla Khan, V. Ramesh, H.I.Bhatt (Joint Secretary, AIIEA), Shreekanth Mishra (Joint Secretary, AIIEA) and V.S. Nalwade (Vice President, AIIEA) met the Chairman, LIC and submitted the Charter of Demands for LIC. Along with Sri V.K.Sharma, Chairman LIC, Sri Hemant Bhargava, Managing Director; Sri Sharad Srivastava, ED (Personnel); Chief (Personnel) and other officials of personnel department were present in the meeting. The AIIEA delegation placed a demand for 40% wage rise effective from 01 August 2017 with hundred percent merger of the D.A. as on that date and appropriate loading on this to frame the new scales of pay.

The delegation made it absolutely clear that wage revision in LIC should be based on the strength and paying capacity of the institution and it should commensurate with the hopes and aspirations of the employees. The AIIEA delegation demanded that there should be substantial increase in all allowances payable to the employees and due attention be given to improvement of retiral benefits.

While explaining the rationale behind our demand for a 40% wage hike, the AIIEA delegation emphasised on the need to bring about certain improvements in the LIC Pension Scheme 1995. The delegation demanded that 100% D.A. neutralisation be given to all pensioners and family pensioners irrespective of the date of retirement, family pension should be increased on the basis of improvements in Central Government and RBI, that pension should be revised upwards with every wage revision. The demand for one more option to join the 1995 Pension Scheme was also reiterated. The delegation pointed out to the Chairman that this issue is pending for a very long time and need to be vigorously pursued on the strength of a very strong financial performance by the Corporation.

The AIIEA informed the Chairman that the Charter contains some non-monetary demands. These demands can be met without waiting for the completion of the process of wage negotiations. The delegation referred to the long pending demand for improvement in the Promotion Policy. Our demand for elimination of subjective factors, interview and openness of the Confidential Reports were reiterated. We demanded reduction in

the eligibility years for promotion to the post of Record Clerk. It was also pointed out that some provisions of the Staff Regulations had become quite archaic and out of sync with the present-day realities. The delegation therefore demanded that there was a need to revisit some provisions of the Staff Regulations and these had to be recast in the line of the changes made to the Service Rules of central government employees. The AIIEA also raised the issue of Industrial Democracy and pointed out that denial of the basic democratic right of recognition to the majority union was unacceptable in a public sector organisation like LIC.

Responding on behalf of the management, the Chairman appreciated AIIEA's justification of the demand for a forty per cent wage rise and noted the positive contribution of the employees in furtherance of LIC's interests in a competitive scenario. He said that the decline in number of policies being experienced in recent years was a cause of anxiety and had to be arrested. He sought AIIEA's co-operation in taking this message forward and sensitising the employees on the role and significance of number of policies.

The AIIEA took this opportunity to reiterate the demand that all that had been committed by the management during the last round of wage negotiations but had not yet materialised till now should be redeemed without further delay. Particular emphasis was given to the issue of 5 Day Week and One more option for Pension. The issues pertaining to residual Part Time employees, CGIT, Ex-gratia in lieu of Bonus were also discussed. The management assured to pursue these issues with the government without any let up.

The submission of the Charter before the

LIC management was preceded by a massive employees' meeting in front of Yogakshema building of Central Office. Hundreds of employees of Mumbai centre and offices adjacent to Mumbai attended the meeting. Remarkably, a large number of employees from Thane and places as far as Nashik, Pune, Satara, and other centres had come to participate in the Gate Meeting. Com. H.I.Bhatt, Joint Secretary AIIEA and General Secretary WZIEA conducted the proceedings and Com. Amanulla Khan, Com. V.Ramesh and Com. Shreekant Mishra addressed the gathering.

Comrades, with the submission of the Charter to the managements of LIC and GIPSA, one phase of the struggle is over. This phase of the struggle that is, framing of the Charter of Demands was a relatively easier phase. The real struggle will start now. Neither the strength of our arguments nor the performance of public sector insurance industry alone is sufficient to fetch us a wage revision in the manner we have framed our demands. In a class divided society like ours, the rulers will constantly try to belittle our performances and downplay our contributions to deny us a legitimate share in what is legitimately due to us. Our struggle for Charter of Demands has to contend with the government policies on labour and wages, which unfortunately remain very hostile. The Working Committee of AIIEA at Surat made a critical analysis of the political and economic situation to conclude that despite the genuineness of our demands, it would require a long and protracted battle to win them over. Therefore, insurance employees have to remain prepared for such a struggle to secure their just demands.



Final option on Pension : Committee on Subordinate Legislation on RBI Pension Scheme

The AIIEA has been vigorously pursuing the issue of a final pension option. The letter of AIIEA dated 16.8.2017 addressed to Chairman LIC is reproduced. The same is self-explanatory.

"Please recall the discussions we had with you on 2nd August 2017 while submitting our Charter of Demands. When we requested you to immediately settle the issue of Final Option on Pension to join the LIC Employees Pension Scheme 1995, you informed us that the government has written to LIC that its recommendation for such an option is regretted. We said that this position is unacceptable as the demand is absolutely genuine and gave the following arguments to back our demand:

1. The Pension Scheme was notified on 28/6/1995 and the employees were asked to exercise the option to join within 120 days.
2. The second option was given to join the scheme within just 18 months between May to mid-August 1997.
3. Even after the second option a small number of employees did not exercise the option.
4. They did not exercise the option in view of the fact that between 28/6/1995 and May 1997, there was no change in the interest regime nor were there any improvements in the pension scheme.
5. But after the wage revision effective from 1.8.1997 which was notified on 22.6.2010, many improvements have come about in the pension scheme. Prominent are:
 - (a) 100 percent D.A neutralisation
 - (b) inclusion of dependent parents as eligible to receive family pension
 - (c) inclusion of dependent widowed/ divorced daughter as eligible to receive family pension and
 - (d) improvement in the family pension
6. The principle of natural justice demands that employees should be given an option to join the scheme after taking into account the improvements brought about.
7. In the RBI options were given four times whenever improvements were made in the pension scheme.
8. In the Banking industry the second option was given in 2010 after the improvements

in Pension Scheme came about and this helped the employees take a considered decision.

We requested you to take up this issue with the government in the light of the above compelling facts as also on the basis of the fantastic financial performance recorded by LIC. We are happy that you assured to take up this issue at the highest level in the government and you also agreed that considering the small percentage of employees who desire a pension option, the cost involved is not substantial and can be absorbed by LIC. In fact the letter of LIC to the government written on July 4, 2014 makes strong recommendation for giving a final option to employees to join the pension scheme 1995.

We are happy to inform you of a new development on the issue of Pension. The RBI had recommended to the government to give a final option for the 5th time to its employees. We understand that the government is yet to act on this recommendation. In the meantime, The Committee on Subordinate Legislation of Parliament under the chairmanship of Shri Dilipkumar Mansukhlal Gandhi comprising of 15 Members of Parliament studied THE RBI PENSION REGULATIONS 1990 and submitted its Report to the Lok Sabha on 10th August 2017. This committee after a detailed examination of the RBI Pension Regulations and after hearing both the RBI and the Finance Ministry officials has unanimously recommended that RBI should be allowed to give another Pension Option to its employees who could not exercise the options on the earlier four occasions.

This recommendation of the Committee on Sub-ordinate Legislation of Parliament clearly strengthens the case of LIC to seek immediate approval of the government to give a final option on pension to the employees to join the LIC Employees Pension Scheme 1995.

We trust and hope that you will move speedily to resolve this long pending demand.'



JOINT ACTION BY TRADE UNIONS

THE joint national convention of central trade unions and independent industrial federations held at Delhi on August 8, 2017 chalked out a programme of joint campaign and struggles against the anti-worker and anti-people policies and the growing authoritarian tendencies of the Modi led BJP government at the centre.

The national convention unanimously decided to organise a massive three days' 'padav' (dharna) near parliament from November 9-11. It called upon the working class of the country to prepare itself for country wide indefinite general strike in the future. The 'padav' will be preceded by extensive joint campaign through state, district, block, industrial centre, factory level joint conventions.

The huge participation of workers from all over the country – from far off Tamil Nadu and Kerala in the south to the strife torn state like Jammu and Kashmir in the north, from all sectors, organised and unorganised, public and private – shows the determination of the working class of the country to fight against the attacks on their livelihoods and working conditions by the BJP led government wedded to the neo-liberal agenda. The Talkatora Stadium was overflowing with workers standing on the floor and standing packed in the passages. Despite this, almost half the workers had to remain outside the hall.

The joint convention was organised by all the central trade unions and almost all the

independent national federations of different sections of employees, except the BMS which has opted out of joint struggles since the BJP came to power at the centre. In addition to INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, SEWA, AICCTU, UTUC and LPF, the independent national federations and unions of employees in the central government, state government, insurance, banks, defence, railways, BSNL, electricity, coal, steel, energy, petroleum, road transport, air transport, water transport, port and dock, mining, IT, PSUs etc participated in the convention.

The convention strongly condemned the authoritarian measure of the government depriving the INTUC representation in the tripartite and bipartite forums and committees including in the international forums. It denounced the measure as a heinous onslaught on the rights of the entire trade union movement. It declared that the trade union movement in the country will not take it lying down. It pledged to fight it back with all its might.

The declaration placed by G Sanjeeva Reddy, president of INTUC was unanimously adopted by the convention amidst thunderous slogans after representatives of the ten central trade unions spoke in support of it. The AIIEA was represented by Com Anil, Bhatnagar, Vice-President and Com Naveen Chand, Joint Secretary. A large number of cadres belonging to AIIEA participated in the National Convention. ●

LIC - Sixtyone Years of Service & Challenges

V. Ramesh



LIC has a very purposeful existence and it has the enormous goodwill of the people of the country. It has a committed workforce in all cadres and this will put it in good stead in facing the future challenges and onslaughts of the neoliberal agenda.

The cadres of AIIEA will continue to protect the light that illuminated millions of lives across the country for the last 61 years.

Life Insurance Corporation of India completes 61 years of glorious and purposeful existence on 1st September, 2017. LIC was formed to mobilise peoples savings and provide them complete security and efficient service. The LIC has been performing a glorious part in the nation building exercise.

With 8 Zonal offices, 113 Divisional Offices, 1, 15,394 employees and 11, 31, 181 agents- LIC is a huge organisation with omnibus presence across the length and breadth of the country. With a total premium income of Rs 3, 00,196 crores and total income of Rs 4,92,626 crores (for the Financial Year 2016-17) and with assets over Rs 25, 72,000 crores – the financial strength of LIC has no match. The total life fund of LIC is over and above Rs 23 lakh crores. The settlement of 98.34% of maturity claims and 99.63% of death claims reveal the excellent service performance of LIC.

In the year 2016-17, LIC achieved its First premium target in the month of February itself and secured TFPI of Rs 37859.87 crores with a growth rate of 47.07%. There is 27% growth rate in composite first premium income. Seventeen years after the opening of the insurance industry for private sector, LIC is still the market leader with a market share of 71.07% in premium income and 76.09% market share in policies. LIC has generated an investible surplus of Rs 3, 61,564 crore during 2016-17. LIC got 7.65% of average annualised yield on its investments of RS 2.60 lakh crores in State and Central Govt securities. Rs 41751 crores were invested in equities and Rs 19302.46 crores of profit was secured by the sale of investments in equities. As a

result of this increased income, a reversionary bonus of Rs 47387.44 crores is declared to the policyholders which was 34207.58 crores last year. In the same way there is increase in the dividend given to Govt of India from 1800 crores last year to 2494 crores this year. LIC is able to maintain its solvency ratio of 154.65% as against the statutorily required 150%.

As part of Corporate Social responsibility, LIC established Golden Jubilee Foundation Trust in the year 2006. The aim of the trust is to give relief to poor and distressed people. From this trust, funds are allocated for activities pertaining to educational advancement, medical relief and other objects of utility to the general public. Funds were provided for construction of school buildings, hospitals, libraries, old age homes, hostel buildings etc. As on 31.03.2017, Rs 88.06 crores were given to various projects numbering around 398.

What makes LIC so successful? When insurance industry was opened for private sector, many believed that the growth of LIC will decline and its market share will fall like the way it happened in Banking, Telecom and other sectors. Even in other countries wherever insurance industry was opened like in the South Asian countries, the public sector insurance crumbled to the onslaught of the private players. What is so special of LIC that its records in new business, generation of surplus and settlements of claims soared high even in the midst of stiff competition? It is the commitment of Officers, employees, Development Officers and agents that makes LIC a wonderful organisation. As Prof Noel Machado put it '**employees just don't work in LIC, they just live in LIC**' and it

is this passion and love for the organisation that makes LIC a great organisation. It is acknowledged that AIIEA played a great role in creating that kind of consciousness.

After the formation of LIC in 1956 by amalgamating 245 private insurance companies, the Corporation took over 21000 employees in the clerical and supervisory cadres. Employees came from different companies and they were united under the banner of All India Insurance Employees Association. But their service conditions and pay scales were different and there were as many as 110 provident fund accounts each with a different set of rules. So the major challenge was to integrate employees as LIC employees and this can be possible only if there is uniformity in service conditions of all employees. All India Insurance Employees' Association demanded standardisation of wages and uniformity in service condition for all employees. AIIEA gave a call for the first ever strike on 5th December 1956 and the strike was a huge success. Later the Govt issued standardisation order on 1st June 1957 and this paved the way for integration of LIC employees under the leadership of AIIEA. In 1957, the Mundra scandal rocked LIC and there were allegations against the LIC's purchase of shares from troubled companies of Sri Harilal Mundhra. Parliament discussed this issue and MC Chagla committee was appointed to look into the allegations. The committee gave its report in 1958 and Finance Minister and top LIC officials resigned after the report was made public. Some vested interests tried to exploit the situation and campaigned against the idea of nationalisation itself. One of the important recommendations of the Chagla committee was to apply the provisions of Section 27A of the Insurance Act 1938 and as a result in August 1958 Section 27 A of the Insurance Act 1938 as amended was made applicable to LIC. The idea was to see that the funds of the Corporation should only be used for the benefit of policyholders and nation building and not for any extraneous purposes. LIC weathered this storm and today no one remembers Mundhra affair and in last 61 years LIC has earned a name for itself as non-corrupt organisation in the country and its employees are known for their honest and integrity.

In the use of technology LIC was always a step ahead of other organisations. From the unit record systems to the present day

advanced IT initiatives, LIC was the leader in the use of technology and this helped in the serving the policyholders and in managing the ever increasing scale of business operations. AIIEA welcomed the new technological initiatives in LIC whenever they were helpful for the growth of the organisation and not impacted employment opportunities. AIIEA was always in tune with times. Technology which threatens existing jobs and cuts down future employment opportunities is not acceptable to AIIEA. It is with this philosophy AIIEA struggled against automation in 1960s and successfully thwarted the attempts of the Management to install computer at Kolkata. It was historical struggle and protected the employment opportunities of the future generations. AIIEA which opposed automation agreed to FEAP installation programmes and further up gradation of technology keeping in view the changing times. AIIEA with its campaign and struggle could stall the privatisation moves of the Govt for almost for a decade in 90s. These ten years were helpful for LIC in consolidating itself technologically and when insurance sector was opened up LIC was ready to face the competition of private players. While allowing technology and other changes, AIIEA was successful in convincing the LICV management to set aside the recommendations of Booz Allen Hamilton which recommended for elimination of 45000 jobs in LIC. Due to the initiative of AIIEA, LIC adopted a development model which absorbed technology and the existing jobs also. It is the vision of AIIEA that protected the jobs and at the same time empowered LIC with new technology.

By the time LIC completed two decades in 1976, the annual volume of new business increased to eight-fold and it was operating from around 800 offices. LIC acquired national character and has become a premium financial institution of the country. LIC was expanding and was making difference to the economic well-being of the country through its investments mobilised from the people of the country. It was in this background the Govt appointed Era Sezhiyan committee in 1979 to study the working of LIC. The committee recommended for the splitting of LIC into five or more independent Corporations. Govt accepted this recommendations and the stage was set for the split of LIC. Here again it is the struggles of AIIEA which protected the monolithic character

of LIC and today when we celebrate the 6 decades of LIC, we have to remember that it is the campaign of the cadres of AIIEA and the intellectual acumen of the leadership of AIIEA that saved LIC from breaking into five or more small corporations.

With the advent of neoliberal policies, the Govt appointed a committee headed by R.N.Malhotra in 1993 which recommended for the opening up of insurance industry for foreign and Indian insurance companies. It also recommended for the privatisation of LIC by raising its capital to 200 crores and selling 50% of the increased equity to the public. AIIEA opposed the Malhotra committee recommendations and gave call sustained struggle. It is this gigantic struggle that has ensured that LIC still remains a 100 percent government holding corporation.

It is now 17 years that the insurance sector was opened up. But the dominance of LIC continues despite adverse policies of both the government and the regulator. There are continuous attempts to weaken the public sector insurance industry. The Government decision to sell the shares of the four public sector general insurance companies is condemnable. It also makes it clear that LIC would also face the threat of government policies of privatisation. We have to be vigilant and should continue our struggle along with excellent service to the policyholders and campaign among the people.

For the last 61 years LIC served the nation and its people. Today it stands as a colossus in the financial firmament of the country. In a most unhealthy economic environment and a prejudiced regulatory regime, LIC has to maintain its growth, protect its market share and meet the ever increasing customer expectations. LIC has a very purposeful existence and it has the enormous goodwill of the people of the country. LIC serves the largest number of policies in the world and has highest number of committed and active agents. LIC has committed workforce in all cadres and this will put it in good stead in facing the future challenges and onslaughts of the neoliberal agenda. The cadres of AIIEA will continue to protect the light that illuminated millions of lives across the country for the last 61 years. It is a commitment that AIIEA gives to the nation on the occasion of the 62nd foundation day of LIC.



The GIC: Re filed its draft red herring prospectus to the SEBI on August 7, 2017 for public listing. The New India Assurance Co. Ltd. followed suit on August 9, 2017. The public offer will result in dilution of 14.22% and 14.56% stake of the Government in the post issue share capital of the GIC:Re and the New India respectively. As declared by both the companies, the net proceeds on issue of fresh shares would be utilized for meeting the capital needs of the companies during expansion of their businesses and augmenting the solvency margin. Another objective for filing for listing, as declared in the prospectus is enhancement of the brand value of these companies. Above all, the proceeds on the sale of shares of the Government would be retained by the Government itself.

A closer look at the Financial position of the GIC:Re and The New India would make it clear that capital infusion as the reason being put forward by these companies for listing in the stock market, is unconvincing, to say the least. For instance, The New India with a net worth (including fair value of investments) of Rs. 34,716 crore, Asset base of Rs.69173 crore and a solvency margin of 2.16 is well placed to meet any future capital requirement from its own resources. The solvency margin for GIC-Re is even more at 3.46. As far as building of brand value is concerned, it is our experience that it has no connection with listing in the Stock Market. The brightest example of the same is LIC of India. Further, it would be worth mentioning here that the National Insurance Company Limited, a PSGI Company, issued subordinated debt bonds to improve its solvency margin which was 1.26. As per the market reports, the response of the investors was overwhelming. Such is the brand image of any PSGI Company that it can attract a large number of investors even if it needs debt to strengthen its financial position. Hence, it is evident that the afore stated reasons, being put forth by the companies, are being used to distract us from the fact that the Government is withdrawing itself from few more marvelously performing public sector companies and making space for the entry of private capital in these companies. Moreover, this is just a beginning, as other three PSGI Companies viz. National Insurance, United India Insurance and Oriental Insurance are also gearing themselves up to hit the market.

It is common knowledge that in January,

Challenges before PSGI Industry & Our Task



आपत्काले रक्षिष्यामि

● Sanjay Jha



The AIIEA is committed towards strengthening of PSGI Companies. Hence, even a minute dilution of the Public Sector Character is not acceptable to us. This is not a mere rhetoric based on some ideology only. This stand of ours is based on strong economic considerations keeping in mind the betterment of the majority of the people.

2017, the Central cabinet had already approved dilution of its stake by 25% in the PSGI Companies. Subsequently, the Central budget for the year 2017-18 set a target of collecting Rs. 72500 Crore through disinvestment and outright sale of Public Sector Enterprises in order to keep the Fiscal Deficit at 3.2% of the GDP. The government set a target of raising Rs.11000 crore through disinvestment of shares in the PSGI companies and GIC-Re. This is also evident that the present Government, with its avowed objective of working as a facilitator for the private big corporate, will have a clear agenda to weaken the Public Sector Units, which work as bulwark against the predatory movement of the private capital. To achieve this objective, billions are foregone in the name of tax incentives to big corporates and then the fiscal deficit is controlled by curtailing the allocations on the welfare schemes and selling off the shares of Public sector Undertakings. The same exercise is being undertaken now by involving the PSGI Companies. However, the PSGI Companies are not alone in their scheme of things. The Niti Aayog has already listed out 74 PSUs for disinvestment.

The AIIEA is committed towards strengthening of PSGI Companies. Hence, even a minute dilution of the Public Sector Character is not acceptable to us. This is not a mere rhetoric based on some ideology only. This stand of ours is based on strong economic considerations keeping in mind the betterment of the majority of the people. The

PSGI Companies were formed to fulfill three specific objectives viz. 1) To make general insurance services available to the vast majority of the people, 2) To give insurance facilities at an affordable price and 3) To introduce professionalism in the market. If we look into the 46 years' performance of the PSGI Companies, we can rightly claim that these companies have done exceedingly well on all the three parameters stated above. With their approximately 8500 offices spread over 608 districts of the country, these Insurance Companies have their offices in tier IV cities also. They have been in the forefront, when it comes to the implementation of welfare schemes of the Government. The latest instances are PMSBY and PMFBY. The four PSGI Companies are way ahead of others in making these two schemes successful. It is pertinent to mention that the overwhelming number of policies under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana are being underwriting by the public sector companies. The annual premium of Rs.12 is not sufficient to meet the cost of the claims. The claim experience is more than 170 percent. This means that for every 100 rupee of premium, the companies are paying claims worth Rs.170/-. The government is not underwriting this loss. Despite meeting the social obligations as their prime functions, these PSGI Companies have not compromised on professionalism. This is why, even after facing competition (sometimes unethical) from a number of Private Insurers, the PSGI Companies are still holding 52% of market

share with the four PSGI Companies placed at first four positions till the Financial year 2016-17. The above facts are sufficient to drive home, why AIIEA stands for strong PSGI Companies. Also, from our experience with disinvestment in other sectors we apprehend that even a minute infusion of private capital would result into shifting of the accountability of these companies from policyholders and common people to the private shareholders, whose sole motive would be to maximize their profits. This is not acceptable to us. Hence, we are against the efforts being made by the Companies for listing in the Stock Market.

AIIEA has successfully fought against privatization of Public Sector General Insurance Companies for more than 23 years. We have already been campaigning against the efforts

of disinvestment through mass campaigns, conventions etc. We have also forged a broader unity among other Associations of Employees and Officers in the industry. After the first phase of the joint struggle programme, the next phase is going to commence from August 22, 2017. The campaign has to gain greater momentum. It must focus not just on mobilizing employees to fight these disastrous policies but also to win the support of all progressive sections of the Indian population in favour of our struggle. The AIIEA, as always would play an active and leading role in the struggle. We know that challenge before us is enormous. But we believe, we can overcome.

(Com Sanjay Jha is the Secretary, Standing Committee GI & Joint Secretary, AIIEA)

SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN AGAINST GST ON INSURANCE PREMIUM SCINTILLATING PERFORMANCE

The decision of the AIIEA Working Committee to mobilize the policyholders and general public against imposition of GST on insurance premium has evoked massive response across the country. The SZIEF stands out with a magnificent performance. According to the information received, so far more than 10 lakh signatures have been collected in South Zone. Thanjavur Division has done an excellent job by collecting over 2 lakh signatures. Madurai, Salem and Tiruvananthapuram Division would have crossed 1 lakh signatures by the time this issue goes to the press. All other divisions of South Zone are expected to collect the targeted 1 lakh signatures before 31st August 2017.

The signature collection momentum has picked up in the South Central Zone. There are enthusiastic reports from across the country. Insurance Worker will bring out a detailed report with photographs in the October issue on this program. However, some details of the campaign carried out by the Tamilnadu and Kerala Units is necessary to be mentioned to place on record the great done by the employees.

The units of SZIEF began the campaign by collecting signatures from eminent personalities spread across the zone. But this campaign also met with resistance

from the organizations owing allegiance to the BJP. In Vellore when our Comrades were collecting signatures at the DKM Arts College, those belonging to ABVP objected to it. In spite of their objection, our Comrades campaigned among the students and the staff and got signatures. In another incident at Veeravanallur, near Cheranmadhevi Branch (Tirunelveli Division) when a large number of our Women Comrades were collecting signatures among the public, the cadres of BJP objected to our campaign. They asked us to stop the campaign immediately. When our Comrades proceeded with the campaign in spite of their resistance, they even sought police intervention. But they could not succeed in both the places since public response to our campaign was overwhelming. The government has been spending much on the advertisements explaining that the GST would be beneficial to the masses. But they do not tolerate the movements like these which expose the burdens laden with the GST.

In many places Street Corner meetings involving our cadres and fraternal organizations were conducted. Pamphlets were distributed among the public utilizing these opportunities. The policyholders who are burdened with higher taxes have overwhelmingly in support of this campaign.

Peace, Prosperity & Protection for All

M Girija

Peace needs not only to be firmly established as being a desirable value and state of being, but also must be something that has an active tangible relationship and emotional bond with humankind. For this, the value and wider positive effects of peace must be instilled into each and every person. According to this year's International Peace Day theme, people should not only have the ability, but also the right to enjoy peace.



The International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21st September of every year. This day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly as a day devoted to strengthen the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and people. This day is celebrated to recognize the efforts of those who have worked hard to end conflicts and promote peace. To inaugurate the day, the United Nations Peace Bell is rung at UN Headquarters. The bell is cast from coins donated by children from all continents except Africa, and was a gift from the United Nations Association of Japan as "a reminder of the human cost of war". The inscription on its side reads, "Long live absolute world peace". The Day embodies our shared aspiration to end the needless suffering caused by armed conflict. Yet, there is more to achieve peace than laying down weapons. True, peace requires building bridges between the people, combating discrimination and standing up for the human rights of all the people of the world.

The theme for the International Day of Peace this year is: "Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All". The theme is focusing in particular on the plight of refugees and migrants throughout the world. While observing the day on this theme, it is our obligation to ensure that everyone who are forced to flee their homes in search of a better life receives the protection to which they are entitled to under the international law. It is our duty to replace fear with kindness.

World - Less Peaceful

The 10th Annual Global Peace Index (GPI) shows that we are now further away from world peace than at any time in the past 10 years and it is creating a global 'peace inequality gap'. The 2017 Global Peace Index shows that amidst continuing social and political turmoil, the world continues to spend enormous resources on creating and containing violence, but very little on peace. The index finds that globally the economic impact of violence on the economy is enormous. The world is becoming a more dangerous place and there are now just 10 countries which can be considered completely free from conflict. Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world, followed by New Zealand, Portugal, Austria and Denmark. Syria remains the least peaceful country in the world followed by Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan and Yemen. The worsening conflict in the Middle East, the lack of solution to the refugee crisis and an increase in the incidence of deaths from major terrorist attacks have all contributed to the world being less peaceful in 2016 than it was in 2015. The conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have been going on for well over a decade. Then it spilled into Syria in 2011, and afterwards into Libya and Yemen. If we take battlefield deaths, they are up at 1,12,000 – a 20 year high. And 75% of these deaths are in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. The 10 year trend in peacefulness finds that global peacefulness has deteriorated by 2.14% since

2008. According to GPI, 52% of countries have recorded deterioration, while 48% have improved. The global level of peacefulness deteriorated rapidly after the global financial crisis.

The largest regional deteriorations in the score occurred in North America, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. The score for North America deteriorated entirely as a result of the US, which more than offset a mild improvement in Canada. The score of US has been dragged down largely because of deterioration in several indicators, i.e., homicide rate, level of perceived criminality in society and the intensity of organized internal conflict. The latter measure has deteriorated because of the increased levels of political polarization within the US political system. Though Europe remains the most peaceful region in the world, the average peace score did not change notably due to the substantial deterioration in Turkey, the impact of the terrorist attacks in Belgium and France, etc.

Imperialist aggression in the world

The falling trend in the global peacefulness is a matter of concern for all peace loving people. At the same time, if we look at the things happening around the world, we fear that in GPI 2018, the world would become a still more dangerous place to live. War comes at a cost, not only in terms of the devastation and disruption it causes, but also the economic, social and political costs that accompany such wars. After Trump assumed the Presidency, the US launched military attacks on Syria on the pretext of use of chemical weapons by Syria. Already, the air-strikes of US under the watch of Donald Trump have killed innocent civilians at a much higher rate than under Obama, with horrifying numbers of people killed in Syria and Iraq. Three years after Obama officially declared US exit from Afghanistan, the US military dropped Americas powerful non-nuclear bomb – ‘the mother of all bombs on ISIS targets in Afghanistan. Trump is claiming that it was his call to end financial support to terrorist groups. And this has led to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt isolating Qatar by accusing that it is funding terrorist groups. But, the real reason is that Qatar is being punished for not toeing the US line on Iran. The victory of Trump has

emboldened the Israeli government. On the pretext of fighting terrorists, it has mounted air strikes on Syria. Israel is also building more colonies in Palestine. Recently, President of US has warned North Korea that the US military is “locked and loaded”. Trump has stated that it would be the best for North Korea not to make any more threats to the US. If not, then they will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen. US imperialism is also intensifying its attempts to regain its control over Latin America.

Communal offensive in India

While Bhutan (13th rank) is the most peaceful country in South Asia, India ranks 137th in Global Peace Index 2017. The victory of BJP in 2014 general elections for Lok Sabha and in some of the State Assembly elections has emboldened the rightwing outfits to pursue communal divisive agenda more violently with the active support of the administration at the Centre and in many States. In the recent period, the attacks on Dalits and minorities by the cow vigilante groups have increased in many States, particularly where the BJP government is in power. Despite sporadic protests across the nation, cow vigilantism is continuing unabated. The rise in violence against Muslims across the country by the so-called ‘gau rakshas is full of dire portent. The intolerance has increased which has resulted in ruining the peace of the nation. The rulers at the Centre, and in some States – especially the BJP run – instead of dousing the fire of hatred killings etc in the name of caste and religion, fuel it. If we want to ensure respect, safety and dignity to all the people living in India, then the religious fundamentalism – both majority and minority – needs to be contained. The people of the country should uphold the tradition of celebrating the idea of India – unity in diversity.

The failures on the economic front have no less contribution to the ills of the Indian society. Promises doled out by the PM on creation of jobs have been thrown to the four winds. It is the despondent and hapless youth that fall an easy prey to casteism and communalism of all hues. Let us not forget here that it is such disgruntled youth that are swayed by the racist movement even in the advanced countries in the West including US.

There have been a procession of hollow slogans in India like, “Ache Din”, “Swach

Bharat", "Smart cities", "Make in India", "Stand up India", "Start up India", "Digital India" – the latest being "New India". But no slogan ever came to be implemented seriously. The pent-up feelings of disappointment and despair would naturally lead to actions that dent the peace and tranquility of the Indian society.

Need of the hour

Peace needs not only to be firmly established as being a desirable value and state of being, but also must be something that has an active tangible relationship and emotional bond with humankind. For this, the value and wider positive effects of peace must be instilled into each and every person. According to this year's International Peace Day theme, people should

not only have the ability, but also the right to enjoy peace.

On this International Peace Day of 2017, let us remember that millions of vulnerable members of our society, many of whom have lost everything, need our understanding and assistance. Let us work out together about what we can do to help them. And let us redouble our efforts to address the root causes of conflict, advance our activities towards growth for all and heighten our emphasis on preventing violence in the first place. By opening our hearts, joining our hands and reaching out to refugees and migrants, let us move closer to attaining peace, prosperity and protection for all. ■

'Dissent is Not Treason... It is the Essence of Democracy' Military Veterans to Modi

A group of 114 veterans of the Indian Armed Forces have written an open letter to the prime minister, chief ministers of states and lieutenant-governors of union territories, expressing their distress at "divisive" recent developments in the country which "go against the secular and democratic values enshrined in the constitution". The letter is reproduced below. Some of the signatories include Maj Gen Dipankar Banerjee, Lt Gen C A Barretto, Col T S Bedi, Maj Gen P R Bose, Vice Adm A Britto, Lt Gen F T Dias, Maj Gen Shyamal Ghosh, Col V Govindarajan, Brig Prem Hejmadi, Maj Gen MPS Kandal, Lt Gen Vijay Oberoi, Admiral L Ramdas, Air Marshal D S Sabhikhi, Lt Gen Y N Sharma, Maj Gen L Tahlani, Air Marshal N V Tyagi

WE are a group of veterans of the Indian Armed Forces who have spent our careers working for the security of our country. Collectively, our group holds no affiliation with any single political party, our only common commitment being to the constitution of India.

It saddens us to write this letter, but current events in India have compelled us to register our dismay at the divisiveness that is gripping our country. We stand with the 'Not in My Name' campaign that mobilised thousands of citizens across the country to protest against the current climate of fear, intimidation, hate and suspicion.

The armed forces stand for "unity in diversity". Differences in religion, language, caste, culture or any other marker of belonging have not mattered to the cohesion of the armed forces, and servicemen of different backgrounds have fought shoulder to shoulder in the defence of our nation, as they continue to do today. Throughout our service, a sense of openness, justice and fair play guided our actions. We are one family. Our heritage is like

the multi-coloured quilt that is India, and we cherish this vibrant diversity.

However, what is happening in our country today strikes at all that the armed forces, and indeed our constitution, stand for. We are witness to unprecedented attacks on society at large by the relentless vigilantism of self-appointed protectors of Hinduism. We condemn the targeting of Muslims and Dalits. We condemn the clampdowns on free speech by attacks on media outlets, civil society groups, universities, journalists and scholars, through a campaign of branding them anti-national and unleashing violence against them while the state looks away.

We can no longer look away. We would be doing a disservice to our country if we do not stand up and speak for the liberal and secular values that our constitution espouses. Our diversity is our greatest strength. Dissent is not treason; in fact, it is the essence of democracy.

We urge the powers that be at the centre and in the states to take note of our concerns and urgently act to uphold our constitution, both in letter and in spirit.

विदेशी राजनयन किसका चमन

रामचन्द्र शर्मा



What the 56 (so far) foreign jaunts of our Prime Minister has achieved for the country? Giving up the time-tested foreign policy of non-alignment that brought international prestige to India, and aligning with the imperialist forces to the extent of becoming their camp-follower and alienating our neighbours!

मोदी की 65 विदेश यात्राओं का हासिल क्या है? जारी संसद सत्र में दिनांक 3 अगस्त 2017 को राज्यसभा में विपक्ष ने सरकार को यह पूछ लिया। 56 इंची सीने वाली सरकार और जिसको-तिसको सबक सिखाने की गोदी मीडियाई खबरों का सच क्या है, यह पूछ लिया। सांसदों ने यह भी पूछा कि प्रधानमंत्री के इतने विदेशी दौरे परन्तु वापसी के बाद प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा संसद में एक की भी रिपोर्ट पढ़ नहीं करना, क्या संसद की महत्ता और संसदीय लोकतंत्र का हास नहीं है? सरकार के दोहरे बोलों का कमाल देखिये। सवालों से चैतरफा घिरी सरकार की ओर से विदेश मंत्री सुषमा स्वराज ने जवाब देते हुए एकतरफ तो यह कहा कि युद्ध से नहीं, बातचीत और कुटनीति से सुलझायेंगे डोकलाम विवाद। वहीं भारत की कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी (मार्क्सवादी) के महासचिव कामरेड सीताराम येचूरी के द्वारा भारत को अमेरिका के जूनियर पार्टनर बनने के बयान पर दूसरे ही पल में वह प्रधानमंत्री मोदी की खुशामद में यह भी कह जाती हैं कि मोदी में ही डोनाल्ड ट्रंप से टकराने का है माद्दा। जबकि हकीकत यह है कि जब प्रधानमंत्री मोदी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप से मिलने अमेरिका जा रहे थे, तब उनका गोदी मीडिया बड़े जोरशोर से ये उठा रहे थे कि पेरिस समझौते से अमेरिका के पीछे हटने और एच1बी1 वीजा पर प्रभावी बात करेंगे परन्तु ट्रंप के साथ हुई वार्ता में मोदी ने एक बार भी कहीं इनका जिक्र तक नहीं किया।

प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के विदेशी दौरों की गोदी मीडिया में धूम ही धूम। चौथी-पांचवी बार अमेरिकी यात्रा। फ्रंट लेडी मेलानिया से गर्मजोषी पूर्ण हाथ मिलाई। सच्चे मित्र डोनाल्ड ट्रंप से गलबहियां कर पायी शाबासी की थपकियां और व्हाईट हाउस में दावत। संयुक्त बयान में आंतकवाद पर कड़ा प्रहार। 100 हवाई जहाज और 22 ड्रोनों की खरीददारी की कीमत चुकाई के बाद कारोबारियों के साथ इवांका और ट्रंप परिवार को भारत दर्शन का आमंत्रण। न एच.1बी.1 वीजा पर बात न पेरिस जलवायु समझौते से पीछे हटे ट्रंप से कोई शिकायत। गलबहियां और बी.1

‘सच्चे मित्र’ के विश्लेषण से आगे और चाहिए भी क्या भला? सच्चे मित्र से गले मिलने की सुर्खियां बनी हुई थी कि एक और सुर्खी दूसरे नेचुरल मित्र नीदरलैंड के प्रधानमंत्री मार्क रूट से मिलने की उभर आई। नीदरलैंड के एक सप्ताह बाद सदियों पुराने फिलस्तीनी संबंधों को तिलांजली दे जा पहुंचे एक और असली मित्र नेतन्याहू से मिलने इजराइल के तेल अवीव।

विदेशी दौरे और प्रचार की भूख, दोनों ही ऐसी चीजें हैं जो ‘बीमारी बढ़ती गई, ज्यों ज्यों दवा की’ भांति बढ़ती ही जा रही हैं। नरेन्द्र मोदी की अब तक 56 देशों की विदेशी यात्राओं का हासिल क्या है? दूर देशों की बात तो छोड़ो, आज हमारा एक भी पड़ोसी ऐसा नहीं है जो हमसे स्नेह रखता हो। क्या बड़बोलापन इसकी जड़ में है? संबंध हेकड़ी से नहीं, सद्भावपूर्ण पारस्परिकता से बनते हैं। कारोबारी संबंधों की एक सीमा है। बड़बोलेपन की सुपरस्टार मोदी सरकार ट्रंप के गले क्या मिले, उनके वित्तमंत्री अरूण जेटली ने तैस में आकर कह दिया कि चीन भारत को 1962 का भारत नहीं समझे। जवाब में चीन ने भी कह दिया कि भारत भी चीन को 1962 वाला चीन न समझे। बात भी सही है कि आज दुनिया में एक-आध देश को छोड़कर कोई भी 55 वर्ष पीछे की स्थिति में नहीं है और भारत भी कोई 3 साल में बदल गया है, ऐसा भी नहीं है। लेकिन फटीगुदड़ी की सोच लिये संघी सरकार को प्रगतिशीलता नजर आती ही कहां है? अगर दिखती होती तो गुटनिरपेक्ष आंदोलन में हमारी बनी विश्वनेता की छवि को तोड़कर प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी अपना अगला दौरा इजराइल का क्यों करते? होने को फिर वही हथियारों का सौदा और अपने जरखरीद पीहू मीडिया के सहारे एक और ‘असली दोस्त’ का प्रचार। अब ये मत पूछिये ऐसे सच्चे, नेचुरल और असली मित्र और कितने हैं। अगर गिनाने लगे तो मेमोरी कार्ड और प्रिन्टर भार नहीं झेल पायेंगे। इसलिए मित्रों की बात छोड़ हम मीडिया की कही बातों की ही थोड़ी खबर लें कि वे हमारे प्रधानमंत्री के अमेरिकी दौरे को किस नजर से देखते हैं।

न्यूयार्क टाइम्स अखबार ने एक आला अधिकारी के हवाले से लिखा है कि दोनों नेताओं की आत्मीयता चीनी राष्ट्रपति शी जिनपिंग को दिखाने के लिए थी। क्योंकि ट्रंप चीन से काफी नाराज है। उत्तर कोरिया के मिसाइल कार्यक्रम को रोकने में वे विफल रहे हैं। ट्रंप सरकार भारत को 22 ड्रोन बेच रही है। इसका इस्तेमाल भारत हिंद महासागर में चीन की जासूसी करने में कर सकता है। उधर, चीन के प्रति भारत का संदेह गहरा है। शी जिनपिंग के महत्वाकांक्षी प्रोजेक्ट ओ.बी.ओ.आर. पर भारत को कई आपत्तियां हैं। ऐसे में मोदी चीन से होड़ के लिए ट्रंप की तरफदारी चाहते हैं।

वहीं ग्लोबल टाइम्स अखबार ने अमेरिकी थिंकटैंक अटलांटिक काउंसिल के दस्तावेज के हवाले से लिखा है कि 'बीजिंग का बढ़ता प्रभाव रोकने के लिए वॉशिंगटन को नई दिल्ली की जरूरत होगी। इसमें भारत के लिए गर्व करने लायक कुछ भी नहीं है। अखबार ने आगे लिखा है कि अमेरिका और भारत, चीन के उदय पर चिंता साझा करते हैं। अमेरिका ने चीन पर दबाव डालने के लिए भारत से दोस्ती बढ़ाई है। चीन को घेरने की अमेरिकी रणनीति का हिस्सा बनना भारत के हित में नहीं है। इसके विनाशकारी परिणाम भी हो सकते हैं। अखबार ने लिखा कि चीन के साथ मजबूती से खड़े रहना भारत के लिए मददगार होगा।'

वॉशिंगटन पोस्ट ने लिखा कि पत्रकारों को मुलकात से पहले ही बता दिया गया था कि कोई भी प्रश्न नहीं लिया जायगा। पेरिस समझौते पर कोई बात नहीं हुई। डॉन ने लिखा कि मोदी और ट्रंप ने एक-दूसरे को दोस्त की तरह गले लगाया। ट्रंप ने पाकिस्तान से यह सुनिश्चित करने को कहा कि उसकी जमीन से आतंकवाद न पनपे। लेकिन पाकिस्तान ने तुरन्त बयान देकर कह दिया कि कश्मीर को आतंक से न जोड़ें। द इंडिपेंडेंट ने लिखा कि विश्व नेताओं के साथ ट्रंप की मुलाकात सौदों के इर्द-गिर्द होती है। भारत के साथ भी सैन्य सहयोग पर बात हुई और रक्षा सौदे हुए। इसके एक सप्ताह बाद इजराइल की यात्रा पर गये मोदी और उसका गोदी मोडिया दोनों ही नेतन्याहू द्वारा किये गये स्वागत से अभिभूत हो गये।

एक तरफ नेतन्याहू मोदी के जरिये दुनिया को यह संदेश देना चाहते हैं कि इजराइल की स्वीकार्यता बढ़ रही है तो वहीं मोदी भी पहले नोटबंदी, किसान आंदोलन और अब जी.एस.टी. से पिट रही भद से ध्यान हटाने का उपक्रम कर रहे हैं। इजराइल से भारत के संबंध 25 साल पहले शुरू हुए। 25 साल पहले 1295 रू. का शुरूआती व्यापार अब 32000 करोड़ रू. के कारोबार में बदल गया है। रूस और अमेरिका के बाद इजराइल हमारा सबसे बड़ा हथियार निर्यातक देश है। इजरायल सबसे ज्यादा हथियार भारत को बेचता है। यानि कुल निर्यात का लगभग 40 प्रतिशत बीते 3 सालों में दोनों देशों के बीच 26000 करोड़ रू. के रक्षा सौदे हुए। अभी 13000 करोड़ रू. के हथियारों की डील जिसमें 10 हेरोन टोपी ड्रोन को लेकर 2590 करोड़ रू. एवं स्पाइक मिसाइल को लेकर 3237 करोड़ रू. का सौदा इस यात्रा का फलित है। नारा 'भेक इन इंडिया' विदेशी निवेश को आमंत्रण और हर दौरे में हथियारों के सौदे हैं न गजब का स्वदेशी जागरण और

देशभक्ती। जर्मनी और फ्रांस गये तो वहां रॉफेल हेलिकाप्टर और होवित्सर तोप का सौदा कर आये तो अब ये हथियार सौदे। समझ सकते हैं, कितनी कीमती हैं मोदीजी की ये विदेशी यात्राएं। दलाली ना बाबा ना। मोदीजी के शासन में कानूनी जो हो गई है।

भले ही विदेश मंत्री सुषमा स्वराज ने संसद में सवालोंने धरने पर बातचीत के महत्व को स्वीकारा हो परन्तु हकीकत यह है कि नरेन्द्र मोदी की सरकार जब से बनी है तब से उसकी घरेलू नीति का असर विदेश नीति पर परिलक्षित हो रहा है। यह सरकार दिखावटी तौर विदेशी दौरे चाहे जितने कर रही हो परन्तु व्यवहार में वह हमारी शांति, सहअस्तित्व और गुटनिरपेक्षता की नीति को पलटकर टकराव के रास्ते पर जा रही है। वह अपने ऐतिहासिक और विरासती स्थायी मैत्रीय संबंधों को तिलाजंली देते हुए उन साम्राज्यवादी शक्तियों की पिछलग्गु बनकर इतरा रही है। जिनका एजेन्डा ही युद्ध और कारोबार के जरिये अपने साम्राज्य और आर्थिक हितों को विस्तार देना रहा है। परिणामस्वरूप हमारे पड़ोसियों से टकराव का परिवेश बन रहा है। जिन मुद्दों को बातचीत से आसानी से हल किया जा सकता है, उन पर मोदी सरकार के हेकड़ी भरे बयान तनाव बढ़ा रहे हैं।

प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की इजरायल की अभी हालिया यात्रा, हथियारों के खरीद सौदे और हमारे विरासती संबंधों वाले फिलस्तीन की उपेक्षा तथा इससे पहले अमेरिकी दौरे के करार कुछ ऐसे ही इशारे कर रहे हैं। इसी बीच उन 56 इस्लामिक देशों के संगठन का कश्मीर को लेकर बयान जो आज पाकिस्तान के करीब नजर आता है, सन् 1994 में ऐसे ही घटनाक्रम में ठीक इसके उलट हमारे समर्थन में था। कश्मीर को लेकर चीन का बयान भी ऐसे ही घटनाविकास की प्रतिक्रिया को दिखाता है। इतना ही नहीं चीन भारत को याद दिला रहा है कि हम पंचशील से हट रहे हैं। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के इजरायल दौरे को श्रृण्वतया अहम मोडिश करार देते हुए मार्क्सवादी कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी के नेता प्रकाश करार ने कहा कि यह हिंदुत्व विचारधारा का ही हिस्सा है जो घरेलू के साथ-साथ विदेश नीति में भी परिलक्षित हो रहा है।

जहां बातचीत फासले और गलतफहमियों को दूर करता है वहीं टकराव फासले को और गहरा करता है। मोदी सरकार के हिन्दुत्ववादी रूझान हमारी विदेश नीति के मूलभूत सिद्धान्तों को पलट रहे हैं। जब तब राष्ट्रवाद के तड़के, 56 इंची सीने का बड़बोलापन और परमाणु शक्ति सम्पन्न राष्ट्रों के बीच युद्ध के परिवेश के निर्माण में न तो कोई समझदारी है और न ही यह राजनयन की गंभीरता और कौशल को दिखाता है। विदेश नीति से यू टर्न लेना हमारे राष्ट्रीय हित के विपरीत है। शांति और विश्व भ्रातृत्व की हमारी विदेश नीति से विपरीत दिशा में जाकर हम देशों के समूह के बीच स्थापित अपना स्थान खो रहे हैं। गुटनिरपेक्ष आंदोलन की अगुवाई कर हमने जो असम्बद्धता की विष्व छवि बनाई थी, वो अमेरिका-इजरायल से सम्बद्धता दिखाकर खो रहे हैं।

At a time when neoliberalism undermines democracy, throws millions of workers out of jobs, when dictators masquerade as champions of democracy, when the far right and neo-Nazis have risen their ugly heads and when the American imperialism seeks to expand the empire by war...



Commemorating Charlie Chaplin, the People's Artist

■ Ramkrishna Datta



Christmas Day this year shall mark the 40th death anniversary of Charles Spencer Chaplin, popularly known as Charlie Chaplin, who won over the hearts of millions of cinema-audiences across the world through his unique style of acting on the big screen. No one else acting in motion picture could equal his feat till date. Just a few hours before his family's traditional Christmas celebration was to begin, Charlie Chaplin died at 4 a.m. on 25 December, 1977 at his home at Corsier-sur-Vevey, a small village near the eastern end of the Lake of Geneva, Switzerland. At the time of his death his wife Oona and seven of their children were at the bedside.

Charlie Chaplin was born on the night of 16 April 1889 in East Street, Walworth, London. At that time Sydney, his half-brother, was four years old. His father, Charles Chaplin, Sr., and mother, Hannah Chaplin (Hill), separated even before Charlie was three. Both of them were music hall performers. Chaplin, Sr., deserted the family to go on tour. He died of alcoholism in 1901, at the age of 37. Charlie and his half-brother Sydney became accustomed to fend for themselves. Chaplin's childhood, in fact, reminds one of that of a Charles Dickens character. According to Jerome Larcher, a producer and script-writer and former editor of *Cahiers du cinema*: "It constitutes the matrix of his cinematic world; in a sense, his tramp character represents an imaginary extension of the boy he once was".

It was his mother who passed on the theatrical baton to Charlie Chaplin. He made his first appearance on the stage just at the

age of 5 when his mother's voice cracked while performing and she was booed off the stage. Charlie later recalled in his autobiography: "The audience began to laugh and sing falsetto and to make catcalls. It was all vague and I did not quite understand what was going on. But the noise increased until Mother was obliged to walk off the stage". At that stage the stage manager, who had seen him perform before his mother's friends, led him by his hand to the stage and left him there alone after placing some explanatory words to the audience. Charlie's performance enthralled the audience and they greeted him by loud applause. His suffering did not end here. The family of mother and two sons sank further in poverty. Hannah and the two children were compelled to enter the Lambeth workhouse. Subsequently, Charlie and Sydney were dispatched to an orphanage outside London. Here a huge warden unjustly caned him. Perhaps, this is why, a critic say, we see the puny tramp's (the tramp character he portrayed) future defiance towards not only oversized men but also all forms of authority.

Charlie Chaplin's life gradually rebounded from adversity. His clog dancing did not continue for long. This brief period was followed by what a correspondent of *The New York Times* called "weeks and months of catch-as-catch-can existence". He took on a series of odd jobs—news vendor, barber's assistant, printer, toy maker etc. Charlie reminisced later, "....., but during these occupational digressions, I never lost sight of my ultimate aim to become an actor". At the age of 12, his perseverance was rewarded. He received the role of Billy the Groom in William Gillette's play "Sherlock

Homes" and toured the provinces. It was at that time he began to make a name for himself. He left the world of the theatre in 1906 and switched to pantomime. He stepped into the world of cinema when, in 1913, Mack Sennett, then the producer of short film comedies spotted him. He joined Sennett in Los Angeles and made his first appearance in "Making a Living" in 1914. The film was a one-reeler. It was at Mack Sennett's Keystone studios in early 1914 Charlie created the tramp character while the shooting of the film "Mabel's Strange Predicament" was on. The character dressed in baggy pants, big shoes, a cane and a derby hat. He recollected later, "I wanted everything a contradiction: the pants baggy, the coat tight, the hat small and shoes large". The character was an instant hit with the cinema-goers. Charlie's association with Mack Sennett lasted for one year during which he acted in 35 films. His fame enabled him to join the Essanay Company and worked in 14 films in 1915, including "The Tramp". Film critics say that the movie was his first generally recognized classic and first in which he introduced a note of pathos. In 1917, Charlie Chaplin built his own studio in the heart of Hollywood. For the first time he became his own producer in his own studio. He co-founded United Artists, the distribution company, in 1919. This gave him complete control over his films. His first feature-film was "The Kid"(1921). His role in the film was not only as an actor; he was the writer, director and producer of the film. Charlie Chaplin's masterpiece "The Kid", according to a film critic, was 'a chapter out of Chaplin's own slum life'. It is widely acknowledged that Charlie Chaplin, a stickler for perfection, helped elevate film to a respected art form. The man was also a great music composer. Beginning with "City Lights" (1931), he composed music for his films. Despite Charlie's fortune and fame, he never forgot his days of poverty and the struggle for existence. He also did not neglect his mother and saw to it that she was well cared for in her eventual mental breakdown. In 1921, he took her to California, where she died on 28 August 1928.

Charlie Chaplin's films contained social and political themes. During his lifetime many significant events took place. The first world war, the Russian revolution, the growing unemployment in America, the Great

Depression, the rise of fascism in Europe, the second world war, McCarthyism in the United States— all these impacted his creative genius. The silent era tramp character was an icon of a poor man in modern capitalist society. Chaplin was concerned about the devastating effects of the Great Depression. His fear was that capitalism, along with the use of machinery at the workplace, would just increase unemployment. This concern gave birth to "Modern Times"(1936). The film, partly, is a comic commentary on the dehumanized aspects of the mechanized, industrial world. Charlie Chaplin was known to have sympathies for the Left from 1920 onwards, reminds Vijay Prashad in his article, "The Political Life and Cinema of Comrade Charlie Chaplin"(The Wire, 29.07.2017). The readers shall find it interesting to learn what Charlie had told Buster Keaton — the famous actor of silent movies—on communism. According to Keaton, Charlie stated: "Communism was going to change everything, abolish poverty". Then he banged on the table and said, "What I want is that every child should have enough to eat, shoes on his feet and a roof over his head". (Ibid) In the backdrop of the rise of fascism in Europe, Charlie Chaplin wrote the script of "The Great Dictator" in 1938. He started shooting the film in the following year. In 1940, the world premiere of "The Great Dictator" was held in New York. "A ferocious ridicule of Hitler and Mussolini, the film has grown in stature over the years as its political implications have been, according to critics, more fully realized". This was what Bosley Crowther wrote in The New York Times on December 26, 1977 while paying a rich tribute to Charlie Chaplin. Charlie later wrote in his autobiography: "Although The Great Dictator was extremely popular with the American public, it no doubt created underground antagonism". Adverse publicity against him started appearing in the Press. Despite that, "The Great Dictator", according to the creator himself, continued breaking records both in England and America. Charlie Chaplin's denouncement of fascism did not stop with the creation of "The Great Dictator". When the gruesome Nazi invasion of USSR was on, Charlie Chaplin became very much vocal in support of the Soviet Union and tried to build up public opinion in America in favour of opening a second front immediately. In 1942,

he received a telephone call from the head of the American Committee for Russian war relief in San Francisco, asking him if he would take the place of Mr. Joseph E. Davies, the American Ambassador to Russia, who was to speak, but at the last moment had been attacked with laryngitis. Charlie Chaplin accepted the invitation. The following day



the meeting was held. The hall became packed with ten thousand people. He addressed the audience with the word, "Comrades". He continued emphatically: "And I mean comrades, I assume there are many Russians here tonight, and the way your countrymen are fighting and dying at this very moment, it is an honour and a privilege to call you comrades". (My Autobiography: Charles Chaplin). Just a few weeks later a huge rally for a second front was held in Madison Square Park, New York. The sponsors of the mass meeting held on July 22, 1942 were 250 unions affiliated with the Greater New York Industrial Union Council, C.I.O. Sixty thousand people attended the rally. Charlie had been requested by the organisers to address the meeting via telephone. He made a significant beginning: "On the battlefields of Russia democracy will live or die. The fate of the Allied nations is in the hands of Communists. If Russia is defeated the Asiatic continent—the largest and richest of this globe—would be under the domination of the Nazis".

The releases of "Modern Times" and "The Great Dictator", his passionate speeches calling for the opening of a second front in Europe and his pro-Communist leaning, though he himself declared that he was not a Communist, brought serious troubles for him in his adopted country, America. His broken marriages and his love life also gave his critics the opportunity to blacken his reputation. Nevertheless, Charlie Chaplin, the people's artist of America, was hounded by the American rulers mainly because he was suspected as a Communist. Charlie Chaplin was subpoenaed to appear before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in June 1947 (eventually postponed). He released a press statement inviting the committee members to watch "Monsieur Verdoux" with



close attention: "It is against war and the futile slaughter of our youth. I trust you will not find its human message distasteful....." Charlie Chaplin was virtually exiled by the authorities of the United States. In September 1952, he was sailing to London, accompanied by Oona and their children. The captain of the ship was informed that Charlie Chaplin's re-entry permit had been revoked. Offended, he spent the rest of his life in Europe, settling on an estate at Vevey, Switzerland.

At a time when neoliberalism undermines democracy, throws millions of workers out of jobs, when dictators masquerade as champions of democracy, when the far right and neo-Nazis have risen their ugly heads and when the American imperialism seeks to expand the empire by war, the following words of Charlie Chaplin's speech in "The Great Dictator" keep ringing:

"In the 17th chapter of St Luke it is written: 'the kingdom of God is within man'—not one man nor a group of men, but in all men! In you! You, the people have the power—the power to create machines. The power to create happiness! You, the people, have the power to make this life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure.

Then— in the name of democracy—let us use that power— let us all unite. Let us fight for a new world— a decent world that will give men a chance to work— that will give youth a future and old age a security. By the promise of these things, brutes have risen to power. But they lie! They do not fulfil that promise. They never will.

Dictators free themselves but they enslave the people! Now let us fight to fulfil that promise! Let us fight to free the world— to do away with national barriers— to do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men's happiness. Soldiers! In the name of democracy, let us all unite!"

The author is President, KDLIEA, & Vice-President, EZIEA.

International Conference on Global Insurance Practices

The Department of Commerce, Osmania University, Hyderabad has organized a three day International Conference on "Global Insurance: Practices and Outlook" from 29th – 31st July 2017, in the Platinum Jubilee Conference Hall of PGRRCDE, OU Campus. The Conference was organized in collaboration with Telangana State Council for Higher Education and as a part of the ongoing Centenary Year Celebrations of Osmania University. The conference is aimed at 'bringing together all the stake holder to share their views and thoughts on the direction to penetrate the insurance sector further and to develop the new curriculum for graduate and post graduates, who can build their career in insurance sector.' Delegates from different

countries have attended the conference and made it successful. It is a matter of proud privilege that Com. K Venu Gopal, Vice-President, AIIEA and Com. V Ramesh, General Secretary, AIIEA were special invitees to the conference as speakers.

Com. V Ramesh, while addressing the conference, informed that in the prevailing stagnant world economic scenario, the purchasing power of the common man is severely affected and this in turn is adversely affecting the Insurance Business, world over. But, even in such adverse situation, penetration of Insurance esp., Life Insurance is 2.6% in India, which is more than that of many advanced countries, he said. Though the Government promised the inflow of \$ 25 billion FDI in to Insurance Market, at the time of opening up of Insurance to private capital in 1999, only Rs 8000 crore investment came so far, as per IRDA reports, he informed. Jobless Growth is prevalent in the country. Contractualisation of labour and rampant unemployment are contributing for the slow progress in insurance penetration, he opined. It is unfortunate that the government, instead of supporting the Industry by giving incentives in the form of enhanced tax concessions, is heaping further burden on policy holders by increasing GST on Insurance premium. This move will adversely affect the Insurance business, he anguished. Against these odds, the Public Sector LIC of India could remain as the Market Leader, even after 17 years of competition. The claim performance ratio of LIC is unmatched in the world. LIC continues to be a major contributor to the 5 year plans and contributed Rs 14 lakh crore to the 12th five year plan to the government, he informed.

The presentations of both the leaders were well received and appreciated by the audience.

Com. K Venu Gopal addressed the conference in the forenoon session, on 29.07.2017. He congratulated the organizers for their effort to introduce a comprehensive course on Insurance, as a subject in the curriculum. Insurance is a promise to accept the risk, which is dependent on a contingency. Fulfilling this promise with integrity, through prompt Servicing and Claim settlement, is the Hallmark of Insurance, he said. In spite of 24 Private Insurance Companies operating in the Life Sector, LIC could retain 74 % Market Share and the Claim Settlement ratio is 99.86. Insurance is a means of mobilizing People's small savings and providing social security in return. People's savings should

always be protected. These small savings, so mobilized, will form a huge investment for the nation building and social welfare activities. Underwriting is a key aspect of Insurance and adverse selection of life should be avoided at all costs. The role of the Regulator is also of utmost importance in the Insurance Business, he said. He advised the students to focus study on these aspects, while undergoing the course.



Seminar on 25 Years of Financial Reforms at Thiruvananthapuram

A Seminar on 25 years of financial reforms was conducted on August 12 in AKG Hall in Thiruvananthapuram. It was organized by AKG Centre of Research studies along with Bank Employees Federation of India and All India Insurance Employees Association. Com Prakash Karat, Polit Bureau member of CPIM inaugurated the seminar with a brilliant analysis of the present economic and political situation of the country. He has called for an integrated fight against the Hindutva and the neoliberal forces by projecting the Kerala model of promoting the public sector as a case in point. This is because the Hindutva forces were being used to buttress the neoliberal policies by the ruling class that had evolved a consensus among them for pursuing with a renewed vigour. The public sector should set a model of performance against the critics of public sector clamoring for privatization. In Kerala the public sector has made commendable performance under LDF rule.

Com Shreekant Mishra, joint secretary AIIEA presented the paper on insurance reforms. While presenting the history of the reforms in insurance sector he questioned the ill-conceived motive of the successive Govts in pursuing privatization and opening up of insurance sector to foreign capital. The argument for raising FDI in insurance sector advanced by the Govt was the inadequacy of capital. This was the major reform in the insurance industry. Shreekant Misra questioned this argument by giving several examples. The standing committee on insurance reforms headed by Sri.Yaswant Sinha was against increasing FDI on insurance. When PSGI

companies and GIC have enough reserves at their disposal there was no need to privatise them on the pretext of inadequacy of capital. Not much FDI came to the country as was expected. Even after passage of the insurance amendment bill, the promoters of Indian companies sold their shares to the foreign players rather than the foreign companies bring in more capital. Com Shreekant lucidly explained that the reforms have not benefited either the national economy or the insuring people. He said a big struggle by all patriotic masses is necessary to reverse the economic direction of the government.

Com.Kodiyeri balakrishnan, CPM state secretary presided over the seminar. He categorically said that the real alternative to liberalization reforms is the activities of the present LDF Govt in Kerala. When the Modi Govt is selling the public sector on a large scale the LDF Govt. in Kerala is strengthening the public sector. Com. A .Vijayaraghavan, director of AKG study Centre welcomed the gathering. Prof.C.P.Chandrasekhar, well-known economist in his principal address asked all progressive sections to protect the national wealth which is being appropriated by the corporates. The 25 years of financial reforms has weakened the financial sector. The financial sector including the banking is now controlled by the corporates. The public sector banking is being weakened. Democratic struggles should be waged for protecting the public sector. Prof.K.N Harilal, economist said that the interests of the international financial capital are advanced by the present Indian state. Com.C.J.Nandakumar, National president BEFI said that the reliability of the public sector banking is being destroyed by the rulers through their policies. Jose.K.Abraham, BEFI leader, who was the main coordinator of the seminar also spoke on the occasion.Com Anavoor Nagappan, District CPM secretary proposed the vote of thanks. The seminar was well attended by comrades from BEFI, AIIEA and other sections of the people. As a host division, Trivandrum AIIEA comrades provided the necessary help for the successful conduct of the seminar.



SEMINAR AT BHUBANESWAR ON NEO-LIBERALISM

As per the decision of AIIEA, a seminar was conducted by Bhubaneswar Division Life Insurance Employees' Association at Bhubaneswar LIC Divisional office premises on 5th August on the subject "Neo-liberalism, Privatisation & Joblessness". Com. A.K.Padmanabhan, Vice-President, CITU was the chief speaker. This meeting was massively attended by around 250 people including leaders of various fraternal trade unions of the city. Addressing the meeting Com. Padmanabhan gave a broad outline of the crisis enveloping the capitalist world. How and why the world has not yet fully recovered from the crisis was vividly explained by him. He said that, the burden of the crisis was being shifted onto the shoulders of working class. Massive jobloss throughout the globe is the outcome of neo-liberalism. He thanked AIIEA



for its relentless struggle against Neoliberalism and Communalism.

Com. S.B.Pattnaik, General Secretary welcomed the guests and Com. B.B.Nayak, Organising Secretary presented the paper on the topic. Com. C.M.Haibru, President, gave the vote of thanks.

SEMINAR AT MIDNAPORE AGAINST DISINVESTMENT OF G I C

Khargapur Division Insurance Employees' Association, WBSGIEA and 12th July Committee, Paschim Medinipur Dist. Committee (a joint forum of teachers, state and central government employees) jointly organized a seminar on "DISINVESTMENT OF PUBLIC SECTOR IN GENERAL AND GENERAL INSURANCE IS PARTICULAR IS AGAINST THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY" at Karmachari Bhaban, Midnapore on 15-7-2017. It was organized as a part of the call given by the All India Conference of AIIEA held at Ernakulam to mobilize the public opinion in favour of struggle against disinvestment of public sector GIC. The meeting was presided over by Com. Asim Kumar Misra, President of KDIEA. LIC and GIC employees from all branches of Paschim Medinipur, Purba Medinipur and Jhargram Districts gathered in a great number.

Moreover, State Govt. & Central Govt. Employees, pensioners and teachers were also present.

The venue was jam packed. The main speaker was veteran leader of WBSGIEA, Com. Pradip Basak. After a short introduction by the president, Com. Tarun Kanti Biswas, General Secretary, KDIEA, Com. Tapan Mitra, State Secretary of WBSGIEA and Com. Ashok Ghosh, Jt. Convener, 12th July Committee narrated the present situation of the country and the financial position of nationalized insurance industry.

Com. Basak elaborately discussed the history of insurance employees' movement against privatization and how AIIEA played its pivotal role in the anti-privatization movement in India. He said that we are fighting against the present economic policy of India not to protect the interest of the insurance employees but to defend the interest of the common masses. AIIEA is committed to a sustained struggle to defend the public sector. We must say the audience was highly enriched by the speech delivered by Com. Basak.



General Council meeting of ICEU, Bangalore I & II

The Annual General council meeting of ICEU Bangalore I & II was held on 6th and 7th August 2017 at Jeevan Sampige" Malleshwaram Bangalore. This conference taking place immediately after the submission of Charter of Demands evoked massive enthusiasm and response. The activists of the organization enthusiastically decorated the venue with buntings, banners and floral rangolis. The Meeting hall was jam-packed with over 800 comrades representing all the city and mofussil base units. Nearly 70 percent of the attendance comprised of women being the most heartening feature of the conference. A good number of pensioners also participated in the inaugural session.

The conference got to a flying start with Com D.Suresh, President, ICEU I unfurling the AIIEA flag. As the flag fluttered high in the winds, the venue reverberated with thunderous slogans reposing faith in the AIIEA and its struggle to secure a decent life to the insurance employees and displaying a commitment to fight against the neo-liberal policies and the divisive politics. The two salutation songs rendered by the women comrades of Malleshwaram and Oriental Base Units set the stage for success of the conference.

The conference was inaugurated by Com Shreekant Mishra, Joint Secretary, AIIEA. Com Shreekant enthralled the audience with his lucid deliberations lasting for over one hour. He expressed happiness on coming to Bangalore to participate in this conference as Bangalore has a pride of place in AIIEA for its contribution to the development of the insurance employees movement. Com Shreekant who was the Convenor of the Charter Sub-Committee gave graphic details of the demands raised in the charter for upward revision of wages and other amenities. He forcefully placed arguments backing the demand for a 40 percent wage revision pointing out to the growth of the industry and increasing productivity of the employees. But he cautioned that however just our demands are, they cannot be looked in isolation from the policies of the government. The policies of the government are not in favour of the working class and they squeeze the working class to benefit the industrialists



and big capitalists. Therefore, he said that to secure a just wage revision, it would require a big struggle. In order to wage such a struggle, he pointed out that the organization must remain united and all attempts to divide the working class in the name of religion, language and caste must be defeated. Com Shreekant expressed hopes that Bangalore will rise up to successful meet all the challenges of the present times.

The Conference was greeted by Com Prem Kumar, General Secretary, Bangalore Regional General Insurance Employees' Association and Com G.K.Gangadhar, General Secretary, Insurance Corporation Pensioners' Association, Bangalore.

Speaking in the inaugural session, Com Amanulla Khan, President, AIIEA congratulated the audience for their overwhelming and enthusiastic participation in the Conference. Giving details of the difficulties encountered in securing the present venue for holding the conference, he fervently appealed to all the employees to make generous contributions to complete the task of construction of the Union Office. He pointed out that the Union Office is a collective property of the employees and it would be the nerve centre of all trade union and democratic activities.

Speaking on the dangerous atmosphere of warmongering and tensions across borders, Com Amanulla Khan pointed out that we should never forget the lessons of history. August 6

is the worst day in the history of humanity, he said. On this day in 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima instantly killing 140000 people, decapacitating millions and the impact of the radiation is still felt. The nuclear weapons today are many more times more powerful making the existential threat to human race very real. He said it is therefore necessary to struggle for peace and against war as peace is essential for human progress.

Com. Amanulla Khan gave lucid details on Charter of Demands, the justifications behind the demands and the necessity to remain prepared to secure the just demand through struggles. He pointed out that today the country can remain united only by recognizing the plurality of cultures, languages and religions. He exhorted the audience to fight back the attempts by some vested interests to disrupt the unity of the working people in the name of homogenizing the Indian society.

The inaugural session came to a successful close with vote of thanks by Com S.H.Vijayakumar, Jt.Secretary, ICEU II. Earlier Com Ramakrishna alias Gopi Vice-President, ICEU, Bangalore I welcomed the gathering.

In the Delegates session, the Report of the Executive Committee detailing the activities of the organization in the last one year was placed by the General Secretaries of the two divisional units. The Report discussed in great details the important development both at the global and national levels. The Report discussed exhaustively the situation in the industry, the challenges the public sector insurance industry is facing and the state of the organization. The Report also laid

the task before the organization. Forty two comrades took part in the debate. The debate showed the maturity of the organization in understanding the developing political and economic situations. The debate enriched the report by also giving suggestions as to how the resistance has to be build against the anti-worker and anti-people policies. Com Amanulla Khan, President, AIIEA also spoke in the delegates session. The Report was unanimously adopted after the discussions were summed up by Com K.Gopal.

The Conference also unanimously adopted the Statements of Accounts presented by Coms K.B.Venkat Reddy and B.N.Yashoda, Treasurers of ICEU, I & II respectively on behalf of their units.

The conference also adopted a number of resolutions. It decided to vigorously carryout the signature campaign against the GST on insurance premium.

The Conference unanimously elected Coms D.Suresh, S.K.Geetha and K.B.Venkat Reddy as the President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively of ICEU, Bangalore Division I for the ensuing term. The conference also unanimously elected Coms P. Nagendra, K.Gopal and B.N.Yashoda as President, General Secretary and Treasurer of ICEU, Bangalore II for the ensuing term.

The conference came to a successful close with vote of thanks by Com D.Suresh, President, ICEU, Bangalore I. The conference recorded its appreciation for the tremendous work done by Malleswaram Base unit for its successful conduct.



59th CONFERENCE OF IEU, UDUPI DIVISION

The 59th Conference of IEU, Udupi Division was held at Sri Naryana Guru Kalyan Mantap Udupi on 25-06-2017.

To start with the proceedings, the union flag was unfurled by Com. K.Vishwanatha (President) amid enthusiastic slogans. Floral tributes were paid at the Martyrs column.

The conference was inaugurated by Com. J.Suresh (Jt. Secretary/SCZIEF) who in his address pointed out that the conference was held at a juncture when the working class is abound with challenges from all quarters. He called on trade unions to rise to the occasion by consolidating the work force towards unity of workers to promote National Integration. On international situation, he observed that the resolutions of recently concluded Brexit Summit coupled with labour laws of Trump led US Govt. have direct impact on working class movements and said today the workers movement are directed towards protecting their own existence rather than lighting against issues concerning their interests. Referring internal scene, he said the Modi Govt. ruling on illusions has neglected the burning issues of farmers and workers and is actively engaged in dividing workers on communal lines for their political gains.

Veteran comrade Admar Sripathy Acharya in his address recollected the days of emergency during 70's and said the country is experiencing

yet another form of undeclared emergency during Modi regime.

Com. P.Vishwanatha Rai, CITU, in his address urged the trade unions to work towards the twin objective of communal harmony and National Integration.

Com. Sripathy Upadhyya, IPA narrated the struggleful history of AIIEA and called on comrades to carry on the mission further.

Com. U.Gurudath, General Secretary, IEU, Udupi explained the path of journey trodden by IEU Udupi Division in 60 years and called on members to fight back any moves of Govt. destabilizing LIC and any attacks on the rights of workers.

The Delegate session, the report of the executive committee was presented by Secretary. 18 members from base units debated on the report and was unanimously adopted in the house. 16 resolutions on AIIEA lines were adopted unanimously.

Com. Prabhakar B.Kunder treasurer presented statements of Accounts for the year 2016-17 and was adopted unanimously.

Comrades K.Vishwanatha (President), Deric A.Rebello Shekhar Poojary (Vice Presidents), U.Gurudath (Gen. Secretary), Umesh & S.Kavitha (Jt. Secretaries), Prabhakar B.Kunder (Treasurer) and Dinesh Shetty (Jt. Treasurer) were elected as Office Bearers of the ensuing year. Comrades H.K.Raghavendra Rao, B.N.Devadiga and K.G.Vallinath were elected as Regional Secretaries.

Com. Vishwanath presided over the meeting. Com. Ushalatha Shetty (Convener, Women-Sub-Committee) was present in the proceedings.

Com. Deric A. Rebello welcomed and compered the programme. Com. U.Gurudath presented vote of thanks.





61st Conference of Cuttack Division IEA

The 61st Annual General Conference of Cuttack Division Insurance Employees Association (CDIEA) was held at Jagatsinghpur on 13-15 August 2016. At the outset, Com. S Duttagupta, President of our Association, unfurled the Red flag of CDIEA. Amidst thunderous slogans, floral tributes were offered to the martyr's column.

The inaugural session started with revolutionary and patriotic songs sung by our comrades portraying the importance of unity and integrity of nation, which touched the hearts of all. In his welcome address, the chairman of the Reception Committee Sri Basudeb, an advocate, social reformer, rationalist, praised CDIEA for being vanguard in all struggles and movement of working class in Odisha.

Inaugurating the conference, Com V Ramesh, General Secretary of AIIEA made scathing attack on Modi government for its abysmal failure in tackling hunger, unemployment, poverty and inequality and resorting to advertisement blitzkrieg to camouflage its failure. Depicting the importance and contribution of public sector in nation building since Nehruvian era, he derided present government for its aggressive policies of disinvestment and privatization of public sectors including GIC-Re for the benefits of corporate and utilising the resources generated by disinvestment to reduce the fiscal deficit which is resultant of inability of government

to tax the rich. He also warned that corruption is intrinsically inherent in privatization. Expressing concern about widespread poverty and hunger, he told that poverty is nobody's choice. It is thrust upon people by wrong policies of government. He urged upon the audience not to maintain stoic silence when fissiparous and divisive forces are wrecking havoc on unity and integrity of nation with the tacit support present NDA regime.

Addressing as Chief Speaker, Com Bishnu Mohanty, Vice-president of CITU, severely criticised government for twisting, changing labour laws for the benefits of corporates and to detriment of labourers and working class people. He also discussed the decision taken by joint national convention of central trade unions and independent industrial federations to organise a massive three days' 'padav' near parliament from November 9-11 against the anti-worker and anti-people policies and the growing authoritarian tendencies of the Modi led BJP government at the centre. In his inimitable style, addressing as Chief Guest, Com Sreekanta Mishra, General Secretary, ECZIEA, lambasted the Modi government for attempting to divide the Indian society in the name of caste, language, community and religion.

Other who spoke on the occasion included Com Prakash Ray, Joint Secretary, BEFI,



Com R.N Mallick, former president of CDIEA and Joint Convenor of OSKEM, Com Manas Pattnaik, General Secretary OSGIEA, Com S B Patnaik General Secretary BDLIEA, S J Ramesh Sahani (Class-I Officer Federation), I. Sengupta (Branch manager , Jagatsinghpur Branch). While Com. S. Duttagupta, president of CDIEA presided the meeting, Com M G Barik , General Secretary of CDIEA gave introductory speech. Com Abhaya Das, Organising Secretary proposed vote of thanks. After the adjournment of the open session by the President, cultural programme was held by local children which enthralled the audience .Prizes were also distributed among the students for winning debate essay competition etc

In the delegate session, Com M G Barik General Secretary, presented the Annual report and Com Peasant Kumar Nayak, Treasurer of CDIEA, presented the audited statements of accounts for the corresponding period. Com (Dr.) Santosh Kumar Mohapatra, Joint secretary of CDIEA and an eminent bilingual Columnist and Economist of Odisha initiated debate. He delivered an illuminating speech by

providing vivid description of international and national scenario and different policies which are adversely affecting masses' and working classes including our industry. Delegates from all the 20 base units discussed about the report including one woman comrade .The rich deliberations clearly showed the maturity of the organization.

Coms V.Ramesh, Shreekant Mishra, Pradeep Mukherjee, President, ECZIEA addressed the delegates session. Others who spoke included also Com Gajendra Mohanty, former president of CDIEA and vice-president of AI LPA), Com Trinath Dora, General Secretary , SDLIEA, Com. R N Mallick .

The report and statements of accounts presented before the house were also unanimously approved by the house. The conference adopted as many as 15 resolutions on industrial national, state issues. For the ensuing term, the conference elected Comrades S Duttagupta, M G Barik and P K Nayak as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

21st CONFERENCE OF LICPA, MADURAI

The 21st Conference of LICPA, Madurai was held on 5.8.17 was presided over by Com.V.Ramasamy, the President in which 165 pensioners attended.

Com.C.Chandrasekaran, Secretary presented the annual report before the house. Com.T.Kumararaja, Treasurer, submitted the audited accounts. Five comrades took part in the deliberations on the report.

Com. D.Gopalraj, (GIPA), Com.J.Gopalakrishnan, (LIC Cl.I Fedn) Com.G.Mariyappan, (NFIFWI), and Com.N.P.Rameshkannan, (ICEU) greeted the conference. The speeches of the leaders condemned the move of the centre to disinvest PSU and dwelt on the lingering threat to diversity and secularism.

The report was adopted after the summing up by the Secretary. Dr.P.Suresh, MD,DM (Neuro), Apollo Hospitals Madurai hogged the limelight with his power point presentation on "Stroke" the disease, to which the aged are

more susceptible to. He listed the do's and don'ts and clarified the doubts of the audience

Mr.Sivanath of Vidal Health Insurance explained the procedures for cashless treatment.

The senior comrades were honoured in the conference. Resolutions on withdrawal of GST on LIC premium, upward revision of pension on wage revision in LIC as per the practice in vogue at state and central govt , withdrawal of NEET and various other issues of importance were moved by Com V.Shanmugam, Jt.Secretary were adopted unanimously.

Com.V.Ramasamy, C.Chandrasekaran, T.Kumararaja, were elected President, Secretary, and Treasurer respectively.

The curtains of the conference were dropped with the vote of thanks proposed by Com.I.Joseph Williams.

WOMEN'S CONVENTION CHENNAI 2

The 23rd Working Women's Convention of ICEU, Chennai Division II, was held on 29.07.2017.

The Convention began with a skit written & enacted by our women comrades. The skit, a satirical comedy, highlighting today's political scenario, was written & directed by Com. V. Anuja. Coms. A.Selvi, V.Vijayalakshmi & P.L.Veena, played their roles with élan & won the appreciation of all.

The Convention was presided over by Com. V. Anuja, Jt. Convenor and welcome speech was given by Com S.S.Geetha Jt.Convenor. The Convention was inaugurated by

Com. S. Premalatha, State Convenor Women Sub-Committee, BEFI. She spoke on "WOMEN EMPLOYEES AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR" She spoke at length about the plight of women in the Banking sector.

The Special address was delivered by Com. K.Swaminathan, Vice-President, SZIEF on topic "FUTURE OF THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY". He spoke about the challenges our industry is likely to face after the introduction of GST.



Com. K.Thulasi, Convenor, submitted the report. Com. S.Visalakshi, CBO 12, Com. K.Latha Mageswari, CBO 27, Com. K.Aruna, CBO 31 & Com.S.Lakshmi, Ambattur Branch participated in the debate. The debate was enough proof of how well informed our women comrades are.

Com. K. Manoharan, Gen. Secy. summed up the debate.

Com. V. Leelavathi, Jt. Convenor, CBO 22 proposed the vote of thanks. The active participation of more than 250 comrades from all Branch units made the Convention a Grand Success.

WOMEN'S CONVENTION-CHENNAI -I

The 22nd Annual Convention of working women of ICEU, Chennai Division-I, was held in a grand manner on July 29, 2017 with the active participation of around 300 women comrades, besides some former leaders and

cadres of AIIEA.

The Convention commenced with rendering of a revolutionary song by the women comrades of CBO.25 (mylapore). The convention was conducted by a presidium consisting of Comrades S.Manjula, Convenor of the Women's Sub-Committee, Rachael Sharmila, Joint Convenor, A.Sivapriya and V.Vani. Com.S. Manjula welcomed the Chief Guest and the audience and briefly narrated the objectives of holding such conventions.

Inaugurating the Convention, Prof.A.Arasi, a research scholar from the Madras Institute of Development Studies, shared her intellectual viewpoints in a most effective manner on a variety of subjects including the adverse effects of capitalist neo-liberal policies. She explained the differences between 'paid work' and 'unpaid work', especially in regard to



women. Despite the fact that there was a time when women were prevented from going to work, today there is demand for working women in marriages, she concluded.

The Report, which can be considered as a thoroughly educative document, was placed by Com.S.Manjula followed by the other members of the presidium and Comrades K.S.Manjula (CBO-8), K.Gayathri (CBO-25) and K.Vijayalakshmi (Chengalpattu) brilliantly put forward their views and suggestions on the Report. Several resolutions were adopted by the house including 33% reservation for women in legislative bodies, 5-day working week, one more option for pension, atrocities against women, harassment of women in working places, etc.

In his summing up of the discussions, Com.S.Rameshkumar, General Secretary, ICEU, Chennai Division-I, very elaborately dealt with the challenges facing the public sector insurance industry, the hurdles being placed by the Government in settlement of wage demands and stressed the need for wider campaign against the destructive policies of the Government of India.

The Convention unanimously elected a new Women's Sub-Committee with Comrades A.Sivapriya (Convener), Rachael Sharmila, Uma Vanchy, S.Latha, K. Vijayalakshmi, S.Mythili and S. Ahila (Joint Conveners).

The meeting came to an end with vote of thanks proposed by Com. Rachael Sharmila, Joint Convener.

WZIEA WOMEN CONVENTION

The Zonal level women convention of Western Zone Insurance Employees' Association was held at Pune on 6th August 2017. The participation of nearly 400 women comrades from Maharashtra, Goa and Gujarat was historic achievement.

The convention began with flag hoisting at the hands of Com. Sanjeevani Deshpande & Pradnya Tapare, President of IEA Pune 1& 2 respectively. It was followed by a prayer sung and composed by lady comrades. The convention was presided by Com. Vasant Nalawade, President, WZIEA.

Com. Gita Shant, Zonal Convener, Women Coordination Committee of North Central Zone Insurance Employees' Federation, while inaugurating the convention in her inimitable style cautioned women comrades about the ill effects of neo liberal policies on working class in general and women in particular. She also appealed to the employees to prepare themselves for struggles to protect their rights, benefits and public sector insurance industry.

Com. Kiran Moghe of AIDWA was chief guest. She narrated the plight of unorganized working women and rising worldwide struggles of workers against exploitation. She informed the pitiful situation of widows of suiciding farmers and their families.

Com. H.I.Bhatt, General Secretary, Wziea explained the Charter of Demands, pending issues in particular pension option and listing

of PSGI Companies. Com. Falguni Mehata, Convener WZIEA Women Sub committee, Com. Asha Velingkar Jt. Convener, Com. Neha Mote Jt. Convener and Conveners of divisional units expressed their views. Com. Nalawade in his presidential address explained about growing attacks on our syncretic values and idea of India.

While proposing vote of thanks Com. Varsha Deshmukh made a special mention of male comrades of Pune units for their guidance and contributions.

A donation of Rd.10000/ was given for social work activity and a booklet "Bharari" containing essays and poems by women comrades was published on the occasion.

The convention concluded with inspiring song "Hum honge kamyab" by Com. Anjali Tatpuje.



31ST WOMEN CONVENTION OF MADURAI DIVISION – YET ANOTHER MILESTONE

The 31st Women Convention of ICEU, Madurai Division was held on 30th of July 2017 at Madurai in a very grand manner. The Divisional Office and the P&GS Units hosted the Conference and made wonderful arrangements. They conducted an essay competition in “Mangayarkarasi Higher Secondary, School, Sellur” on “Present Day Challenges before women and Solutions” and distributed the prize. There was an exhibition of photos of the Women Sub-Committee Activities in the past one year along with special focus on Com. K.P. Janakiammal, a veteran freedom fighter and one of the founder leaders of AIDWA, whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year. The Conference was well attended by around 200 women from across all 27 branch units of Madurai Division.

The Conference started with an array of Cultural Programmes. The foremost of the program was the choir by a team of women comrades and a solo song from the host unit. It was then followed by a dance depicting the safety of women today. A political satire on the present socio, political and economic status of the nation was then staged by “*Kaya/Kalai Kuzhu*” members and got overwhelming appreciation from the audience.

The Conference was presided over by Com. G. Aruna, Convener of Women Sub-Committee. Com. S. Nageswari, Women Sub-Committee Member of Divisional Office welcomed the gathering. Com. Aruna introduced the report in the house and as many as 7 comrades took part in the debate and enriched the report in various angles. Com. K. Samuelraj, General Secretary, TamilNadu Untouchability Eradication Front delivered the Special Address in the Conference. While appreciating the field work being done by Insurance Employees, he highlighted the inevitable role of Trade Unions to bring about harmony and peace in



the society against the divisive forces based on caste and religion. Com. S. Kowsalya whose husband fall prey to the Honour Killing, and Com. S. Selva Gomathi, Lawyer and a Trustee of SOCO Trust, who got a stay against the Government's ban on the sale of beef, were felicitated in the Conference. Both the activists shared their experience and their commitment towards the future movement, enthused the audience. Com. J. Vijaya, Jt. Convener, LICSZWWCC greeted on the occasion. Com. N.P. Rameshkannan, General Secretary, summed up the debate and announced the decisions of the Conference to activate Media Response Committee and to hold Women TU Classes.

The Souvenir of the Diamond Jubilee Conference of Madurai Division was released in the Conference by Com. K. Samuelraj and was received by Com. S. Rajamanickam, a senior leader and an office bearer of AIIPA, Madurai. Then prizes were distributed to the winners of the competition floated on the eve of the 30th Working Women Conference of ICEU, Madurai Division. Resolutions including Special Leave for Women for Gynecological problems and Relief to Insurance premiums from GST were passed unanimously. Com. G. Aruna as Convener and a team comprising of 12 office bearers for the ensuing term were elected in the Conference. The Conference came to an end with vote of thanks proposed by Com. S. Renuka, Joint Convener.

Seminar on “GST – Implications” at Hyderabad

“People For India (PFI)” Forum, Hyderabad has organized a seminar on the topic “GST- It’s Implications”, on 21.07.2017, in the premises of Sundarayya Kala Nilayam, Baghlingampalli, Hyderabad. The seminar was presided over by Com. K Venu Gopal, Vice-President, AIIEA. Sri R Sashi Kumar, Chartered Accountant; Com. M Saibabu, General Secretary, CITU, Telangana State and Prof. K Nageshwar, Former MLC were the Chief Speakers. Over 400 employees from Insurance, Banking, Central and State Govts., Postal, Telecom, Medical sectors, Retd. employees and people from different walks of life have attended the seminar and made it a huge success.

Inaugurating the Seminar, Com K Venu Gopal opined that the BJP Govt. is trying to make people believe that GST is the biggest financial reform since independence. While informing that the entire service sector is brought under 18 % Tax slab, he condemned the act of levying increased GST on Insurance premium. It is unethical to levy GST on the risk portion of Insurance Premium and it is a great burden on the policy holder, he said. This move will adversely affect the insurance business, he cautioned.

Sri R Sashi Kumar, in his address, informed that GST is actually a reform in the Indirect Taxes system and it is present in not single but in three forms viz., CGST, SGST, IGST and five rates viz., 0%, 5%, 12%, 18% & 28%.

He said that the GSTN website will be in total control of the private corporate as they are the major shareholders. As more number of goods are brought in to the GST Orbit, the prices of essential commodities are bound to go up and there by surge in inflation, he cautioned.

Com. M Saibabu, while addressing the seminar, felt that GST cannot be implemented in India, due to the vast socio, economic, geographical differences prevailing in the country. He said, it is not correct to tax the few rich possessing 58% of the country’s wealth and the innumerable others possessing only 7% of the wealth, alike, at a common rate. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who opposed GST vehemently, when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, is now trying to project GST as his own brain child. This is a testimony to the double standards of the BJP Party, he ridiculed.

Prof. K Nageshwar, in his enlightening address, asked how Digital India, as being promoted vigorously by the Govt., is possible, when the GST on the Lap Tops and Computers, most used by students and youth, is increased. Raising the Slogan of “Skill India” on one hand, the Govt., levied tax on Pens, Pencils and exercise note books used by children, he commented. Those very people who gave the slogan of “Swatch Bharat”, have levied GST on Sanitary Napkins and while calling for “Cashless Economy”, levied GST on Debit/Credit Cards, he pointed. GST was imposed even on the Wheel Chairs being used by the Physically Challenged and the Braille Paper used by the Blind, he anguished.

All the speakers called for developing broader awareness among people, on all the anti-people policies being pursued by the government, by extensive usage of social media also.

The seminar concluded with Vote of thanks proposed by Com. K Venu Gopal.



Seminar on Privatisation and Joblessness at Patna

A seminar on "Privatisation and Joblessness" was jointly organized by Insurance Employees' Association Patna Division, IEAPD-II & B.J.S.G.I.E.A in the auditorium of Bihar Industries Association, Patna on 22nd July 2017. While inaugurating the seminar, eminent economist Prof. Dr. N. K. Choudhary threw light on the evils of privatization, liberalization and globalization and its effect on employment. He said that privatisation not only kills jobs, it also brings about outsourcing, contractualisation and casualisation in a big way. He further said that with the advent of new economic and industrial policies in 1991 Joblessness and unemployment started growing fast.

Speaking on the occasion, Com. Shreekant Mishra, General Secretary Eastern Zone Insurance Employees' Association criticised

NDA Government for jeopardizing the scope of employment. He said that public sector industries in Defence, Railways, Telecom, coal, Bank, Insurance are all under attack. The Government has decided to privatise public Sector General Insurance companies in which New India assurance is likely to be the first victim. He reiterated that if disinvestment and privatization become the state policy, LIC can never remain safe.

Nearly 250 participants attended the seminar, jointly presided by Com. V.K.Verma, Com. R.N.Choudhary and Com.S.N.Prasad. Com. Sanjay Jha, (Joint Secretary, AIEA) Com. Om Prakash and Com. Vishal Saran (General Secretary of IEAPD & IEAPD-II) also spoke in the seminar.

Medical Awareness Camp by Chennai-I

As part of its Diamond Jubilee celebrations, AICEU, Chennai Division-I arranged for a Medical Awareness Camp at Chennai on August 5, 2017. Two young and highly qualified doctors from the MIOT Hospital, Chennai, addressed the participants.

Com. S.Rameshkumar, General Secretary, ICEU, Chennai Division-I, who presided over the session, besides welcoming the Chief Guests and the audience, briefly explained the significant background of the two doctors.

Dr.Benoy John, M.D., D.M (Cardiology) Director & Head, Dept. of Cardiology, MIOT International, Chennai, in his address, explained that interventional cardiology treatment is famous now-a-days for treatment of heart ailments and went about explaining the types of blocks in the heart, various methods of surgery and treatment and stressed the need for people aged 45 and above to do regular exercises to avoid hypertension, which would lead to heart attacks. He also urged

that it is essential to have regular check-up of the functioning of the heart and in case of any abnormality, rush to a hospital without wasting time. After explaining the processes of Angioplasty, Blocks in the Coronary Arteries, Valve Therapy, Venogram, Heart Transplant, etc., he felt that with Health Insurance facilities available for the LIC employees, it would not be difficult for them to go in for specialized treatment for heart diseases.

Dr.Shankar Balakrishnan, M.D., D.M (Neurologist), MIOT Hospital, mainly dealt with the Parkinson's disease caused due to problems in the brain, and explained how the disease is diagnosed by scanning and treated by brain stimulation. He told the audience that



there were five stages in the disease and in advanced cases Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) is being done to cure the patient. He cited many examples to show how DBS improves the functioning of the limbs of patients, who got relieved from the disease. He also explained the various processes of insertion of Electrodes in the brain to make its functioning normal.

Both the doctors exhibited films which were helpful to the audience to understand the various procedures being adopted to cure the patients of their diseases. At the end, some comrades in the audience sought

certain clarifications, which were explained by the doctors. To honour the doctors for their commitment and highly useful participation in the Camp, they were presented with Mementos. Com.K.David former manager of Insurance worker Journal presented memento to Dr.Binoy John and Com.K.Sridhar, Divisional Union Treasurer presented memento to Dr.Sankar Balakrishnan.

Com.S.Rameshkumar profusely thanked the doctors and also the audience, who participated in the camp.

Campaign against agrarian distress and food security

As per the decision of AIIEA Secretariat Meeting held on 31.5.2017 at Hyderabad, the three issues were identified - agrarian distress and food security; neoliberalism, privatization and joblessness & unity of the working class - the essence of progress. All the three issues are of great significance & in order to prepare the employees to understand and to campaign on these issues the units were advised to undertake one of the activities every month.

On the issue of agrarian distress and food security, NZIEA has got printed twenty thousand pamphlets for distribution amongst farmers' community, employees and general public. The organization is of the firm view that the farmers' community and the agriculture workers are badly affected due to the criminal apathy of the government towards them. It is necessary to make aware the people of this country including our employees through campaign to understand the issue in depth. The units were also advised to undertake

campaign - to hold seminar/convention, distribute leaflets and any other mode of campaign so that the message goes to the people of this country.

We have received report from NZIEA Delhi Divisional Committee 1 & 2 that during the march to Parliament undertaken by the farmers community from Ramlila Maidan to Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on 9th August 2017, the comrades of Delhi-1&2 distributed the pamphlets in bulk to the participants. On behalf of NZIEA the comrades welcomed the participants in the rally. The agriculture workers and farmers were also highly emotive on their welcome by our comrades. In that sense the comrades of Delhi-1 & 2 have performed their duty on campaign on the issue with full zeal. During the rally, comrades interacted with the general public also explaining them the real issues of farmer community is facing since the inception of neo-liberal policies and also the urgent need of united struggle by all sections of the society.

Comrade Benoy Aich

Com. Benoy Bhusan Aich, former leader of the general insurance employees' movement and founder General Secretary of Eastern Zone General Insurance Employees' Association after suffering from prolonged illness breathed his last in the early hours on 31st July, 2017. He was 89 years old. He left behind three sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, relatives and innumerable friends, colleagues and comrades. His death created a gloom of pall in all offices of General Insurance companies. The past and present leaders of the organization paid floral tributes.

Com Benoyda made enormous contribution to the growth of the organization and its functioning. Insurance Worker condoles his death and shares the grief with the bereaved family and thousands of friends and comrades of Com Benoyda.

CONFERENCE OF LICPA, THANJAVUR

The 9th General Conference of LIC Pensioners' Association, Thanjavur Division was held on 12th July 2017 at com R G Ninaivarangam (Union office premises of ICEU/ Thanjavur Dn). After paying homage to comrades Dindigul R Narayanan, Com RG, departed leaders, pensioners of Thanjavur Division and others the session commenced.

Com K Lakshmanan, president, LIC PA, Thanjavur Dn presided. Around 120 pensioners, two central committee members of AIIPA from Tamilnadu and office bearers of LIC & GIC Pensioners Associations from Tamilnadu Divisions attended the conference. Com R Balan, joint secretary welcomed the gathering.

COM K NATARAJAN, vice president, AIIPA, in his inaugural address, explained the rationale behind the decision of AIIPA to keep away from the legal battle indulged by some other organisations. He referred to the judgements of Jaipur, Rajasthan and other High courts which vindicated AIIPA's stance that LIC has no powers to decide on the issues of Pensioners which can be decided only by the Central government through notification. Taking this fact into consideration and also certain observations made by the judges, while pronouncing the judgements, AIIPA reviewed the position and decided to enter into legal fray, he averred.. Senior counsel Sri Nag Mohan Dass, former Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court, who was engaged to argue our case, put forth his arguments most effectively in the Delhi High Court, Com Natarajan pointed out. He further observed that the judges were

very much impressed by the arguments of our counsel and made certain observations, which raised hope that the judgement would be favourable to us. But, unfortunately, the judgement was totally negative on the issue of UPDATION & provided only partial relief on the issue of 100% neutralisation, that too for a section of pensioners.

He further informed that AIIPA made a deep study of the judgement and after having consultations with our counsel, decided to file SPECIAL LEAVE PETITION in the Supreme Court challenging the same. He assured the pensioners that AIIPA would take care of the pensioners' demands and take suitable steps to achieve them. He made an appeal to liberally contribute to defray the legal expenses.

Com S R Krishnamurthy, Secretary, LIC PA, Thanjavur submitted the report. 8 comrades participated in the debate and enriched the report. After summing up by the Secretary, the report was adopted unanimously.

Com R Punniyamurthy, Vice president, SZIEF and com S Selvaraj, General secretary, ICEU, Thanjavur Division greeted the conference and assured their support and cooperation to the pensioners.

Resolutions on Updation, 100% neutralisation of DA to pre 01.08.1997 retirees and other pending issues were adopted unanimously.

Comrades S R KRISHNAMURTHY, R BALAN & S ARAVAMUDAN were elected as president, secretary and treasurer for the ensuing year.

Com P Vijayakumar, joint secretary proposed vote of thanks.

MEMORANDUM AGAINST GST



As per call given by All India Insurance Employees Association (AIIEA), ICEU Machilipatnam Division met GST Council Member and Andhra Pradesh State Finance Minister Sri Yanamala Ramakrishnudu on August 4, 2017 at his Chamber in AP Assembly Secretariat and gave representation for withdrawal of GST on insurance premium. The delegation explained in detail to the Finance Minister that GST has become a burden on Policyholders. The Minister assured to take up the issue in GST COUNCIL

INSURANCE NEWS IN BRIEF

- ▶ A report by CII-Price waterhouse Coopers, "Evolving Considerations for the Indian Insurance Industry", states that while global average investment in digital technologies is increasing Indian insurance industry is lagging far behind – both in its level of digitalization and its ability to realise financial returns on its digital investments. Mobile adoption and internet trends under Digital India banner are bringing in a new generation of customers who are conversant and comfortable with using technology for their financial decisions, it further states. The Report also stresses on three key areas relevant to the insurance sector — simple products and low-cost distribution, digitisation and fraud management, and broadening the investment horizon
- ▶ Wannacry which has made many cry. The cyber attack threats have engulfed entire globe. India is the third worst hit country in the Wannacry attack. Hence there has been increase in demand for cyber crime insurance. But 55% companies in India do not have proper programme to assess the threat or a frame to determine the loss.
- ▶ Made for them, it seems so, if one goes by what has happened just last kharif and rabi seasons. They, the private insurance companies, have made a windfall of over Rs.16,700 crore in 2016-17. The tool is Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, which till recently was being allowed to be operated by the private companies only. These general insurance companies collected crop insurance premium of Rs.20,374 crore but paid out only Rs.3,655 crore to settle the claims. The claims filed were for Rs.5,650 crore. Government coolly says that there have been a few implementation problems even after Comptroller Auditor General (CAG) slapping it over the issue. In its performance audit report of Agriculture Crop Insurance Schemes, CAG has said, while huge funds were provided to private insurance companies, there was no provision to check whether the funds were properly utilised.
- ▶ It is being predicted that with GIC-Re going public there will be increase in the premium of health and motor insurance. GIC-Re has filed the draft red herring prospectus for public issue with SEBI. There are reports that LIC will be investing in GIC-Re.
- ▶ IRDA orders that all insurers having unclaimed amounts of policyholders for a period of more than 10 years as on September 30, 2017 will have to transfer all such amount to Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund before March 1, 2018.
- ▶ An expert panel appointed by IRDA has recommended shifting to Risk-Based Capital (RBC) to fix the solvency ratios of the insurers. The panel says that the present system, which fixes the solvency ratios based on the reserves and the sum at risk for the life insurer, is not sufficiently transparent or risk-focused to adequately reflect the true financial conditions of the insurer. The RBC method, on the other hand, is risk-focused and follows the standards adopted in developed countries.
- ▶ Life insurance industry in India collected first year premium of Rs.53,659.66 crore during the period April-July 2017 registering an increase of 18.59% over the same period of last year. While LIC garnering Rs.39539.01 crores, an increase by 18.62%, has captured a market share of 73.68%. With respect to number of policies during the said period LIC's market share works out to 74.86% procuring 5125173 policies.
- ▶ The first quarter of the present financial year has given LIC a whopping 145% increase in the profit on sale of equity investments. Last financial year during the period – April to June – LIC had made a profit of Rs.2489 crore, while this year for the same period LIC has garnered a profit of Rs.6100 on the sale of equity investments. During this period LIC has invested Rs.1600 crore in the equity market.
- ▶ Natural disasters have caused an estimated insured loss, world-wide, of US\$ 22 billion during the first half of 2017 (January to June 2017). 76% of these losses are generated by the events in US. During the same period the global economic (uninsured) losses from natural catastrophes are estimated at US \$53 billion.
- ▶ In USA, recently some insurers and benefit managers are insisting the patients to forgo generics and buy brand-name drugs. Consumers are getting increasingly angry over what they pay for drugs. On one hand the insurers campaign favouring generics but in practice it is quite opposite. More often than not the pharmacists inform the patients that their insurance policy covers only brand-name drugs.

A.M.KHAN, DHARWAD

ECONOMIC TID BITS

- The US House of Representatives have proposed a plan to cut more than \$ 5 trillion from social programmes over the next decade. The proposals include \$ 4 trillion cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, \$ 150 billion cut in food stamps, reduced support for student loans and grants and cut on social security disability coverage. Alongside the proposals to cut social programmes budget, there is a proposal to increase spending for US military spending to the tune of US \$ 929 billion to prepare for war and social unrest.
- The IMF has downgraded the forecast for growth of UK by 0.3% to 1.7% this year. The IMF forecast Chinese growth at 6.4% an increase of 0.2 points from the last quarter. The forecast for Japan was increased to 1.3% this year an increase of 0.1% and the euro union growth rate was revised upward by 0.2% to 1.9%. Of the major economies of G7, Canada's growth rate was 2.5% this year, up 0.6% from the last quarter. However, IMF has downgraded the growth of Canada from 2% to 1.9% next year. Maurice Obstfeld, the Chief Economist of IMF has said that in advanced economies, median incomes have stagnated and inequality has risen over several decades. Even as unemployment is falling, wage growth still remains weak which is reducing the living standards of vast majority, which has the potential risk of "exacerbating social tensions".
- The Indian Ministry of Defense (MoD) has requested Finance Ministry additional funds of Rs. 200 billion (\$ 3.1 billion) to speed up procurement of ammunitions, armaments and other war materials, due to the escalating tensions at Doklam between India and China. India's military budget has risen almost five fold from \$ 11.8 billion in 2001 to some \$ 56 billion now.
- According to a study by Global risk management firm Willis Towers Watson, in USA the employers reduced their expenditure on retirement benefits by a staggering 25% between 2001 and 2015. In addition to cutting retired and current workers' benefits, the Corporations have eliminated traditional "defined benefit" retirement benefits, replacing them with "defined contribution plans" under which the final payouts are largely determined by the vagaries of stock market. According to the study, the percentage of employers offering DB plans plummeted from 45% to just 7% between 2001 and 2015. According to the study, 44% of older workers (aged 55 plus) who are concerned about their future finances and 64% of those who are struggling financially expect to work to age 70 or more.
- According to a study by Pew Research Centre, number of Americans aged 65 or more who are working jumped from 13% in 2000 to nearly 19% in 2016 and is expected to increase to 32% in the next five years. Over 25 million Americans 60 years or more are economically insecure, living at or below 250% of the Federal poverty level or \$ 29425 a year for an individual, according to the National Council on Aging. The study also notes that since the financial crash of 2008, the desire for retirement guarantees has been rising steadily, up 17 points since 2009.
- The unemployment rate of USA is 4.4%. According to the recent "Real Wage Index", the real wages in USA have fallen by 7.5% since 2006. In real terms, average wages in the US peaked more than 40 years ago. The share of US GDP to labour has fallen to the lowest level since the end of World War II. However, since post 2008 crisis low point of March 2009, the Dow has risen by 340% resulting in widening gap between rich and poor. According to US Labour department report, during the past four decades major work stoppages has declined by 90% and between 2007-2016, the average work stoppage by workers was just 14 per year.
- On 28th July 2017, Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos became the world's richest person in the world for few hours after making a gain of \$ 1.4 billion when the shares of Amazon surged by 1.6% in the New York Stock Exchange. He holds 17% of the shares of Amazon. This is in sharp contrast to the low wages earned by Amazon's Global workforce.
- According to Federal Reserve, the Dow has risen by 11% this year and an investment of \$ 10000 made in 2007 would now be worth \$ 33600. However, only 15% of the US households hold stocks, majority being the financial elites.

■ J.SURESH, MYSORE

WORKING CLASS STRUGGLES

Queensland: Brisbane bus drivers continue strike action

Brisbane City Council bus drivers held a four-hour strike on 2nd August in protest against a proposed enterprise agreement offer by the council. The strike followed two two-hour stoppages and a four-hour stoppage over the past two weeks. Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) members want the agreement to improve wages and safety and allow workers to have a say in shift arrangements.

Nationwide strike by educators set in Chile

Following an August 5 national assembly, Chile's College of Professors union announced a strike for August 17. The nationwide stoppage will protest the recent passage of a law called New Public Education (NEP), which union president Mario Aguilar said "does not resolve the great problems in Chilean education" and "maintains the logic of the market," further threatening public education. The walkout will also protest delays in payments of wages and benefits owed by some municipalities. Hundreds of teachers from San Fernando, began a march August 4 to Santiago to demand an audience with president Michelle Bachelet and the education minister.

72-hour strike by Uruguayan anesthesiologists over pay dispute

The Surgical Anesthesiologists Syndicate (SAQ) in Uruguay called a three-day strike August 2-4 to demand that the State Health Services Administration (ASSE) comply with agreements reached in 2007 and ratified in 2008 and 2010. According to the SAQ, the ASSE had agreed to equalize pay for the 2,000 anesthesiologists, but failed to carry out the promise.

Colombian hospital workers strike for overdue pay

Workers for the University Hospital of Santander (HUS) in Colombia walked off the job August 5 following failed talks with Darsalud, their contract employer, over unpaid wages for the last three months. Striking workers protested in front of the hospital, intermittently blocking the entrance and declaring their resolve to continue their industrial action until they have been paid.

Nicaraguan public transit workers strike over infrastructure improvement demands

Public transport drivers in the city of Boaco, Nicaragua stopped work on August 3 to press their demands for infrastructure improvements. The drivers struck after having submitted several fruitless petitions to the city council of Boaco, the capital city of the department of the same name

Hundreds of buses were grounded by the action.

Toronto legal aid workers set to strike

Workers at West Toronto Community Legal Services (WTCLS) have voted to go on strike after the employer cut their monetary offer in half in retaliation for an appeal by their union to the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB). The workers at WTCLS, which is funded by Legal Aid Ontario, provide legal and housing support to low-income and disabled people in the area. After rejecting the employer's latest offer workers delivered a unanimous strike vote to their bargaining agent, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU).

Nuclear workers in northwest England to be balloted for strike

Around 5,000 staff employed by Sellafield Ltd, which is part of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, are to ballot for possible strike action. They are members of the Unite and GMB unions and are protesting the imposition of a 1.5 percent pay increase, which is below the inflation rate and has been preceded by years of inadequate increases amounting to cuts in real pay terms.

Protest and strike threat by Croatian ship workers

On August 7, workers employed by the Croatia state owned shipping company, Jadrolinija, held a protest in Split and threatened strike action. They are members of the Independent Union of Seafarers of Croatian Passenger Ships. They have several grievances relating to their pay and conditions. They have not had a pay increase for 10 years and recently had their pay cut. Some workers have no security, being on fixed term contracts. Some on-board staff are expected to work 19 hours in a row in contravention of the legal limit of a 14-hour day.

Pilots and engineers strike over redundancy payments at Nigerian airline

Airline pilots and engineers have declared a national strike over the sacking, without termination payments, of 600 of their colleagues at Aero Contractors of Nigeria Company.

The airline company is currently being bailed out by the state-financed Asset Management Corporation of Nigeria (AMCON) with the resulting loss of jobs.

Ugandan rail workers strike over unpaid wages and security funds

Hundreds of rail workers went out on strike July 26 in Uganda demanding the payment of June and July's wages.

■ **S.SRIDHARA, MYSORE**

For our Field Force

Lapsed policies : "The premium from lapsed policies cannot be transferred to shareholders fund. It remains in the life fund and gets distributed to those who are regularly paying premium," IRDAI member (Life) Nilesh Sathe said.

Unclaimed amounts: IRDAI has asked insurance companies to move the unclaimed monies, which are unclaimed for 10 years from the date it was payable to the policyholder or the beneficiary, to the Senior Citizens Welfare Fund, which has been created by the government. **Unclaimed amount is money that is due to policyholders or beneficiaries in the form of death claim, maturity claim, survival benefits, premiums refunds or indemnity claims—including accrued interest—but has not been claimed for more than 6 months since the settlement date.** However, policyholders and beneficiaries are eligible to claim it up to 25 years from the date of transfer of the same to the Senior Citizen's Welfare Fund.

Digitisation failure: Less than 2% of the insurance policies have been digitised even after 4 years of its introduction. India is the only country which is trying to digitise insurance policies. LIC is not participating in this system to avoid additional costs. Instead, **LIC has started its own e-services which can be used to avail of a list of services including viewing the policies in an electronic format.** According to Private Insurance Cos., policyholders are seeking physical document even after digitising and hence they are incurring more expenses. But, IRDAI is indicating that it'll be made compulsory in next 2 years.

LIC 51% growth : In July 2017, LIC reported an increase of 51.4% in premium during the month at Rs.16,254.91 crore as against Rs.10,737.92 crore in July 2016. For 23 private sector players, the total business premium last month increased 34% to Rs.4,172.76 crore from Rs.3,116.52 crore.

LIC need not : LIC does not have to reduce its stakes to 15% or less in companies where it has strategic investments, like Corporation Bank and LIC Housing Finance. IRDAI has asked LIC to reduce its stakes in L&T and ITC to 15% by December 2018. Moreover, it would extend the time by a year for LIC to reduce its stakes in these two companies if LIC needed more time.

Rs.4 Lakh Cr investment : LIC is looking to invest around Rs.4 lakh crore in fiscal year 2018. This will be its highest ever investment in absolute terms.

145% jump in profit: LIC has registered a whopping 145% jump in profit, from Rs.2,489 Crs to Rs.6,100 Crs, from sale of equities in the April-June quarter of the current financial year.

Claims without Death Certificate : The Gujarat and Assam floods are being ranked among the biggest natural disasters. LIC is obtaining a list of deceased from the state government and reaching out to the victims' relatives to settle death claims. LIC has waived the death certificate requirement for such settlements and would pay out claims on the basis of documents issued by state authorities.

Policyholder money loot : According to IRDAI, Rs.78 crore was siphoned off from the books of the Sahara India Life Insurance Co. in 2014-15 and transferred to the parent company Sahara India on the pretext of opening 650 new offices, in violation of the Insurance Act.

Expense ceiling: The overall expense ratio for the life insurance industry (excluding Aviva Life, Sahara Life and Bharti AXA Life) was 15.5% in 2015-16. **LIC has the lowest expense ratio of 8.5%.** IRDAI chairman T.S. Vijayan hinted that a cap on insurers' expense ratio will be made mandatory.

Growth from Demonetisation: Premium collected by life insurance companies more than doubled in November when demonetisation was announced. A study by the Reserve Bank of India, named Mint Street Memo, noted that most of these were single-premium policies where the amount is paid in lump sum rather than periodically. (LIC wasn't able to collect old notes. It seems Banks have diverted the deposited amounts to the insurance companies promoted by them.)

Highest GI Growth : The general insurance industry reported its highest-ever year-on-year growth of 32% in premium collection in FY17 because of crop insurance. And in July, **for the first time, private sector non-life insurance companies moved ahead of the four state-owned companies in premium collection.** In FY17, private sector general insurers reported a growth of 35%, driven by crop insurance **as they had 73% share in crop insurance business.**

Insurance gets attraction : With gold losing sheen and real estate prices cooling off, it is expected that Indian households will prefer financial products, including insurance, for savings.

Aadhar not mandatory : IRDAI has clarified that Aadhar is not a mandatory requirement for Know Your Customer (KYC) in the insurance sector.

ARIVUKKADAL, THANJAVUR



It is unfortunate and sad that India has lost three prominent scientists, Prof. U R Rao, Prof. Yash Pal and Prof. P M Bhargava within the span of few days.

Professor PM Bhargava the founder-director of Hyderabad-based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) died on August 1. He was 89. Professor Bhargava was well known scientist and a guide to many in the country, who are committed to the promotion of science and scientific temper amongst our citizens. He was the first scientist to return his Padma Bhushan award to the government, after the nation was shocked at the killing of Prof. M M Kalburgi and lynching of Akhlaq.

Prof. Yash Pal was one of the prominent scientists of his time, who reminded the Indian

State of its societal duties and contributed his energies towards creating platforms from where the message of scientific temper could be spread. Professor Yash Pal passed away on July 24 in New Delhi, on the same day when his one time colleague, Prof. U R Rao passed away in Bengaluru. Both these stalwarts shared in their heart the love for their fellow citizens, and respect for the pluralistic, composite cultural ethos of India.

Insurance Worker deeply mourns the demise of these great personalities and shares the grief with the bereaved families and all progressive sections of the Indian society.

Insurance Worker congratulates Soumik



Master Soumik Dey, secured 9th position in the Assam Higher Secondary Council Examination held in the year 2017

from Ramanuj Junior College, Silchar with letter marks in all the subjects. He secured 660 marks out of 720 in NEET Examination and secured 170 rank in All India Ranking and number one in Assam State. In JEE (mains) and JIPNER he secured 5972 and 287 respectively. He has taken admission in BHU (Varanashi) Medical College. He is the youngest son of Comrade Arpita Dey of Jeevan Prakash Base committee of Silchar D.O

and Shri Sishir Kr. Dey, Branch Manager P&GS Silchar unit. Insurance worker congratulates Soumik and wishes him many more success in the days to come.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Month	Base 2001	Base 1960
October 2016	278	6345.60
November	277	6322.77
December	275	6277.12
January 2017	274	6254.30
February	274	6254.30
March	275	6277.12
April	277	6322.77
May	278	6345.60
June	280	6391.25

Base1960=Base2001x22.8259

Response



August 2017 issue is very informative and educative. Amaratya Sen's Towards Unfreedom is a damning indictment of the present political atmosphere. The journal helped me to understand the issue of Kashmir and its rich cultural heritage. Hats off to Editorial team. Happy Independence Day.

- P.Muthukumaran
TIRUVANNAMALAI

This refers to the editorial 'attack on syncretic values'. The Kashmir issue has become a more sensitive one, even a saner advice is misconstrued as unpatriotic. One must appreciate the deep concern expressed by the editorial. It has elaborately analysed the root causes about the wanton destruction and mayhem in the Kashmir valley. What is needed now is continuous frank and sincere dialogue not jingoistic reactions. People expect the government to pay heed to the saner voices and restore peace and tranquillity in the valley.

K.Narayana Rao,
BANGALORE

DONATIONS

Com.Simarjit Bhatia, Muktsar Br,Jalandhar Div. Rs. 500
Com. G. Periyaswamy CBO-II, Madurai Div. 1000
Insurance Worker heartily thanks these comrades for their fine gesture

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ఖాతాదారుల సేవలో 60 సం॥లు * ఖాతాదారుల సేవలో 60 సం॥లు * ఖాతాదారుల సేవలో 60 సం॥లు *



ఎల్.ఐ.సి. ఎంప్లాయిస్ కో-ఆపరేటివ్ బ్యాంక్ లిమిటెడ్.,

(స్థాపితం : 1952, రిజిస్టర్ నెం. 15 ఎన్ ఎన్)

జవన్ ప్రకాష్ జల్లింగ్, గ్రాండుప్లూరు, కెన్నడీరోడ్, మచిలీపట్నం - 521001.

☎ : 223469, 222269, Fax : 226987

ది. 16-1-2017 నుండి డిపాజిట్లపై అమలులో ఉన్న వడ్డీరేట్లు

15 రోజుల నుండి	30 రోజుల వరకు	- 5.00%
31 రోజుల నుండి	3 నెలలలోపు	- 5.25%
3 నెలల నుండి	6 నెలలలోపు	- 6.25%
6 నెలల నుండి	1 సంవత్సరం లోపు	- 7.00%
1 సంవత్సరము నుండి	3 సంవత్సరముల లోపు	- 7.50%
3 సంవత్సరముల నుండి	5 సంవత్సరముల లోపు	- 7.00%
5 సంవత్సరములు ఆపైన		- 6.50%

**60 సం॥ల వయస్సు నిండిన ఖాతాదారులకు
 డిపాజిట్లు పై 0.5% ఎక్కువ వడ్డీ కలదు.**

నెలకు, మూడు నెలలకు, ఆరు నెలలకు వడ్డీ తీసుకొను సదుపాయం కలదు.

దూరప్రాంతముల వారు డిడి ఛార్జీలు మినహాయించుకొని

LIC Employees Co-operative Bank Ltd., పేరున మచిలీపట్నంలో

చెల్లుబాటు అగునట్లు డిడి పంపవచ్చును.

తక్కువ అద్దెతో లాకర్ల సౌకర్యం కలదు.

పూర్తి వివరములకు బ్యాంకును సంప్రదించగలరు.

బ్యాంక్ పాలకనర్లను

సిహెచ్. రవికుమార్

అధ్యక్షులు

ఎస్.వి. రత్నారావు

ఉపాధ్యక్షులు

ఛైర్మన్లు

కటకం నాగేశ్వరరావు

కట్లా భాస్కరరావు

కొల్లవర అమర్నాథ్

పి.వి. శ్రీనివాసరావు

తోట శ్రీనివాసరావు

మున్నంగి రాజేశ్వరరావు

జి. కృష్ణప్రసాద్

యం.డి. షరీఫ్, CEO

ఖాతాదారుల సేవలో 60 సం॥లు * ఖాతాదారుల సేవలో 60 సం॥లు * ఖాతాదారుల సేవలో 60 సం॥లు *