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**NATION NOW DEBATES
WHAT THE GOVERNMENT
DID IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS -
ON PROMISES ON JOB CREATION,
BLACK MONEY, ACHHE DIN,
SAB KA SAATH SAB KA VIKAS....
PM MUST ASK FOR VOTES ON
HIS PERFORMANCES AND NOT
ON PREVIOUS PMS' FAILURES**

**A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR
WORKING CLASS & PROGRESSIVE FORCES
TO RECLAIM INDIAN REPUBLIC**



**JALLIANWALA BAGH
MASSACRE
...100 YEARS**

**13 APRIL
1919**



**WOMEN'S DAY &
SOCIALIST FEMINISM**



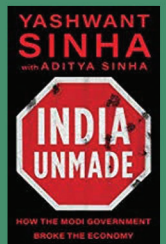
**WEALTH CONCENTRATION
& A NEW IMPERIALISM**

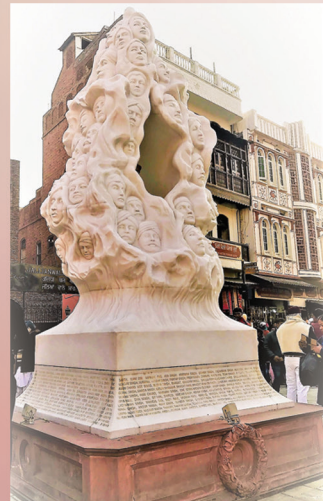
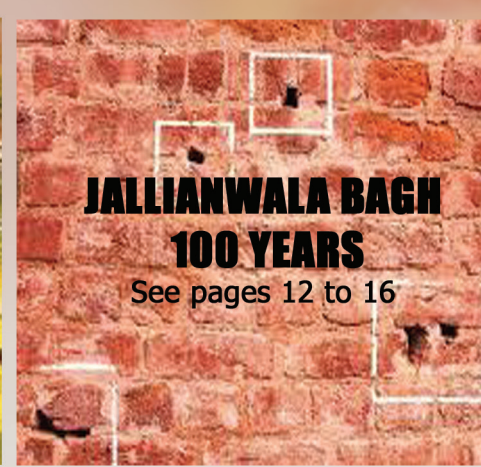


MODI'S FIVE YEARS.....



A LOOK-BACK





MEMORIALS TO THE MARTYRS



RECLAIM THE INDIAN REPUBLIC

The Election Commission has announced a seven phase polling to elect a new Lok Sabha and the Government. The polling will begin on 11th April and end on 19th May. The counting will be taken up on 23rd May, 2019 and results are expected the same day. Simultaneous elections will be held for four State Assemblies of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. The Election Commission has decided not to conduct elections in Jammu & Kashmir where the Assembly stays dissolved for a long time. This is disappointing. Delaying elections in this State appear to be for reasons political rather than inability to put a proper security mechanism.

These elections are very crucial for the future of the country. The elections provide an opportunity to debate on the problems the country is facing. The people would also like to know what vision the political parties have to overcome these problems. The problems are aplenty. There is a deep economic, social and cultural crisis. Despite the growth in the economy, the country is witnessing joblessness at a 45 year high. The benefits

of growth are cornered by a few rich leading to massive income and wealth inequalities. Agriculture on which more than 50 percent of the workforce depends is in unprecedented crisis impacting the Rural India very adversely. Manufacturing despite slogans of Make in India etc show no sign of a pick-up. The twin shock of demonetisation and hasty implementation of GST has virtually destroyed the informal sector killing millions of jobs in the process. The public sector institutions that laid the foundations for industrialisation of the country and self reliant economy are systematically denigrated and attacked. Privatisation of public sector and dependence on foreign capital are the core policies that guide the neoliberal regime.

The Constitution based on which the Indian Republic is built is under severe stress and strain. There are shrill voices from the rightwing for replacing of Constitution. The fundamental rights guaranteed like freedom of expression have come under tremendous attack. The independence of democratic institutions and judiciary is being undermined.

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The armed forces are being politicalised. The society is polarised on religious and casteist lines. There are increasing attacks on the religious, linguistic and cultural diversities threatening the unity and integrity of the country. The rightwing groups have been given a free hand to intimidate the minorities on the issue of eating and dressing habits. There are increasing attacks on the Dalits and crimes against women continue to rise.

The country must debate on these important issues. These debates will help the electorate to make an informed decision. But unfortunately these important issues have totally disappeared from national discourse. The media more importantly the electronic has failed the Indian people. A large section of the media has lost its independence and has become a mouthpiece of the government. Rather than critically analysing the governance in the last five years, the media has been scrutinising the opposition. The media today is engaged in raising the feelings of jingoism and

pseudo-nationalism. This is not surprising as the media today is controlled by big business houses like Reliance and Adani who have been the beneficiaries of crony capitalism. Rafael deal is a classic case of subversion of rules and the nation incurring costs to benefit a crony capitalist.

The Prime Minister is a master orator adept in inventing catchy slogans. The campaign main bhi chowkidar is ridiculous and tasteless. This country has a number of agencies whose job is to act as chowkidars. India needs a Prime Minister and not a chowkidar. We need a leader who lays down his vision as to how he would help construction of the Indian society where the benefits of development are equally shared and every citizen leads a life of dignity. Unfortunately, the Prime Minister rather than being the leader of the government has been playing the role of an opposition leader. The nation knows what Congress did and did not do when it ruled the country. The nation now wants to know what the Prime Minister

भारतीय गणतन्त्र बहाल करो

नई लोकसभा व नई सरकार के गठन हेतु चुनाव आयोग ने सात चरणों में चुनाव कराये जाने की घोषणा की है। चुनाव अप्रैल को शुरू होगा और मई को पूरा होगा। वोटों की गिनती मई को होगी और उसी दिन परिणाम आने की उम्मीद है। चार विधानसभाओं, आंध्र प्रदेश, उड़ीसा, सिक्किम व अरुणाचल प्रदेश के चुनाव भी लोकसभा के साथ ही होंगे। चुनाव आयोग ने जम्मू कश्मीर विधानसभा का चुनाव न कराने का निर्णय लिया है जहां विधानसभा बहुत पहले ही भंग कर दी गई थी। यह निराशाजनक है। इस राज्य में चुनाव न कराने का कारण सुरक्षा उपायों से अधिक राजनीतिक प्रतीत होता है।

ये चुनाव देश के भविष्य के लिये बहुत निर्णायक है। चुनाव देश के सामने खड़ी समस्याओं पर विचार-विमर्श करने का अवसर प्रदान करता है। जनता यह भी जानना चाहती है कि राजनीतिक दलों की इन समस्याओं पर विजय पाने के बारे में क्या राय है। समस्यायें अनेक हैं। देश में गहरा आर्थिक, सामाजिक व सांस्कृतिक संकट है। अर्थव्यवस्था में वृद्धि के बावजूद देश वर्ष में सबसे अधिक रोजगारविहीनता को देख रहा है। वृद्धि के लाभ धनी लोगों के द्वारा हथिया लिये गये हैं जिनके कारण आमदनी और सम्पत्ति की असमानता दिखाई देती है। कृषि जिस पर प्रतिशत मानव शक्ति निर्भर करती है, अभूतपूर्व संकट में है जिससे ग्रामीण भारत पर बहुत बुरा प्रभाव पड़ रहा है। मेक इन इंडिया व अन्य नारों के बावजूद विनिर्माण में उठान नहीं दिख रहा है। विमुद्रीकरण एवं जीएसटी को जल्दी में लागू करने के दोहरे आघातों के कारण अनौपचारिक क्षेत्र बर्बाद हो गया है जिससे लाखों रोजगार नष्ट हो गये हैं। सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उद्योग जिन्होंने देश के औद्योगिकीकरण

एवं आत्मनिर्भर अर्थव्यवस्था की नींव रखी थी, उनको जानबूझकर नीचा दिखाया जा रहा है और उन पर हमला किया जा रहा है। सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उद्योगों का निजीकरण और विदेशी पूंजी पर निर्भरता वे मुख्य आर्थिक नीतियां हैं जो नव-उदारवादी शासन को दिशा देती हैं।

संविधान जो भारतीय गणतन्त्र का आधार है, वह बड़े संकट में है। दक्षिणपंथ की ओर से संविधान को बदलने की तीखी आवाजें आ रही हैं। अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतन्त्रता जैसे मौलिक अधिकारों पर बड़ा हमला हो रहा है। जनतान्त्रिक संस्थाओं व न्यायपालिका की स्वतन्त्रता को कमजोर किया जा रहा है। सशस्त्र सेनाओं का राजनीतिकीकरण किया जा रहा है। समाज धार्मिक व जातिवादी भावनाओं पर धुंवीकृत हो रहा है। धार्मिक, भाषायी और सांस्कृतिक विविधताओं पर हमला हो रहा है जिससे हमारे देश की एकता व अखण्डता को खतरा पैदा हो रहा है। दक्षिणपंथी समूहों द्वारा अल्पसंख्यकों को उनके खाने तथा पहनने की आदतों के बारे में परेशान किया जा रहा है। दलितों पर हमले बढ़ रहे हैं तथा महिलाओं के विरुद्ध अपराधों में भी वृद्धि हो रही है।

देश को इस पर विचार-विमर्श करना चाहिये था। विचार-विमर्श मतदाताओं को निर्णय करने में सहायता कर सकता है। परन्तु दुर्भाग्य से ये गम्भीर मुद्दे केन्द्रीय विमर्श से गायब ही हो गये हैं। मीडिया और विशेष तौर पर इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया ने देश की जनता को असफल कर दिया है। मीडिया के बड़े हिस्से ने अपनी स्वतन्त्रता खो दी है। पिछले पांच वर्षों में मीडिया प्रशासन का भोंपू बन गया है। प्रशासन का गम्भीरता से विश्लेषण करने की बजाय मीडिया विपक्ष

and his party did in the last five years. Why it failed to redeem the promises made on job creation, black money and bringing achche din. The Prime Minister must ask for votes on the basis of his performance and not on the alleged failure of the earlier regimes. The Prime Minister must also understand that he is a leader of the country and not just a propagandist and he should desist from levelling unsubstantiated allegations and polarisation of the communities for electoral gains. It is very dangerous for democracy to politicise our defence forces and it would be self defeating to hide the failures of the government in tackling terror under the cover of national security. It is unfortunate that the opposition has fallen into a trap by responding to the agenda set by the Prime Minister rather than talking to the nation about the real issues of the people. The opposition must bring back the focus on the bread and butter issues of the people as they matter most.

The coming election has placed a great

responsibility on the working class. The working class has engaged itself in relentless struggles against neoliberal regimes. These struggles have certainly succeeded in slowing down the pace of neoliberal agenda. These struggles must continue to reverse not only the anti people and anti worker policies but also to place an alternative set of policies for discussions. Beginning can be made with the workers charter. This election provides an opportunity for working class to make all efforts to strengthen the Left and send as many leaders of workers as possible to the Parliament to have its voice in the nation building. The movement of workers should be directed towards strengthening of secular and democratic forces. No efforts should be spared to campaign against the current neo-liberal and communal dispensation and work for its defeat. This clearly is the task before the working class. These elections are a historic opportunity for the working class and progressive forces to reclaim the Indian Republic.

का मूल्यांकन कर रहा है। मीडिया अब कट्टरता व झूठे राष्ट्रवाद के मुद्दे उठाने में लगा हुआ है। यह आश्चर्यजनक नहीं है क्योंकि मीडिया बड़े उद्योग घरानों जैसे रिलायन्स व अडानी से नियंत्रित है जिसे परिवारी पूंजीवाद से लाभ मिल रहा है। राफेल सौदा नियमों की अनदेखी करने का अनोखा उदाहरण है और देश इस परिवारी पूंजीवाद की कीमत अदा कर रहा है।

प्रधानमंत्री भाषण देने की कला में विशेषज्ञ हैं और आकर्षक नारे खोजने में निपुण हैं। यह अभियान कि मैं भी चैकीदार हूँ हास्यास्पद एवं नीरस है। देश में ऐसी अनेक एजेन्सियाँ हैं जो चैकीदार का काम करती हैं। भारत को एक प्रधानमंत्री की जरूरत है न कि चैकीदार की। भारत को ऐसे नेता की जरूरत है जो ऐसी राय का निर्माण कर सके वह कैसे भारतीय समाज का निर्माण करेगा जहाँ विकास के लाभ हर नागरिक को बराबरी से मिलें तथा जहाँ प्रत्येक नागरिक इज्जत की जिन्दगी बसर कर सके। दुर्भाग्य से प्रधानमंत्री सरकार की अपेक्षा विपक्ष की नेता की भूमिका का निर्वाहन कर रहे हैं। देश यह जानता है कि जब कांग्रेस शासन में थी तो उसने क्या किया और क्या नहीं किया। देश यह जानता चाहता है कि प्रधानमंत्री और उनकी पार्टी ने पिछले पांच वर्षों में क्या किया ? वे काले धन, रोजगार सृजन व अच्छे दिन लाने में क्यों विफल रहे। प्रधानमंत्री को अपने प्रदर्शन पर वोट मांगने चाहिये न कि पहले के शासन की तथाकथित विफलताओं पर। प्रधानमंत्री को यह समझना चाहिये कि वे देश के नेता हैं, कोई प्रचारक नहीं और उन्हें विपक्ष पर अप्रमाणित आरोप लगाने से और चुनावी फायदे के लिये समुदायों का धुंवीकरण करने से बचना चाहिये। यह जनतन्त्र के लिये बहुत खतरनाक है कि सशस्त्र सेनाओं का राजनीतिकीकरण किया जाये तथा

राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के साये में भारत सरकार की विफलता को छुपाना खुद को धोखा देने जैसा है। यह दुर्भाग्य-पूर्ण है कि विपक्ष प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा तय किये हुए एजेण्डे का जवाब देने में पिंजड़े में फंस गया है बजाय इसके कि वह देश की जनता के वास्तविक मुद्दों पर विचार-विमर्श करता। विपक्ष को जनता की रोजमर्रा की जिन्दगी पर ध्यान केन्द्रित करना चाहिये क्योंकि वे ही ऐसी चीजें हैं जिनका सबसे अधिक महत्व है।

आगामी चुनावों ने मजदूर वर्ग पर भारी जिम्मेदारी डाल दी है। मजदूर वर्ग नव-उदारवादी शासनों के विरुद्ध कठिन संघर्षों में लगा हुआ है। यह संघर्ष नव-उदारवादी शासन की गति धीमी करने में निश्चित रूप से सफल हुए हैं। इन संघर्षों को सरकार की जन-विरोधी एवं मजदूर विरोधी नीति को पलटने के लिये जारी रहना चाहिये तथा जनता के समक्ष एक वैकल्पिक विचार-विमर्श रखने के लिए सक्षम होना चाहिये। शुरुआत मजदूरों के चार्टर से की जा सकती है। यह चुनाव मजदूर वर्ग को अवसर प्रदान करता है कि वह वामपंथ को मजबूत करने की दिशा में सारी ताकत झोंक दे ताकि वह संसद में वामपंथ के ज्यादा से ज्यादा सदस्य भेज कर राष्ट्र निर्माण में अपनी आवाज सुना सकें। मजदूरों के संघर्षों की दिशा धर्म-निरपेक्ष व जनतान्त्रिक ताकतों को मजबूत करने की ओर होनी चाहिये। मौजूदा नव-उदारवादी शासन और साम्प्रदायिक व्यवस्था को उखाड़-फेंकने के अभियान में कोई प्रयास शेष नहीं रहना चाहिये और इसकी पराजय के लिये काम किया जाना चाहिये। मजदूर वर्ग के सामने यह स्पष्ट काम है। ये चुनाव मजदूर वर्ग व देश की प्रगतिशील ताकतों के समक्ष भारतीय गणतन्त्र को बहाल करने का ऐतिहासिक अवसर प्रदान करते हैं।

INCLUDE INSURANCE RELATED ISSUES IN ELECTION MANIFESTO

AIIEA WRITES TO HEADS OF POLITICAL PARTIES ON 22ND MARCH 2019

The All India Insurance Employees' Association is the largest and oldest trade union of the insurance employees in India. The AIIEA has been playing a very constructive role in the progress of the public sector insurance industry and helping it to successfully meet the social and national objectives. You are aware of the magnificent contribution of Life Insurance Corporation in the nation building activity. This institution has been mobilising small savings of the people and converting them into long term capital for infrastructure and social sector. The National Policy on Health has also placed great reliance on health insurance to ensure that the citizens receive the financial security in case of unfortunate sickness.

In the past few years, insurance industry is going through a difficult period. In order to help this industry perform to meet the nation's expectations, the following measures are of immense importance. The Country is going to elect a new Lok Sabha in the next two months. As in the past your Party will place its vision for the development of country through its manifesto. We will be very happy if these issues find reflection in your Party's Manifesto.

1. Abolition of GST on Life and Health Insurance Premium

At present the risk portion of life insurance premium and the entire health insurance premium is being charged GST at the rate of 18%. This is unfair considering the nature of the services sought. Life Insurance is to protect against the uncertainties of life and a tax at such a steep rate is totally unjust. Similarly the GST on health insurance premium at 18% is equally unfair. This is creating a situation where people are looking to other modes of savings denying themselves the coverage against the uncertainties of life and adverse health conditions. We, therefore, request you to commit to abolish the GST on Life and Health Insurance Premium.

2. Separate IT exemption limit for life insurance premium

The life insurance premium is bracketed along with other types of savings under Section 80 (C) of Income Tax. Considering the uniqueness of the life insurance business, we request you to consider a separate exemption limit for the life insurance premium.

3. No to privatisation of public sector insurance industry

The LIC and the Public Sector General Insurance Companies must remain 100 percent under the control of the government. It has been historically proved that only where the State controls the peoples' savings; they can be channelized to national development. The control of private sector on domestic household savings will be for private profit maximisation. Considering the fact that our country is still a low income country, it is important for the insurance sector to remain a monopoly of the government for cross subsidisation and meeting the needs of the poorer and vulnerable sections of the population. We, therefore, expect you to commit to retain the LIC and PSGI companies as 100 percent government owned. We also request you to ensure that these institutions are given functional autonomy to meet the targets set for social and national objectives.

4. Withdrawal of Defined Contribution Pension Scheme

The above scheme is similar to the National Pension Scheme and is introduced for employees who joined the services of LIC and PSGI companies after 1.4.2010. We are opposed to this scheme on the same lines government employees are opposing the NPS. Please commit to withdraw this scheme and allow the institutions to revert back to defined contribution and defined benefit Pension Scheme.

We are confident that our suggestions will be incorporated in your Party Manifesto.

Workers' Convention Calls Upon the People Continue the Fight for Alternative Policies

For the first time after Independence, the central trade unions and independent industrial federations in the country joined together to adopt a 'Workers' Charter' and demanded that these demands be included in the election manifestoes of the political parties. The 'Workers' Charter' was unanimously adopted in the joint national convention of workers held in the Constitution Club Annexe on 5th March 2019. Around a thousand workers from across the country representing the leadership of all the ten central trade unions and the independent federations in the country participated in the convention.

The National Convention of Workers also called upon the working class and all sections of common people to strengthen the Left which is continuing to work tirelessly in the cause of the poor and the working class. The Convention also called upon the people to strengthen the secular and democratic forces in the interests of the unity of the people and the nation. Emphasising that the country had adequate resources to meet the demands raised in the 'Workers' Charter' the convention asserted that the neoliberal agenda being aggressively pursued by the present BJP led government has aggravated concentration of wealth in a few hands at the expense of the workers and peasants who created the wealth of the country. It has widened disparities to vulgar heights. Besides, the Convention decided to take the 'Workers' Charter' to all the workers and common people in the country through extensive campaign and also vowed to continue the struggle against the neoliberal policies, whichever government came to power after the elections, if it indulged in pursuing the same policies.

The Convention began by observing a minute's silence to pay homage to the martyrs of the terrorist attack in Pulwama.

Addressing the Convention, Com Tapan Sen said that the 'Workers' Charter' was an expansion of the 12 point charter of demands for which the entire trade union movement of the country has been fighting for several years. Three country wide general strikes, including the two day general strike on 8-9 January 2019, in which around 20 crore workers participated, were held during the tenure of this Modi government. But the present government was not only totally insensitive to the genuine demands of the workers, it sought to further perpetrate the attacks on the working class and all sections of toiling masses to facilitate amassing of wealth by a few corporates and business houses.

Tapan Sen said that during its entire tenure the BJP led Modi government took no initiative to address the Kashmir issue and kept it boiling with an intention to use it to polarise the country for its electoral benefit. After the Pulwama terrorist attack, when the entire country needs to stand united to fight terrorism as one man, the BJP leaders including the Prime Minister were shamelessly and criminally politicising the issue, for their electoral benefits by whipping up war hysteria among the people. In their quest for power, they have no qualms in provoking their outfits to attack innocent Kashmiri students and traders in various states in the country. This would further alienate the people in Kashmir and aggravate the situation threatening our national integrity and harmony.

Working class wants peace and progress; not war and destruction. The 'Workers' Charter' should be taken to the remotest nook and corner of the country reaching every worker, peasant and agricultural worker. The campaign should also be a warning to whichever government comes to power that the working class will not tolerate continuation of the neoliberal regime any more.

The national convention of workers demonstrated in no uncertain terms of the united will of the working class in the country to fight the anti worker, anti people and anti national neoliberal regime aiming at its reversal and for pro people and pro worker policies.



NEGOTIATIONS OPENED

LIC MAKES A WAGE INCREASE OFFER OF 10%

As scheduled, the information sharing session commenced with a joint session with all the unions on 12th March, 2019 at Mumbai. The LIC was represented by Sri Hemant Bhargava, Chairman-in-Charge; Sri B. Venugopal and Ms. Sunita Sharma, Managing Directors; Sri Sharad Srivastava, Executive Director (Personnel), Sri Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Addl. Executive Director (Personnel); Sri G.S. Chawla, Executive Director (IT/BPR); Sri G.S. Wanwar, Chief (Personnel); Ms. Aruna Seth, Secretary (Personnel) and other senior officials of Personnel and Marketing Department.

AIIEA was represented by Com. Amanulla Khan, President; Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary and Com. H.I. Bhatt, Joint Secretary.

The Joint Session commenced with a power point presentation by Sri Mukesh Gupta, Addl. ED (Personnel), on the financial strength of LIC and concerns before the organization. This was followed by another power point presentation by Sri G.S. Chawla, ED (IT/BPR), on the new initiatives being contemplated by LIC for bringing about improvements in policy servicing.

Sri B. Venugopal, Managing Director, addressed the session and appreciated the contributions of the employees to the growth of LIC. He gave a detailed account of the benefits given to employees in the last two years and requested that employees should give their pointed attention to the growth of the institution. Ms. Sunita Sharma, Managing Director, also addressed the joint session and solicited the help and cooperation of the employees for furthering the interests of the organization.

Sri Hemant Bhargava, Chairman-in-Charge, addressed the joint session and said that LIC was registering growth in both premium income and number of policies in the current financial year. He however expressed his concern over the fact that LIC's growth was much less than that of our peers in the private sector. He pointed out that some areas like persistency ratio and increase in surrenders

required our urgent attention. Sri Bhargava also underscored his concern over the decline in the growth of number of policies and the consequent increase in cost of policy servicing. He pointed out that LIC is developing some new products keeping the flavour of the market in mind and exuded confidence that this would help the organization in meeting the challenges of the competitive market. He said that LIC was constantly making efforts to improve and augment the benefits payable to employees and it was the sustained efforts that succeeded in realizing the long pending demand of final option on pension. He also informed that recruitment to the cadre of Assistants and direct recruitment to HGA cadre from among technically qualified persons would take place very soon and all the modalities are being worked out to expedite the process. The Chairman-in-Charge said that keeping the costs and all other factors in view, he was making a offer of 10% increase on the wage bill as at 1st August 2017.

Responding on behalf of AIIEA, Com. Amanulla Khan, President, said that AIIEA is happy that negotiations on wages at last commenced after eighteen months of the submission of Charter of Demands. He said that the offer of 10 per cent hike in wages was not acceptable to AIIEA; because this was neither commensurate with the financial strength of LIC and its paying capacity, nor was it in keeping with the aspirations of the employees. He said that the AIIEA shares the concerns expressed by the Chairman-in-Charge and other officials over the declining market share of LIC and slowdown in growth of policies and premium income. He however said that the growth of LIC cannot be viewed in isolation from the declining trend in household savings and overall slowdown in the economy.

Com. Amanulla Khan pointed out that the lower and middle income groups who traditionally constitute the core of the LIC's clientele have been the hardest hit by the policies of neo liberal globalization. It was therefore natural for the business of LIC to

AIIEA CALLS IT INADEQUATE DEMANDS SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT

be affected. He suggested that LIC should mine its data base to identify the high net worth individuals and approach them for policies suited to their needs citing insurance protection gap. He also said that there was an imperative need for product innovation keeping in mind the cultural issues. Commenting that GST of 18% was taking a heavy toll on our business, he urged LIC to take up this issue with the Government in all seriousness.

Com. Amanulla Khan thanked LIC for their consistent follow up on the issue of final option on Pension. He however said that the insistence of the government that a portion of the cost of pension be met by the employees has robbed the achievement of its grace. He demanded that LIC should take up this issue with the Government as it had committed to meet the entire cost. He pointed out to the decision of the government on Pension updation in RBI and urged LIC to take up this issue with the government and also the increase in the rate of family pension as obtains in government and RBI. He demanded that LIC should come out with improved offers of wage hike and settle the issue at the earliest so as to channelize the energies to give undivided attention to the challenges confronting LIC and ensure its continued dominance in the market.

A delegation of AIIEA consisting of Com. Amanulla Khan, President; Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary; Com. H.I. Bhatt and Com. Shreekanth Mishra, Joint Secretaries and Com. B.S. Ravi, Treasurer met the LIC management in the evening in the Individual Session. Sri Sharad Srivatsava, ED (Personnel), Sri Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Addl. ED (Personnel); Sri G.S. Wanwar, Chief (Personnel); Ms. Aruna Seth, Secretary (Personnel) and other officials of Personnel Department were present. The AIIEA delegation reiterated its demand for substantial improvement on the wage offers and said that it should be based solely on the strength of LIC, its paying capacity and the aspirations of the employees. On the question of final Pension option, the delegation demanded that the management should make

all efforts to address our concerns on costs to employees. The AIIEA brought to the notice of the officials that a few ex-servicemen and Engineers who were recruited after 28.6.1995 and chose to opt for PF should also be allowed to exercise fresh option. Responding to our demand of immediate recruitment in class III & IV cadre, the management informed that they were taking expeditious steps for recruitment of around 8000 Assistants. Expressing satisfaction over the efforts of the management in this respect, our delegation also demanded that LIC should come out with some solution for absorption of those temporary employees recruited under LIC Temporary Employees Recruitment Rules 1993 and are continued in the services and find an amicable solution to CGIT case without further prolonging the legal battle.

The delegation of AIIEA also raised other pending issues like PLLI, Five Day Week, reduction in interest rate of housing loans, introduction of a group insurance scheme for those employees who availed housing loan, solution to the pay fixation problems of Ex Servicemen employees etc. On the question of PLLI and five day week, the management informed that they are awaiting clearance from the government. On other issues, the management agreed to look into the matter. The AIIEA will continue to pursue these issues. Some individual Issues pertaining to zones were also represented.

The efforts of the AIIEA and the joint front have succeeded in securing the final pension option, opening the negotiations and a breakthrough in recruitment. The AIIEA congratulates the employees for the unity displayed and faith in struggles. The battle to secure a good wage revision is bound to be difficult and prolonged. We must therefore further solidify our unity and remain in absolute preparedness to plunge into action at the call of the organization to secure our eminently justified and legitimate demands.

ONE DECADE OF RELENTLESS STRUGGLE SUCCEEDS FINAL PENSION OPTION SECURED

The Finance Ministry gave its approval on March 1, 2019 for a final pension option to LIC and PSGI employees as recommended by the two institutions. This decision was communicated by the Government to LIC and GIPSA on 2nd March 2019 by the Government. Through this letter the government has imposed conditionalities of cost sharing by the employees taking away the grace of conceding this demand. The AIIEA has asked LIC and GIPSA to ensure that there is no cost to the opting employees or make all efforts to keep that cost at the minimum. Both the LIC and GIPSA have sent draft notifications to the government and they are expected to be notified soon. This done, the process of implementation will have to be streamlined. The Final option will be extended to all those employees, serving or retired who did not exercise the option earlier.

The insurance employees were agitating on this demand for more than a decade. This demand became relevant and important as economic conditions changed with a lower interest regime and pension becoming attractive with the introduction of full DA neutralisation in the year 2000 effective from 1.8.1997. Thereafter a few more improvements in the Pension Scheme came about with dependent parents, widowed/divorced daughters becoming eligible for family pension. The LIC and GIPSA accepted this demand and had recommended to the government for a final option on pension. There was vigorous follow up by both the institutions and Shri S.K.Roy, Chairman LIC wrote a detailed letter to the government on July 4, 2014 giving details of the cost and how it could be absorbed as the net worth of the Corporation increases. The letter cogently argued that this cost can be absorbed with the rising premium income and generation of increasing surplus. The GIPSA too sent similar calculations.

However, the government abolished the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme with effect from 1.1.2004 for its own employees had also unilaterally imposed the Defined Contributory Pension Scheme effective from 1.4.2010 on all employees joining LIC thereafter. The AIIEA had protested against this action with a walkout strike. In view of this political decision, the government rejected the recommendations

of LIC and GIPSA. On a question raised in Parliament on two occasions, the government informed that they cannot give another pension option to insurance employees. The first occasion was on 2nd December, 2016 and the second was on 16th December 2016. On both these occasions Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar informed that it is not possible for government to extend another pension option to insurance employees. Subsequently in June 2017, the government sent a letter to LIC rejecting the recommendation for a final pension option.

The AIIEA did not give up the struggle. It continued to pursue the issue with LIC and GIPSA. We held detailed discussions with Shri V.K. Sharma, Chairman on 2nd August 2017 and impressed upon the need to continue to follow up with the government. The Chairman agreed and took up the issue with government again. Similarly, AIIEA met Shri G. Srinivasan,

Chairman, GIPSA and he too agreed to continue to pursue this issue with the government. The AIIEA backed this demand with a number of strike actions. We also had joint action programmes with Federation of LIC Class I Officers' Associations, NFIFWI and other organisations. Along with this political efforts too continued. A delegation of unions in General Insurance including AIIEA led by Com D. Raja, MP CPI met Shri Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister on 27.9.2018 and requested for positive consideration of the demand.

On February 12, 2019, a delegation of AIIEA accompanied by Com T.K. Rangarajan, MP, CPI(M) met Shri Rajiv Kumar, Secretary, Department of Financial Services and Addl. Secretary Shri Debasish Panda and explained the rationale of our demand on pension option as also the need to commence early wage negotiations. The Officials were appreciative of our reasoning. The discussions were very positive and details were communicated through our circular dated 12/2/2019. On 13th February, 2019 the leaders of AIIEA, LIC Class I Federation and NFIFWI met at Hyderabad and decided on a program of agitation including one hour strike on 1st March, 2019.

The leaders of the three organisations after a powerful demonstration in front of

Central Office on 27th February 2019 met the LIC Officials. In these discussions, it was informed that the issue of pension option is in an advanced stage of consideration and LIC will soon open negotiations on wage revision. The delegation was requested to withdraw the strike in view of these positive developments. This was followed by a written communication to the three unions. The Unions, in view of these positive developments, deferred the 1st March strike.

Finally, a decade long struggle on pension option is reaching its successful conclusion with the Finance Ministry approving the recommendations of LIC and GIPSA to extend a final pension option. The negotiations on wage revision have also been opened up. This was made possible due to the combination of agitation and campaign. We take this opportunity to record our appreciation to LIC and GIPSA for tirelessly following up the demand for pension option. Our special

thanks to the former Chairman of LIC Shri S.K.Roy who made sincere efforts in this direction. We also appreciate the positive role played by Secretary and Addl. Secretary DFS. We thank Shri Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister for finally conceding the eminently justified demand.

A new struggle now begins on the issue of replacement of Defined Contribution Pension Scheme applicable to employees joined after 1.4.2010. This struggle has to be integrated with the broader struggle developing against NPS in the government sector. The AIIEA will play an active role in this struggle.

We congratulate all insurance employees on this great achievement. We request them to continue to remain vigilant to ensure the flow of this benefit to the employees and in preparedness for higher struggles to protect our industry and secure other legitimate demands of the employees.

Standing Committee (GI) writes to Chief Executive GIPSA on March 06, 2019 seeking Improvements in Staff GMC Policy

The AIIEA has been, time and again, raising the demand for improvements in the Staff GMC Policy. We have discussed the issue during various meetings with the officials of GIPSA as well as its member Companies. We have also demanded for convening an exclusive meeting of Check off qualified Associations on this matter.

Now with the next renewal date of the policy approaching, the PSGI Companies have initiated the renewal process through Circulars and enabling their HRMS Modules for facilitating the process.

Hence, we would like to reiterate our demand for following improvements in the Staff GMC Policy and request you to incorporate the same, as majority of them do not involve too much cost :-

- i) To provide 100% subsidy upto the increased eligible sum assured (as against 75% now provided)
- ii) Costs relating to Diagnostic Tests without Hospitalisation: The Following Diagnostic Tests without hospitalisation may be covered:
MRI charges, CT Scan Charges, Sonography, Biopsy, TMT, Echo Test, Gastroscopy,

Colonoscopy, EEG, EMG, HMT, PAP, Smear Test, PSA, Mammography, PET Scanning etc.

These Tests without hospitalisation are covered for LIC Employees / Retirees in the GMC Policy issued by New India Assurance Co. Ltd. By treating these tests outside Hospitalisation, the unnecessary Hospitalisation expenses will be reduced to a considerable extent.

- iii) To remove cap on ICU & room rent charges;
- iv) To remove limit for maternity cover or to enhance the limit to Rs.1 lakh;
- v) Restoration of coverage for psychiatric disorders, psychosomatic disease, use or misuse of drugs, etc;
- vi) coverage for all day-care procedures.
- vii) For retirees, the premium slab should be frozen at the level of retirement (i.e to apply premium slab applicable to 55-65 yrs).
- viii) Consequent upon changes/improvements made in GMC, another option to left-out employees be given to join the Scheme. As also option to all to increase/decrease the SI.
- ix) Outside the purview of GMC:
Provision for health care checkup — preventive health care. This will reduce the

incidence of Hospitalisation expenses and thus savings for the Co. Such provision is available in LIC.

To extend lumpsum medical benefit & CMD's exgratia for high cost treatments to retirees as well.

x) Removal of time limits for pre/post hospitalisation benefits in respect of critical illnesses, viz renal failure, organ transplant, cancer, etc. (this is accepted in GMC given to LIC)

New Employee Benefits Introduced

The LIC has introduced a scheme of reimbursement of monthly mobile phone expenses to Class III employees with maximum limit of Rs.750 per quarter with effect from 1st March 2019. The Corporation has also introduced a scheme of reimbursement of cost of one daily newspaper with maximum limit of Rs.225/- per month. This is also effective from 1st March 2019. The AIIEA has asked extension of these benefits to Class IV

employees also.

The LIC has framed a scheme of reimbursement of expenses towards household help/cleaning of residence of Class I Officers ranging from Rs.6000/- per month to Zonal Managers (S) to Rs.1000 per month to AAO/AO. This is effective retrospectively from 1st September, 2018. The AIIEA has demanded extension of this benefit to other classes of employees.

Extension of Amenities to Class-IV cadre

AIIEA'S LETTER TO LIC CHAIRMAN DATED 17TH MARCH 2019

We congratulate you for taking charge as Chairman of this esteemed institution, the Life Insurance Corporation of India and wish you all success in your endeavors.

We welcome your statement through your message dated 14.3.19 that human resources are the most premium assets of the Corporation and LIC, what it is today, is only because of its people.

We thank you for releasing instructions extending the benefit of reimbursement of cost of Daily (newspaper) and also monthly mobile expenses to Class-III employees.

While welcoming this positive initiation by the Corporation, we request the LIC management to extend the benefit of providing mobile handset and reimbursement of expenses towards Household help to class-III employees also.

We are disappointed that the benefits now provided are not made applicable to class-IV employees. We request you to extend these benefits to class-IV cadre also whereby this cadre is not discriminated.

We assure you of our full support in further strengthening our mighty institution, the LIC.

AIIEA'S LETTER TO LIC CHAIRMAN DATED 18TH MARCH 2019

on EMPLOYEE AMENITIES

We have come across some circulars issued by LIC introducing certain employee benefits like reimbursement of furniture allowance, Electricity charges etc. to some sections of the workforce of the Corporation. We welcome these employee friendly measures and hope they will go a long way in further cementing the loyalty and belonging to our great Institution.

However, we must convey the deep disappointment of a large section of the workforce which has been left out of these new initiatives. We appreciate that you in your communication after taking over as Chairman have given credit to TEAM LIC for the successes achieved and said that every employee of the Corporation is its Ambassador. This clearly is an acknowledgement that every

member of the Team has contributed to the growth and prosperity of the Corporation. In such a situation, it is reasonable and justified to expect that the entire staff should be rewarded with the new initiatives and benefits. Not extending benefit to a large section of the workforce not only raises questions relating to equity and justice but will have a demoralising impact. Such a situation will roll back the painstaking efforts taken over years to build pride and sense of belonging to the Corporation in the workforce.

In the circumstances, we request you to take urgent steps to extend these benefits to all classes of employees who have been left out of the present scheme of things.

A German poster on Women's Day, 1914



International Women's Day Has Its Roots in Socialist Feminism

The fact that International Women's Day has gotten so much traction as a marketing tactic is particularly ironic, given that it basically runs counter to the origins of the holiday, which has its roots in the anti-capitalist, U.S. socialist movement.

In theory, International Women's Day (celebrated every year on March 8) is an event to commemorate the contributions of women around the world and advance the conversation surrounding a wide range of issues related to gender inequity, such as the pay gap, racial and sexual violence, and labor rights. But in practice, it's mainly become a way for brands to try to sell you shit.

The fact that International Women's Day has gotten so much traction as a marketing tactic is particularly ironic, given that it basically runs counter to the origins of the holiday, which has its roots in the anti-capitalist, U.S. socialist movement.

According to historian Sharon Smith, International Women's Day was inspired by the success of an almost three-month-long ladies' garment workers' strike in 1909, which came to be known as the "Uprising of 20,000" - which was called for by a 23-year-old woman, Clara Lemlich. (During the strike, she was beaten, broke six ribs and was arrested 17 times.) "At the time, union official leadership was almost entirely made up of men, but these women

EJ Dickson

Courtesy: Rolling Stone March 8, 2019

workers took charge of their own strike," Smith told *Teen Vogue*. After almost three months of months of protest, the workers won modest gains, including a 52-hour work-week and the right to unionize. The success of the effort was particularly notable because the movement was primarily led by a group of women with very little economic capitol: Jewish immigrant women in their teens and 20s, at a time when anti-immigrant sentiment was at a fever pitch.

The triumph of the ladies' garment workers' efforts to have their union recognized led to Socialists all over the country organizing "Women's Day" marches all over the country the following year, in March 1910. Inspired by the American women's victory, that year Clara Zetkin, a German Marxist feminist theorist, proposed International Women's Day at the International Socialist Women's Conference in Copenhagen that year. In 1911, it was honored for the first time on March 8th, with hundreds of thousands of European women

"Uprising of 20,000"-1909(left) Russian women's "Bread and Peace" strike,8 March, 1917(right)



turning out to campaign for labor rights and the right to vote.

On March 8th, 1917, Russian women issued a "Bread and Peace" strike in response to the deaths of 2 million Russian soldiers in World War I, demanding the end of tsarism and a solution to national food shortages. This event has largely been credited with prompting Tsar Nicolas II's abdication from the throne and Russian women being granted the right to vote; in the following decades, it was primarily celebrated in communist and socialist countries, until the United Nations officially started celebrating International Women's Day in 1975.

Given it's socialist history, the U.S. stayed away from it — though as Kristen R. Ghodsee, author of *Women Have Better Sex Under Socialism*, pointed out in the *New York Times* today, there was a brief moment when it almost became a holiday. In 1994, a group 80 U.S. Senators, including Maxine Waters, introduced a bill to officially recognize it. The bill never made it out of committee.

So the next time you see a multi-billion-dollar fast fashion company start using the language of International Women's Day to sell limited-edition tees, or brands comparing women to caffeinated beverages on Twitter, think instead of the millions of badass women who risked their lives to stick it to the Man and take to the streets to fight for their working-class compatriots.

Come out from domestic slavery -a Soviet Poster in 1932

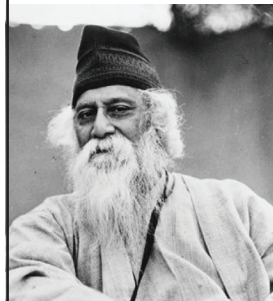


.....इस मिट्टी से तिलक करो,
यह धरती है बलिदान की।

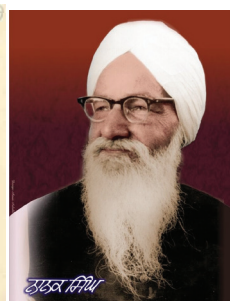
यह वर्ष जलियाँ वाला बाग हत्याकाण्ड का शताब्दी वर्ष है। शहदातें केवल शोकपूर्ण गर्व का विषय नहीं होती, वे नसीहतें होती हैं जिनकी रोशनी में हमें अपने समय का समाज देखकर जिम्मेदारी लेनी होती है कि हम अपने समाज को उस मुकाम पर ले जाने का प्रयास करें जो शहादतों की माँग न करता हो।

जलियाँ वाला बाग हत्याकाण्ड अप्रैल को बने उस रॉलेट एक्ट के प्रतिरोध की नृशंस परिणति था जिसे अंग्रेज हुकूमत ने स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन को कुचल डालने की नीयत से बनाया था। पूरा देश अंग्रेजी अत्याचारों के खिलाफ उबल रहा था, पंजाब और बंगाल में यह उबाल कुछ ज्यादा ही था। बगावती आवाजों को कुचल देने की नीयत से बनाये गये रॉलेट एक्ट का लब्बोलुआब यह था कि अंग्रेजी हुकूमत को जहाँ कहीं भी अपने खिलाफ संघर्ष की गंध भी आ जाये तो वह भारतीयों को बिना किसी आधार, बिना मुकदमा चलाये केवल संदेह के आधार पर वर्षों तक जेल में डाल सकते थे। स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलनकारियों को आतंकवादियों की संज्ञा की दी गई और आतंकवादी होने का संदेह मात्र ही काफी था किसी को भी जेल में सड़ा देने के लिए। दुनिया का कोई भी अत्याचारी शासक आज तक दमन और क्रान्ति के इस द्वन्द्वात्मक रिश्ते को नहीं समझ सका कि दमन क्रान्ति के बीजों का खाद पानी होता है उसे पाकर क्रान्ति लहलहा उठती है। इस कानून से भी यही हुआ कि रॉलेट एक्ट के विरुद्ध पूरे भारत में विरोध लहर उठ पड़ी। महात्मा गाँधी ने सत्याग्रह आन्दोलन शुरू किया, तमाम अन्य धाराओं के संघर्ष भी मैदान में आ गये। विरोध की प्रचण्डता के तमाम हिस्सों में हिंसक झड़पें भी हुईं। ऐसी गरम हवाओं के बीच ही अप्रैल को कांग्रेस के दो प्रसिद्ध नेताओं डॉ सत्यपाल व डॉ सैफुद्दीन किचलेव को गिरफ्तार करके अज्ञात स्थान

Deeply pained by the massacre, Ravindranath Tagore, in protest, returned his knighthood granted by the British. The great Punjabi poet and novelist Nanak Singh, wrote a long poem "Khooni Baisakhi" which was immediately banned.



Ravindranath Tagore's Protest.
Against the Enormity of Government measures in the Punjab.
REQUEST TO BE BELIEVED OF KNIGHTHOOD.



सौ वर्ष.....जलियाँवाला बाग

विश्व भर की दमन और शोषणकारी शक्तियों का मुकाबला करने के संकल्प के साथ हम जलियाँ वाला बाग की शहादतों को शत-शत नमन करते हैं।

– गीता शान्त

पर ले जाया गया। इन गिरफ्तारियों के खिलाफ अमृतसर के लोगों के गुस्से का आलम यह था कि कर्णू के बावजूद अप्रैल को बैसाखी का पर्व मनाने के हज़ारों लोग जलियाँ वाला बाग के मैदान में पहुँचे जहाँ एक सभा का आयोजन किया गया था। जनरल डायर उस समय पंजाब का गवर्नर था। उसने गली-गली एलान करवाया था कि कोई सभा में न जाये और कर्णू का पालन करें। मगर आज़ादी की चाह पुलिसिया एलान से कहाँ थमती है। हज़ारों लोग जब जलियाँवाला बाग पहुँच गये तो जनरल डायर का अहंकार चोटिल हो गया वह अपनी पुलिस की एक टुकड़ी लेकर वहाँ पहुँच गया और शांतिपूर्ण ढंग से चल रही सभा पर अंधाधुंध फायरिंग का आदेश दे दिया।

जलियाँवाला बाग में आने-जाने का एक ही पतला से द्वार था जिस पर डायर खुद अपने सिपाहियों के साथ मौजूद था। इस गोलीबारी में सैकड़ों भारतीय मारे गये, हज़ारों घायल हुए। इस बाग में एक कुआँ था, भगदड़ के कारण तमाम लोग कुआँ में गिर गये कुआँ भारतीय जिस्मों से भर गया और इतिहास में शहीदी कुएं के नाम से दर्ज हो गया।

इस भयंकर हत्याकाण्ड के बाद जनरल डायर को वापस इंग्लैण्ड भेज दिया गया और स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन भी इतने बड़े झटके के बाद कुछ समय के लिए शोक में चला गया। मगर अप्रैल के अंग्रेजी बारूद और भारतीय खून के मिश्रण ने भारत के स्वतंत्रता आन्दोलन में क्रांतिकारिता के नये अध्याय की नींव रखनी शुरू कर दी।

जलियाँवाला बाग की शहीदी ज़मीन ने ऊधम सिंह जैसा क्रांतिकारी दिया जिसने इंग्लैण्ड जाकर वर्ष बाद एक राजकीय समारोह में जनरल डायर की हत्या करके अपनी मिट्टी का हक अदा किया और बहादुर शाह जफर की इस बात को सत्य सिद्ध किया कि –

गाज़ियों में बू रहेगी जब तलक ईमान की।

तख्त-ए-लंदन तक चलेगी तेग हिन्दुस्तान की।।

यह जलियाँ वाला बाग की मिट्टी की कशिश ही थी कि भगत सिंह – वर्ष की उम्र में उसे चंदन की तरह अपने माथे पर लगाकर आये थे और इस देश का चन्दन बन गये। जलियाँवाला की शहीदी धरती ने हमें वह शहीद-ए-आज़म दिया जो न केवल साहस का धनी था बल्कि विचारों से सबसे ज्यादा परिपक्व स्वतंत्रता संग्रामी था। मात्र वर्ष की आयु में ब्रिटिश हुकूमत के लिए भगत सिंह केवल इसलिए चुनौती नहीं थे कि वे अंग्रेजों के खिलाफ थे बल्कि भगत सिंह पर सोवियत क्रान्ति का जबरदस्त प्रभाव पड़ रहा था इसीलिए वह कह रहे थे कि गोरे की जगह काले अंग्रेजों का सत्ता पर कब्जा क्रान्ति का उद्देश्य नहीं है, क्रान्ति का उद्देश्य शोषणविहीन राष्ट्र की स्थापना है।

संवेदनशील लोग आज वर्ष बाद भी गोलियों की



10 March 1919:

The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, popularly known as the Rowlatt Act or Black Act, was a legislative act passed by the Imperial Legislative Council in Delhi on 10 March 1919, indefinitely extending the emergency measures of preventive indefinite detention, incarceration without trial and judicial.

6 April, 1919

Nationwide protest at the call of Mahatma Gandhi. Protest was severe in Amritsar. The British Deputy Commissioner ordered the arrest and deportation of Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satya Pal, nationalist leaders after inviting them to his office for discussion. popular leaders. Again protest broke out.

9 April, 1919

Irrespective of their religious faith, people celebrated Ramanavami as 'Unity Day' against the British, which further infuriated the authorities.

13 April, 1919

When people's unity scaled new heights on the Baisakhi day, Col. Dyer closed the only narrow entrance to Jalianwala Bagh, where people had assembled, with his troops and ordered firing, on the unarmed people.

1650 rounds were fired, which killed more than 1000 people and seriously injured more than 500 people, turning it into 'Khooni Baisakhi'.

It is more than ironical, that, in the centenary year of this blackest action of the colonialists, the current rulers in independent India, any act of opposing the ruling party is dubbed as anti-national and seditious and the colonial Section clause is applied.

उन आवाज़ों को सुन सकते हैं, बदहाल भाग रहे स्त्री-पुरुषों-बच्चों के चीत्कारों का महसूस कर सकते हैं, मौत के ताण्डव के बाद पसरी मातमी खामोशी को सुन सकते हैं और उस सबके साथ आज का भारत देख सकते हैं।

कैसी विडम्बना है कि वर्ष बाद, जिसमें वर्ष उस आज़ादी के हैं जिसके लिए जलियाँवाला बाग शमशान बन गया था, हम कुछ-कुछ वैसे ही वातावरण को महसूस कर रहे हैं। यूँ तो इन वर्षों में हमने कई बार भारतीय मुखौटों में डायर को देखा है मगर अब मुखौटे भी दरकार नहीं रहे। सीधा-साधा साफ-साफ कहा जा रहा है कि जो सत्ता के विरुद्ध है वह देशद्रोही है मतलब सत्ता ने विरोध को अपराध की श्रेणी में रख दिया है। देशद्रोह के जिन कानूनों का इस्तेमाल अंग्रेज करते थे वे पुनः चलन में आ गये हैं। रोजी, रोटी, शिक्षा, चिकित्सा, फसल का मूल्य... कुछ भी माँगना, सत्ता से प्रश्न करता हुआ बोलना, लिखना, पढ़ना सब राष्ट्रद्रोह की परिधि में समाता जा रहा है। इसका अंजाम भी जलियाँ वाला बाग की तर्ज पर ही दाभोलकर, कलबुर्गी, गौरीलंकेश, मंदसौर गोली काण्ड आदि जैसा है।

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय वित्तीय पूँजी से साँठ-गाँठ करके भारतीय कृषि, व्यापार, सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र जिन्होंने भारत को एक सक्षम राष्ट्र बनाया, मिटाया जा रहा है। गॉलेट एक्ट की क्रूरतायें नये भारतीय कलेवर के जन आन्दोलनों को कुचल रही हैं। अपना मकसद पूरा करने के लिए पूरे देश में नफरतों का वही चिरपरिचित प्रयोग किया जा रहा है जो अंग्रेजों ने किया था। मगर शासक भूल रहे हैं कि यह देश जलियाँवाला बाग का देश है जिसमें वतन पर मिट जाने वालों की कमी नहीं है और यह देश के लिए डॉ सत्यपाल व डॉ सैफुद्दीन के साझा बलिदान की विरासत वाला देश है।

हालात कितने भी बद से बदतर हो तो जलियाँ वाला का सबसे प्यारा बेटा भगत सिंह हमें रह दिखाने को मौजूद है - दहर से क्यों खफ़ा रहे, चर्ख का क्या गिला करें।

सारा जहाँ अदू सही, आओ मुकाबला करें।

विश्व भर की दमन और शोषणकारी शक्तियों का मुकाबला करने के संकल्प के साथ हम जलियाँ वाला बाग की शहादतों को शत-शत नमन करते हैं।

Memorial to Sardar Udham Singh, then 15 year old boy, serving water to the assembled people, who later avenged his grief by killing the Michel O'dwyer in London, who was the Governor of Punjab when the massacre was perpetrated. Udham Singh, who proudly called himself Ram Mohemmed Singh, symbolising the united struggle of the freedom fighters, was sent to the gallows on 31st July, 1940, by the British colonialists.



According to some, an apology which comes 100 years after the incident is mere tokenism .

Countless reasons have been given not to apologise, for instance : the Jallianwala Bagh massacre apology should have come in 1919 itself , when the issue was discussed in the British Parliament. Or it should have been offered when the Queen visited the Bagh in 1997.

Or, whose feelings will an apology assuage , when both those who suffered and those who perpetuated the oppression upon them, are no more?

These are commonly quoted arguments, but they fall flat when one examines the circumstances which existed in Punjab in 1919, and the shocking cruelties which continued even after the killings. It is clear that those who have not apologised may not be aware of the truth of what happened 100 years ago. Nor are they aware that the narrative, being increasingly told from the



Martyrs' Well in memory of hundreds of citizens who died while trying to escape the British bullets



The UK must apologise for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre

Apart from the horrific killings and their cover up, the impact of the massacre on the economy and social fabric of Amritsar and many of the cities of undivided Punjab also needs to be considered

Kishwar Desai

The author is an award winning writer and columnist. Her new book, *Jallianwala Bagh, 1919, The Real Story*, has just been published (Courtesy: Hindustan Times, Feb.22, 2019)

Indian perspective, is very disturbing.

The UK should apologise because its government had at one time reduced the people of Punjab to the status of slaves—who could be humiliated — to force the realisation upon them that they were an inferior race and could not be the equal of the British in any way. This was despite the fact that Punjabis had demonstrated their loyalty by giving the most number of soldiers to fight in World War I.

One of the reasons for a poor understanding of the tragedy is that immediately after the massacre, many of the official documents were suppressed, and official hearings were held in camera. Then, to make matters worse, all the government documents, correspondence and private papers till 1947 were taken back to the UK, just before independence. This meant that unless Indian scholars had the resources to work to gather all the material, it would be



difficult to get access to evidence which could put Britain in the dock .

Consequently, most literature published in the UK around the massacre focused on one man, Brigadier General Reginald Dyer. The Empire was able to systematically dismiss the killings as a misjudgment on his part. Even then, justifications were given for Dyer's actions and this old narrative continues in the new books coming out the UK during this centenary year. Indeed there is a constant attempt to whitewash —and recently a British TV channel actually asked me if there was a “Raj nostalgia” in India!

It is obvious from the documentary evidence which has emerged in the past few decades that the Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a planned murder of innocents.

Apart from the horrific killings and their cover up, the impact of the massacre on the economy and social fabric of Amritsar and many of the cities of undivided Punjab also needs to be considered. Many urban centres were destroyed for decades. Thousands of households were left without an earning male member, as a majority of those who were massacred and others who were imprisoned and tortured, were still young. This led to a destruction of Amritsar's thriving economy and arrested the growth of the educated middle class. Punjab was where the Lieutenant

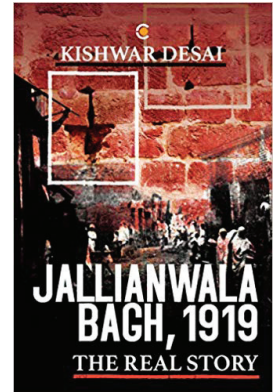
Governor Sir Michael O'Dwyer unleashed his particularly cruel brand of Martial Law punishments following the massacre — in order to suppress any so-called rebellion.

Due to the prevalent racist attitude at the time, we know the names of the handful of British who died in the troubles of 1919, but we still do not have a complete list of all the thousands of Indians killed. .

Not just for the massacre, the British must apologise for allowing so many of their British subjects to be obliterated so ruthlessly in 1919.

And finally, the UK should apologise as India is now an equal partner, fast becoming a super power, with a strong sense of dignity. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre may have been a part of the overall repressive colonialism existing at the time, but it is an extremely important symbol, as it brought momentum to the freedom struggle.

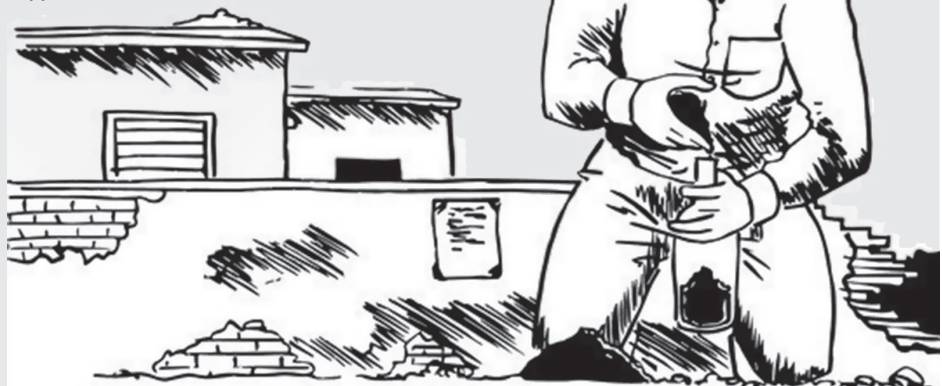
One can only urge the UK to acknowledge that this new self-reliant India has a deep wound which needs to be recognised.



Bhagat Singh , was just 12 years old, when this massacre was perpetrated. The story goes that, immediately, on hearing about the massacre, Bhagat ran to the the Jallianwala Bhag. He collected some blood-soaked soil in a small bottle. The scene of massacre, the blood of the dead, the cries of the injured, decided the future course of his life .

The massacre left a lasting impression on the minds of the young revolutionaries.

Image courtesy:thestorypedia.com



Modi's Five Years

prove that sustained economic growth is incompatible with toxic Hindutva politics



Jobs are scarce, agriculture is in crisis, unorganised sector crippled, tax regime sputtering, corporate sector struggling and exports sinking. It would not only be ironic if, despite such a pitiful track record on the economy, Modi is voted back to power on the back of an exaggerated account of an air strike on Pakistan, but also make us deeply concerned about the underlying nature of our democracy and the policy choices for future governments of our country.

In the early days of this millennium, NR Narayana Murthy, architect of the inspiring Infosys success story, was asked about the secret behind his company's remarkable wealth creation, and resulting adulation, among investors. He remarked in his trademark pithy style: under-promise and over-deliver.

This anecdote is striking in how the exact opposite is true of the Narendra Modi government. Over-promise and under-deliver – that is a pithy summary of the economic outcome of the last five years as we approach the general elections.

The year 2014 was a heady time for dreamers. After a long time, a politician was making economic development the core plank of his election campaign. Not caste or religion but a simple and powerful promise – of making everyone's lot a bit better and weeding out corruption.

Five years later what is the economic scorecard of the Modi government? We look at certain key indicators about the economic health of the country based on publicly available statistics from government or international sources.

GDP growth

One of Modi's main promises was to revive the economy and reverse the economic slowdown in the last years of the United Progressive Alliance government led by the Congress. What has been the outcome? We have had different estimates of Gross Domestic Product growth by different organisations such as the Reserve Bank of India, World Bank

say **Maitreesh Ghatak**,
Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics

& **Udayan Mukherjee**,
television commentator and author of the novel Dark Circles

(Courtesy: **Scroll.in**, 24th March, 2019 .
Tables are not reproduced)

and Central Statistics Office. One notes, in particular, how in December 2018, the NITI Aayog in a highly unusual move released revised GDP figures attributed to the Central Statistics Office which showed that the average growth rate over the same period was slightly higher (7.3%) than previous official estimates. Then, with only months left before the general election, the Central Statistics Office put out yet another set of revised estimates on January 31 that bumped up the average annual growth rate to 7.7%. However, if one looks at the World Development Indicators dataset of the World Bank, the reality is that in the last 15 years, India's GDP growth rate has been above 7% in all but five years.

According to the World Bank dataset, which is considered one of the most authoritative internationally, India's growth rate dipped

below 7% right after the global financial crisis, the last three years of the previous government (the so-called policy paralysis phase), and in the year after demonetisation.

For a man who promised to unleash India's economic might on the world stage using the magic of Modinomics, to now boast of an average growth rate – slightly above 7% according to the World Bank data, slightly below 7% according to the earlier Central Statistics Office estimates presented in the latest *RBI Handbook*, and 7.7% according to the latest revised Central Statistics Office estimates – as a badge of achievement will not persuade anyone except the most diehard believers.

If we use a different benchmark and compare India's growth rate with the average growth rate across the world, the last four years do not stand out. Yes, India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world but that was true in the previous decade too. The gap between India's growth rate and the global average growth rate or the South Asian average growth rate has, according to the World Bank database, shrunk, not widened, between 2014 and 2017 compared to what it was in the decade before 2014. In contrast, Bangladesh and Vietnam have improved their relative growth performances with respect to the world average over the last four years compared to the decade before.

Employment

The debate about GDP growth rates, however, is really a distraction from the various indicators of the enormous distress affecting the majority of the population today. That really is Modi's biggest failure, the number of people who are worse off after his tenure, which no statistical chicanery about abstract indices like the GDP can hide. Therefore, his economic scorecard is best assessed through the prism of what it has meant for Indian citizens rather than through a statistical debate on current and past GDP numbers.

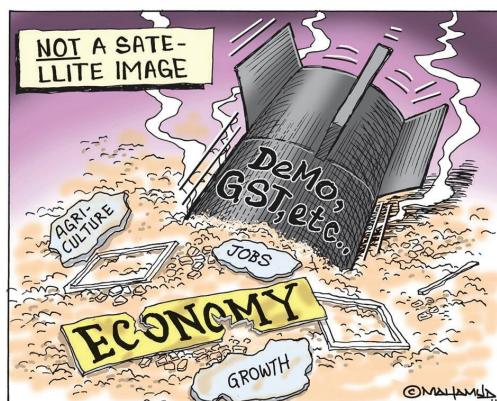
Livelihood is the core issue for the majority of the population. The promises about livelihood were ambitious: 250 million jobs over 10 years, or 25 million jobs a year. If we look at a Centre for Monitoring Indian

Economy series based on household surveys that is available since 2016 but does not go back before that, the number of employed people declined from 406.7 million in 2017 to 406.2 million in 2018 (and dropped further to 400 million in February 2019). In 2017, at least 1.8 million jobs were added but that is only 12% of the net addition to the pool of job-seekers, and a mere 7% of the annual job creation figure of 25 million promised by Modi. For 2016, the corresponding figure was 1.4 million.

A smaller sample of jobs data reported by companies, the CMIE's Prowess dataset, shows an average pace of job growth of 1.9% between 2014 and 2018, which is lower than the average for the decade before 2014.

If we look at data from government sources, then according to the Labour Bureau, the unemployment rate was at 3.7% in 2015-'16. According to press reports on the latest National Sample Survey Office survey, the unemployment rate was at a four-decade high of 6.1% in 2017-'18. No wonder this report too is being withheld by the government despite having been approved by the National Statistical Commission. Two members of the commission have resigned in protest against the government's refusal to release the report. More alarmingly, nearly one in five rural or urban youth are unemployed, according to this data. The data, coming as it does from official sources, conclusively proves the Modi government's track record on employment generation is nothing but an abysmal failure. In urban and semi-rural India, where approximately 15 million young people are entering the job market every year, this has created an environment of frustration and disillusionment.

The government's reaction has been to suppress this data, at least until the election is out of the way, but now the truth is out in the open. This has also shaken the international community's faith in India's statistical apparatus which may have far-reaching implications. Recently, 108 noted economists from across the world wrote an open letter complaining that Indian statistics were being manipulated for political considerations.



Cartoon courtesy: P. Muhamad

Agriculture

The problem is far worse, of course, in the agricultural sector that accounts for over half of India's workforce. Modi's assurance to Indian farmers had been clear: 50% profit over their cost of production and doubling of farm incomes by 2022. Not only has this not been delivered, the Indian farm sector is crippled by a widespread crisis.

At an average of 2.51% for 2014-'17, agricultural growth has been much lower under the Modi government compared to the previous decade (2004-'14) when growth averaged 3.7% or the decade before (1994-'04) when the average was 2.88%. It follows from simple mathematics that to double something in eight years, a sustained growth rate of at least 9% is needed. Short of an agricultural revolution this was an absurd promise to start with, and the performance is below par even by the performance of previous regimes.

Rural wage growth rates are at a 10-year low and in 2018 growth was less than the rate of inflation, that is, it was negative in real terms. Prices of agricultural produce have increased at a much lower rate than that of non-agricultural goods over this period, and in the post-demonetisation period, crop prices have tended to be deflationary. This has squeezed rural incomes and purchasing power relative to the non-agricultural sector. Demonetisation cut off rural menfolk's migration options, exacerbating what is surely one of the most severe agrarian crises of recent years.

Industry

The other major economic fault line of the last five years is the abysmally low growth of the corporate sector and its unwillingness or inability to invest in new capacity and jobs. Curiously, even as the GDP numbers supposedly continue to grow at a reasonably healthy rate, at least as per declared data, corporate profits have languished over the last four years. And, most companies have massive unutilised capacity, which is why they are loath to invest in more. The Gross Capital Formation, which is the investment in plant and machinery, has dropped sharply from 34.3% of the GDP in 2014 to 30.7% in 2017. The average of Gross Capital Formation as a percentage of the GDP during the Modi

era is 31.8%. This is considerably lower than the average during the decade of United Progressive Alliance rule of 39%.

Non-food bank credit charted an abysmally low trajectory through the last four years, stifling economic growth. If we look at the growth rate of credit to only industry, the overall pattern looks similar to non-food bank credit but the numbers look even worse.

When companies do not build new capacities and credit dries up, jobs vanish, which is precisely what is happening today. If we look at other sources of demand that could potentially provide a boost to the economy, such as exports, there too we see a dip in performance under the Modi regime.

Since 2014, Indian exports have grown at a dismal average pace of 1.6%, while in the two decades preceding that, it was 13% to 14%. This, in turn, has led increased India's current account deficit to 2.9% of the GDP, the key reason behind the rupee's collapse to 70 versus the American dollar. Yet, comparing across the same periods, countries such as Bangladesh and Vietnam were able to improve their performances in this dimension. Scaling up labour-intensive manufacturing exports has helped them address their unemployment problem, an area where we have failed. "Make in India" sounds good as a slogan, but in reality the economic outlook under Modi seems to be more like "Mess in India".

Outside the organised sector, the problem is graver. Medium and small enterprises and unorganised units were dealt a deathly blow by the prime minister's demonetisation scheme and have not yet recovered. The CMIE estimates that 3.5 million jobs were lost in the unorganised sector in the aftermath of demonetisation. A ham-handed implementation of the Goods and Services Tax has only exacerbated this trend.

Add to this the government's pathetic attempts at revamping the country's education system to ensure new graduates are employable. Government expenditure on education as a percentage of the GDP has dipped in the four years of the Modi government and almost all news about education is about



Cartoon courtesy: Satish Acharya

government interference with the running of institutions of higher education, saffronisation and a backward looking, “it-was-all-discovered-in-ancient-India” approach to science and technology.

Poverty and inequality

Yet, this is not the full picture. To start with, it is shocking that we do not have any government estimates of poverty since 2011-'12. That aside, what must be even more rankling for millions of Indians struggling to eke out a modest livelihood is how fast the wealth of the rich keeps growing.

According to the World Inequality Database developed by Thomas Piketty and his colleagues, in India the share of the bottom half of the population in total wealth is 6.4% according to the latest available data. In contrast, the share of the top 1% in total wealth is 30%. Not surprisingly, the share of these groups in national income shows a similar gap: the bottom 50% earn only 14.6% while the top 1% earn 21%. What is even more alarming is that the share of the top 1% has been steadily rising at a rate that is much higher than how average wealth or income has been growing. Commensurately, the share of the bottom 50% in both income and wealth has been steadily decreasing. Given this reality, making promises like “sabka saath sabka vikas” without any concrete follow-up actions adds to the pervasive sense of popular discontent with Modi’s economic record.

Macro and fiscal management

Much is made of the government’s fiscal rectitude; how it has managed to rein in the fiscal deficit to 3.3%. Yes, the Modi government has marginally reduced the deficit to GDP ratio relative to the United Progressive Alliance. But reports from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India suggest that this is largely due to creative accounting methods to roll over subsidy data and the windfall of falling oil-prices that allowed it to raise fuel taxes without much protest.

If we look at tax revenue collection, despite the government’s claim about the rise in the number of indirect tax payers due to the GST, the actual collections have not been impressive. The growth in indirect tax collections accruing to the centre in the post-GST era actually shows a decline. An examination of the Central Board of Direct Taxation data suggests no significant increase in the number of income tax payers since 2013-'14, despite the often-heard claim that demonetisation led to a large increase in the number of income tax payers.

Another oft-repeated claim is that inflation was consistently higher under the previous government. Indeed, if we take the annual inflation rate in consumer or retail prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index, the average for the United Progressive Alliance period was 8.1% while that for this government is 5%. However, if we take the difference between India’s Consumer Price Index inflation rate and the world average, the corresponding figures are 3.7% and 3.1% for the two regimes.

Therefore, while some credit is indeed due to the Modi government for fighting inflation, this seemingly dramatic improvement can also be partly attributed to external factors affecting the global economy. One remembers that the Modi government has been very fortunate since it has experienced a decline in oil prices during most of its tenure. It could have done so much with this lucky break but squandered the opportunity.

Conclusion

Those “reformwallahs” who held their noses in 2014 to the toxic nature of Hindutva politics in the hope that it was a price worth paying for economic reforms ignored this basic point about the economy: sustained economic growth is impossible without social cohesion and a spirit of citizenship and solidarity.

Five years down the line this is what we have: job growth at a multi-year low, a farm crisis, a crippled unorganised sector, currency value at a near all-time low, a soaring current account deficit, high interest rates, a half-frozen banking system, a sputtering tax regime, a struggling corporate sector, sinking exports and a GDP growth rate that, for all the constant revisions and data controversies associated with it, does not stand out compared to the previous decade.

Like the stock market, one can create a bubble by stoking expectations. However, at some point the numbers need to add up. That is why it is wise to under-promise and over-deliver, as Murthy believed. When the fundamentals are not in sync with the expectations, bubbles are bound to burst, leaving behind a wreckage of broken promises and bitter disappointments.

It would not only be ironic if, despite such a pitiful track record on the economy, Modi is voted back to power on the back of an exaggerated account of an air strike on Pakistan, but also make us deeply concerned about the underlying nature of our democracy and the policy choices for future governments of our country.

Wealth Concentration drives a New Global Imperialism

Peter Phillips

(Courtesy: Countercurrents
- March 15, 2019)



Image courtesy: www. europeReloaded.com

Regime changes in Iraq and Libya, Syria's war, Venezuela's crisis, sanctions on Cuba, Iran, Russia, and North Korea are reflections of a new global imperialism imposed by a core of capitalist nations in support of trillions of dollars of concentrated investment wealth. This new world order of mass capital has become a totalitarian empire of inequality and repression.

The global 1%, comprised of over 36-million millionaires and 2,400 billionaires, employ their excess capital with investment management firms like Black Rock and J.P Morgan Chase. The top seventeen of these trillion-dollar investment management firms controlled \$41.1 trillion dollars in 2017. These firms are all directly invested in each other and managed by only 199 people who decide how and where global capital will be invested. Their biggest problem is they have more capital than there are safe investment opportunities, which leads to risky speculative investments, increased war spending, privatization of the public domain, and pressures to open new capital investment opportunities through political regime changes.

Power elites in support of capital investment are collectively embedded in a system of mandatory growth. Failure for capital to achieve continuing expansion leads to economic stagnation, which can result in depression, bank failures, currency collapses, and mass unemployment. Capitalism is an economic system that inevitably adjusts itself via contractions, recessions, and depressions. Power elites are entrapped in a web of enforced growth that requires ongoing global management and the formation of new and ever expanding capital investment opportunities. This forced expansion becomes a worldwide manifest destiny that seeks total

Recognizing global imperialism as a manifestation of concentrated wealth, managed by a few hundred people, is of utmost importance for democratic humanitarian activists. We must stand on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and challenge global imperialism and its fascist governments, media propaganda, and empire armies.

The author is a professor of political sociology at Sonoma State University (US). *Giants: The Global Power Elite*, 2018, is his 18th book from Seven Stories Press. He teaches courses in Political Sociology, Sociology of Power, Sociology of Media, Sociology of Conspiracies and Investigative Sociology. He served as director of Project Censored from 1996 to 2010 and as president of Media Freedom Foundation from 2003 to 2017.

capital domination in all regions of the earth and beyond.

Sixty percent of the core 199 global power elite managers are from the US, with people from twenty capitalist nations rounding out the balance. These power elite managers and associated one percenters take active part in global policy groups and governments. They serve as advisors to the IMF, World Trade Organization, World Bank, International Bank of Settlements, Federal Reserve Board, G-7 and the G-20. Most attend the World Economic Forum. Global power elites engage actively on private international policy councils such as

the Council of Thirty, Trilateral Commission, and the Atlantic Council. Many of the US global elites are members of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Business Roundtable in the US. The most important issue for these power elites is protecting capital investment, insuring debt collection, and building opportunities for further returns.

The global power elite are aware of their existence as a numerical minority in the vast sea of impoverished humanity. Roughly 80% of the world's population lives on less than ten dollars a day and half live on less than three dollars a day. Concentrated global capital becomes the binding institutional alignment that brings transnational capitalists into a centralized global imperialism facilitated by world economic/trade institutions and protected by the US/NATO military empire. This concentration of wealth leads to a crisis of humanity, whereby poverty, war, starvation, mass alienation, media propaganda, and environmental devastation have reached levels that threaten humanity's future.

The idea of independent self-ruling nation-states has long been held sacrosanct in traditional liberal capitalist economies. However, globalization has placed a new set of demands on capitalism that requires transnational mechanisms to support continued capital growth that is increasingly beyond the boundaries of individual states. The financial crisis of 2008 was an acknowledgement of the global system of capital under threat. These threats encourage the abandonment of nation-state rights altogether and the formation of a global imperialism that reflects new world order requirements for protecting transnational capital.

Institutions within capitalist countries

The attempted coup in Venezuela shows the alignment of transnational capital-supporting states in recognizing the elite forces that oppose Maduro's socialist presidency. A new global imperialism is at work here, whereby Venezuela's sovereignty is openly undermined by a capital imperial world order that seeks not just control of Venezuela's oil, but a full opportunity for widespread investments through a new regime.

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including government ministries, defense forces, intelligence agencies, judiciary, universities and representative bodies, recognize to varying degrees that the overriding demands of transnational capital spill beyond the boundaries of nation-states. The resulting worldwide reach motivates a new form of global imperialism that is evident by coalitions of core capitalist nations engaged in past and present regime change efforts via sanctions, covert actions, co-options, and war with non-cooperating nations—Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Venezuela, Cuba, North Korea and Russia.

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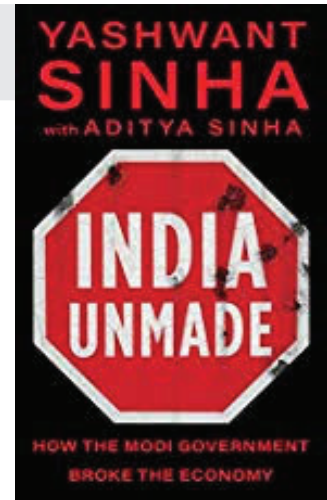
The widespread corporate media negation of the democratically elected president of Venezuela demonstrates that these media are owned and controlled by ideologists for the global power elite. Corporate media today is highly concentrated and fully international. Their primary goal is the promotion of product sales and pro-capitalist propaganda through the psychological control of human desires, emotions, beliefs, fears, and values. Corporate media does this by manipulating feelings and cognitions of human beings worldwide, and by promoting entertainment as a distraction to global inequality.

Recognizing global imperialism as a manifestation of concentrated wealth, managed by a few hundred people, is of utmost importance for democratic humanitarian activists. We must stand on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and challenge global imperialism and its fascist governments, media propaganda, and empire armies. ●

BOOK REVIEW – ‘INDIA UNMADE’

Looking Back -the Disastrous and Destructive Path

Summing up his review of the policies of the government, Yashwant Sinha, the former Finance Minister in NDA-I Govt and a senior BJP leader, before quitting from the Party, is saying that the Modi government is just about event management. “He is the best in creating false impressions. In the process, Modi has given India its ‘lost half decade’”. Reading the book will give an experience of looking back the disastrous and destructive economic policy initiatives of the NDA -II government.



S.SIVASUBRAMANIAN

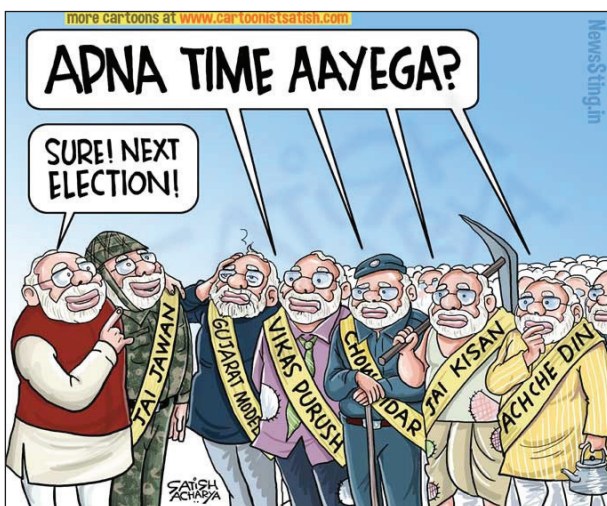
When the NDA government is at its end of the term, we could see many a book being released critically analyzing the policies that were implemented thus far by the government during the last five years. One such book I came across recently is “India Unmade” written none other than by Shri Yashwant Sinha. Sinha was the former Finance Minister in Shri Vajpayee’s Ministry. He was a Cabinet Minister in the government of Shri Chandrasekar also. Until a year ago, he was one among the Senior leaders of BJP. After quitting from the Party, he is very vocal in criticizing the government.

“India Unmade” is a critique of the Narendra Modi government’s economic policies. Throughout the book Shri Sinha criticizes one by one the economic policy steps taken

by the Modi government. “Changing the GDP calculation method, Demonetisation, GST, Unemployment, Make In India, the Schemes pompously undertaken by the government”- everything came under a severe review and criticism in this book.

In the Chapter “Modi and the Beanstalk”, the author criticizes the change in the methodology of calculating the GDP and dismisses it as farcical. The recalibrated ‘new series’ figures came by changing the calculation from cost based formula to a market cost based method. The base year also has been changed from 2004-05 to 2011-12. This, the author terms as tactics of the government to make the government’s economic management look good; because, after this recalibration, the average growth rate comes to 7.35% for the last four years. But the mockery is, if the new calculation method is taken in to account, the GDP growth touches 10.08% in 2006-07, i.e. during the UPA 1 rule. GDP growth cannot be an end in itself. The author affirms that the objective of the growth has to be that the fruits of that growth reaches all sections of the population and it is the government’s responsibility to make sure that the distribution channels everywhere work efficiently, and to this end , taxation, transportation, other laws etc. become important. The author feels strongly that a deliberate policy to put money in poorer hands is needed so that they too participate in the benefits of growth.

On jobs front, Shri Sinha says that there is a jobs crisis in India. When this is the



Cartoon courtesy: Satish Acharya, NewsString

real situation, he scathingly attacks the government which is trying to hide the reality from the people by withholding the Labour Ministry's Quarterly Employment Survey from June 2018, which if allowed to be issued, will depict the dismal employment situation in India. Various programmes of this government came under severe criticism by the author in this book. Pradhan Mantri Jandhan Yojana is one such scheme. "These Jan Dhan accounts were used as a window for black money" the author criticizes. "A week after demonetization was announced, the number of accounts remained stable, but the deposits climbed to Rs.64,252 crore. It reached Rs.74,321 crore on 30th November. After this, the withdrawal began picking up pace. By 20th January, 2017, a total of Rs.50,481 Crore had been deposited after demonetization was announced, and Rs.27,880 Crore had been withdrawn" he says. A month after demonetization, 23% of the Jan Dhan accounts remained without balance. This added to the suspicion that the accounts were being used as a window for black money – that the affluent were paying their employees or other poor people to deposit upto Rs.50,000 in demonetized currency in to their accounts and later withdrawing it.

On GST, he asserts with statistical figures that the MSME sector was the worst hit by the twin shocks of the 2016 demonetisation and 2017 GST. According to RBI's Mint Street report in August, 2018, demonetisation came with a further decrease in credit to the sector, while GST deeply dented its exports. The MSME sector comprises 6.3 crore units and employs about 11.1 crore Indians, contributing about 30 percent of the GDP, 43 percent of manufacturing output and around 40 percent of total exports.

While taking a dig at the policies of the government, the author is raising questions on the increasing scams under this government.

Nirav Modi spotted in London in ostrich leather jacket



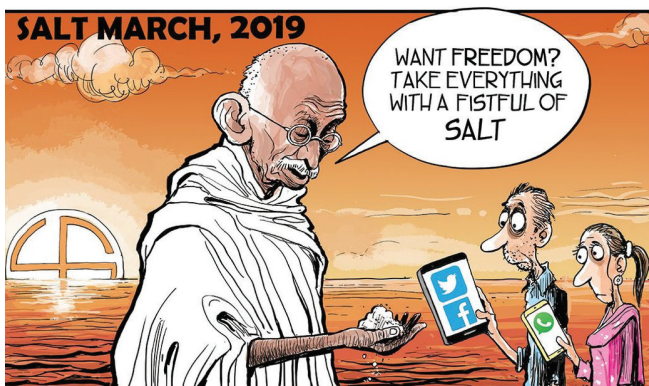
Cartoon courtesy: Sajith Kumar, Deccan Herald

To quote an example, he is criticizing the government which is hesitant to form a Joint Parliamentary Committee to probe the Neerav Modi Scam. On the prices of Petroleum products, he asks the government as to why it did not pass on the benefits of the downslide in the crude prices to the people in 2013-14, instead, raised the taxes on the oil and mopped up a huge revenue. The style of functioning of the government which is giving scant regard to the constitutional authorities and democratic principles also came under a critical review by the author in this book. To quote one example, the author is referring to the occasion in which the demonetization was declared with even the cabinet ministers of the Modi government being not taken in to consideration.

Summing up his review of the policies of the government the author is saying that the Modi government is just about event management. "He is the best in creating false impressions. In the process, Modi has given India its 'lost half decade'". Reading the book will give an experience of looking back the disastrous and destructive economic policy initiatives of the NDA government.

This is a book published by Juggernaut Books in 2018. The book is priced at Rs.699/-.

The author is Jt. Secretary, SZIEF.



Cartoon courtesy;
Sandip Adhwaryu,
Times of India

Proceedings before CGIT on 22nd March, 2019

AIIEA places its arguments effectively

The ID No.27/1991 was listed for arguments on 22nd March, 2019 in the Court of CGIT. On behalf of AIIEA our advocate Dr. P. Ravi Shankar and Com. Anil Kumar Bhatnagar, Vice-President, AIIEA were present to place our case.

The proceedings began with the LIC senior advocate presenting his submissions and reading the objections as filed by them and addressed in respect of Petitioner No. 2 & 6. After counter submission by their advocate it was our turn. In our case management reiterated that out of the total 3337 claims filed by us, five applicants have worked after 4.3.1991 and the rest 3332 cases their names are not in the list as obtained from CGIT and hence they are not eligible. The LIC tried to justify its stand saying that the Supreme Court in its order dated 10.9.2018 had mentioned that 'CGIT will look into list available'.

Shri Ravi Shankar, our Advocate countered these arguments effectively. He said LIC is needlessly prolonging the litigation and this tantamount to denying access to justice and delay in justice delivery. The Learned Advocate quoted several decisions of the Supreme Court on this issue. The second submission was to whom the awards binds and he quoted the provisions of Industrial Dispute Act and the relevant citations of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Our Advocate forcefully argued that the CGIT Award is a judgement in rem and not in persona. Quoting the relevant rule of the Industrial Dispute Act, he pointed out that the Rules clearly specify that an Award is applicable to all similarly placed workmen

and not just the workmen who raised the dispute. This position has been held in a number of rulings given by Supreme Court. Our Advocate pointed out that LIC is well aware that the benefit of the Award should flow to all similarly placed workmen and that is the reason why while arguing in the Review Petition, the Attorney General appearing on behalf of LIC had said that absorption of the workmen would cost the LIC Rs.7086 crore and he had specifically stated the percentage of increase in Staff strength in respect of Class III & IV if the Award was implemented. It was only on the basis of this submission by Attorney General that the Court reduced the benefit of back wages to 50 percent.

The fourth submission was about the circular dated 16.5.2017 and specific clauses which had strong effect on the large number of claimants. Following the said circular, they have absorbed 257 workers and subsequently another 70 and odd workmen. Our Advocate argued that if this was the understanding of LIC, the Attorney General would have never mentioned about the cost while arguing the review petition. It was further submitted that LIC has made false and incorrect statements before the court.

The fifth submission as about quoting the apex Court order dated 10.9.2018 and denying the benefit to all the 3332 workmen whom we had represented. The Advocate argued that no instruction can be issued against the statutory provisions or the law and the Supreme Court

Continued on Page 40

GIPSA TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS ON WAGE REVISION

The GIPSA has invited AIIEA and other check off Unions/Associations for exploratory discussions on wage revision on April 4, 2019 at Mumbai. The CMDs and GMs (P) of all the four companies and GIC-Re are expected to be present. The GIPSA has requested two representatives each from check-off unions to participate. These discussions are taking place after the AIIEA forced open negotiations in LIC and secured an offer of 10% wage rise on the wage bill as at 1.8.2017 in the discussions held on 12.3.2019. The AIIEA made it clear that this offer of 10% is unacceptable as it neither meets the legitimate aspirations of employees nor does it relate to the financial strength of the Institution. The AIIEA will participate in the discussions in General Insurance on April 4, 2019 and place its arguments for a good wage revision in GIPSA companies.

22nd conference of Satna Division Insurance Employees' Association

The 22nd Annual General conference of Satna Division Insurance Employees' Association was held on 9th and 10th February 2019 at Diamond City Panna (MP). Conference was well organised by Panna unit. Conference began with colourful procession of more than 300 Comrades holding the red flags and placards highlighting the demands of people. Rally started from Jaistambha Chouk, Panna and passed through market streets and was greeted by LIAFI and BSNL employees Union at different places. Flag of the association was unfurled at the venue by Com D S Baghel, president SDIEA; floral tributes were offered to the martyr column; thereafter women sub-committee members sang revolutionary people song. The Chairman of reception committee, Com. Murari Lal Thapak, president PFI, Panna delivered welcome speech. Com. DS Baghel, president, SDIEA presented presidential address. Inaugurating the conference chief guest Com. VS Baghel, Joint secretary CZIEA congratulated people of the state for defeating BJP government and said this has created greater democratic space for the working class and democratic movements. Com. Atul Deshmukh distinguished guest, General Secretary, RDIEU also dealt about the agrarian crisis, unemployment and issues

related to insurance industry. Com. Dk khare conducted the proceedings and vote of thanks was proposed by Com. Pushkar Sharma. Under cultural activities, Kavi-Sammelan was organised.

In the delegate session Com T P Pandey presented comprehensive report on behalf of working committee, the discussion on which was initiated by Com. Pushkar Sharma. 18 Comrades participated in the debate. The debate showed high level of maturity, unity of thoughts in the organisation. Com. General Secretary replying to the debate appealed for strengthening the Union at all levels. Report and audited accounts were adopted unanimously. The conference adopted 13 resolutions on various important issues. Com. VS baghel and com Atul Deshmukh also intervened in the delegate session and briefed about Secretariat decisions of AIIEA. They also called for strengthening the hands of the forces that stand for the working classes and raise voices on behalf of toiling masses. Conference unanimously elected Com DS Baghel, Com. T P Pandey and com Rajesh Dwivedi as president, General Secretary and treasurer respectively for ensuing term. Conference came to an end with com. DS Baghel proposing vote of thanks.

22nd Conference of ICREA Machilipatnam

The 22nd Annual General Conference of ICREA, Machilipatnam Division was held at Guntur on 17.03.'19. Around 50 comrades participated in the Conference despite unfriendly weather conditions.

The conf was presided over by Com. E. Jaganmohanarao, President, ICREA. Com.K.Mohanrao, CC member, AIIPA, in his inaugural address explained in detail the efforts of AIIPA in solving the just and genuine issues of pensioners and improving their lot. He deplored the negative and unresponsive attitude of the government. He reminded the house about the struggle launched by AIIEA, under the leadership of Com.N.M. Sundaram uniting the Financial Sector unions to achieve Pension. He reminded the house that, when the then NDA govt under the leadership

of Sri.A.B.Bajpayee, replaced the existing Defined Pension Scheme with Contributory pension scheme with no guarantee for pension amount, only West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura governments headed by the Left parties refused to implement the New Pension scheme and continued with the old pension scheme. He called upon the Insurance pensioners to join hands with those launching struggles demanding scrapping of NPS and restore OPS and also join hands with EPS1995 pensioners, who are struggling for a reasonable minimum pension.

Com.G.Kishore kumar, Gen Secy ICEU and Joint Secretary SCZIEF, while greeting the conference explained in detail the efforts put in by AIIEA for achieving One More Option for Pension. He assured full cooperation to the

struggles of the pensioners.

A detailed report, covering International, National, Industrial as well as problems of the pensioners and efforts of AIIPA and AIIEA for finding solutions to them was presented by Com. Bh.v.l.r.k.murthy, General Secretary and the same was adopted after a brief discussion. The statement of Accounts and budget proposals were unanimously adopted.

The Conf elected a new team of office

bearers & E.C with Com.E.Jaganmohan Rao, Com.Bh.v.l.Radhakrishnamurthy and Com.S.Dhanunjaya Rao as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The Conference came to a successful culmination with the vote of thanks proposed by Com.K.L.Prasad, Jt Secy, ICREA. ICREA expressed its gratefulness to Guntur comrades for making excellent arrangements for making the conf a grand success.

Conference of ICREA Hyderabad

The 22nd Annual General Body Meeting of Insurance Corporation Retired Employees Association (ICREA), Hyderabad was held on 24th February, 2019 at Hyderabad. Inaugurating the Meeting, Chief Guest Com. Bhaskar Somayaji, Jt. Secretary, AIIPA, said that the Retired employees have no bargaining capacity with the management, but campaigning is a very powerful tool in our hands and we can use it to press for and achieve our demands. He asked the retired employees to come out of the comfort of their homes and do something for the organisation. Take inspiration from very senior comrades like com. Janardhan, com.Natarajan etc, who are still serving the organisation, he said.

In her welcome address, Com. M.J.Bhagyalaxmi, President, ICREA, who presided over the meeting, spoke about growing income disparity in the country, where 92% of our people are at the mercy of 8% affluent people. Public Sector, which are temples of Modern India, is being plundered to enrich private individuals. Our demands like recruitment, pension updation etc are abnormally delayed, she said.

In his address Com. Clement Das, General Secretary, SCZIEF and Guest of Honour, said that the need of the hour is for all the trade unions to come together under one umbrella and improve our bargaining power. The present Govt. has broken all the promises made at the time of assuming power. GDP is growing

but jobs are not created. Unemployment is at its highest in the past 45 years. Govt.'s aim is to help private sector and weaken the public sector. It is a do or die struggle for the working class. Com. Clement Das appealed to all to vote for a govt that is pro-people, pro-working class, secular and democratic.

Com. G.Patankar, General Secretary, presented the Secretary's Report, which was followed by presentation of Annual Statement of Accounts for the year 2018 by Com. G. Baloji, Treasurer. Later, both these reports were passed by the General body after deliberations. Com.KNB Acharyulu, CC Member, AIIPA, Com. Anjanachary, G.S., GIPA and others spoke .

The Conference re-elected Com. M.J. Bhagyalaxmi as President, Com. G. Patankar as General Secretary and Com. G.Baloji as Treasurer for the ensuing term.

Com.Vishnu Prasad proposed a vote of thanks.



International Women's Day, 2019

IWD Celebrations by Kolkata Suburban Division IEA

The International Women's Day was celebrated on 8th March 2019 by Kolkata Suburban Division Insurance Employees' Association. The program began with a song by the comrades of Baranagar Base. Com Saikata Das inaugurated the program highlighting the importance of the day in the struggle of women for equality. Com Ujjal Kr. Paul, General Secretary gave details of the role the association is playing in the struggle for dignity by women.

Com Minakshi Mukherjee, President, DYFI, West Bengal was the Chief Guest. In her address she dealt with all issues confronting the women in Indian Society. She stressed on the importance of the organised sector employees to help organise the unorganised.

Com Pushpita Bhattacharyya, Co-Convenor greeted the audience.

The Women Sub-Committee felicitated four students from weaker sections who against great odds are performing well in their academic life. They were given a one time grant of Rs.5000 each. The meeting also felicitated Com Babli Bhowmick who put her life into risk and caught a thief who snatched a gold chain from another of our comrades.

Finally the program came a conclusion with the screening of a documentary on the subject "History of Migration". This documentary was prepared by Com Joydeep Mitra from Sodepur Base Unit. The documentary came for wide appreciation.

..In 3 phases in Madurai

International Women's Day, 2019 was observed in three phases in Madurai Division.

Gate meetings were held at all branch centres in Madurai Division on 8th of March 2019. Women comrades presided over the meeting and addressed the gathering.

All branch units have undertaken social welfare activities. Some of the branches have gone to Old Age Homes, Orphanages, Home for the mentally challenged, Children's home, etc., and extended our assistance on the day of International Women's day itself. Few others would complete the activities within this month.

A Street Corner Meeting was organized on 7th of March, 2019 at Madurai. The programme named "Pengalin Sangamam" was presided over by Com. D. Chitra, Convener of Women Sub-Committee. Com. C. Padmavathy, Joint Convener welcomed the gathering. The Special Address of the meeting was delivered by Com. M. Umamaheswari, Joint Secretary, ICEU, Coimbatore Division. She brought before us the status of women at present times and highlighted how it is

necessary to continuously launch struggles for womens rights and to attain gender equality. Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary, MRGIEA greeted on the occasion. Resolution for the passage of 33% Reservation Bill and to enact Special Act to put an end to Caste Arrogant Killings were moved by Com. J. Vijaya, Jt. Convener, LICSZWCC and seconded by Com. S. Maheswari, Joint Convener. The entire programme was a resounding success with participation of around 150 comrades and came to an end with vote of thanks proposed by Com. M. Mallika, Joint Convener. There was wide publicity in the print media.



At Gauhati

The women sub-committee of Gauhati Division Insurance Employees Association (GDIEA) observed International Women's Day on 8th March, 2019. In this connection a meeting was organized at Divisional Office premise of LIC of India, Guwahati Division during recess hour. More than hundred woman employees of the Divisional office and from various Branches of LICI attended the meeting. Ms Anurita Pathak Hazarika, Director, North East Network, an NGO committed to the causes of women, addressed the meeting. She spoke on the nitty-gritty of the Sexual Harassment on women at work place (prevention) act to the gathering. The meeting was presided over by Ms Geeta Pegu, Joint Convenor of Women Sub-Committee, GDIEA.

As a part of the celebration, Women Sub-Committee of GDIEA also donated medicines, food items, utensils and a folding bed worth



Rs 25000/- to the Helping Hand Old Age Home situated at Battalion Gate, Guwahati. The inmates of the Old Age Home performed dances and songs along with the women employees of LICI gathered in the meeting held there at 5PM. Ms Maitreyee Misra, President GDIEA and Ms Geeta Pegu, Joint Convenor of Women Sub-Committee of GDIEA addressed the meeting. Leadership of GDIEA including General Secretary Pitambar Rajbhandari was also present in both the functions.

Women Sub-Committees of Bangalore Donate Rs.150000 TO Vasantharatna Foundation

Vasantharatna Foundation is a Trust founded in memory of Colonel Vasanth Venugopal who attained martyrdom foiling the bid for infiltration by militants at Uri, Jammu & Kashmir on 31st July, 2007. Col. Vasanth was the Son of an Officer of LIC. Smt Subhashini Vasanth, a renowned dancer founded this Trust in memory of her husband. This trust has been providing assistance to the families of the soldiers killed in action. The two Divisional units of AIIEA at Bangalore observed the International Women's Day on 9th March 2019 with Smt. Subhashini Vasanth as the Chief Guest. More than 170 comrades from both the divisions attended the same. Comrades of Malleswaram and Oriental Building rendered a revolutionary song.

Smt. Subhashini Vasanth gave a detailed picture of the circumstances in which Col Vasanth laid down his life. She recapitulated the happy times she spent with him and also narrated the difficulties she experienced after

his death due to the apathy of the government machinery. She explained the purpose of setting up the Trust in memory of her husband and how this Trust is helping the families of the soldiers killed in action through educational and employment assistance. She appreciated the LIC employees for playing a leading role in democratic and progressive struggles. She forcefully pointed out that the sacrifices of our soldiers should not be politicized and expressed concerns over cry for war being raised by jingoistic forces. While condemning the dastardly attack on CRPF Jawans in Pulwama, she said India must mobilize the world opinion against terror. War cannot be a solution and therefore issues have to be resolved through peace and discussions.

Com. Amanulla Khan, President of AIIEA, while endorsing the views of Smt Subhashini said that he fully understands the difficulties and emotions the homes of soldiers go through. He informed the audience that he married into

a family which has given four generations of decorated soldiers to this country. Therefore he can claim to know what trials and tribulations these families go through in case of a soldier missing in action or when the news of his supreme sacrifice reaches the family. A soldier is always proud to defend the national borders and keep the enemy away but he does not desire war unless it is forced on him. He paid glowing tributes to the memory of Col Vasanth who laid down his life leading from the front to prevent the infiltrators entering our side of the borders. He briefly dealt with the rich legacy of International Womens' movement and pointed out that this movement has made some progress but a lot more has to be achieved. He requested the women members of AIIEA to help the unorganized sections of the women who are struggling for a life of dignity.

Smt. Manasa Basarikodi, Squadron leader of IAF was felicitated on this occasion and she thanked the organization for the same.

Smt. Aruna, Development Officer, City Branch spoke about the 'Stress Management and Healthy Life Style'. It was very informative

and useful to the comrades.

Com.H.R.Gayathri, Convenor Women's Sub Committee Karnataka greeted the assembly.

Insurance Corporation Employees' Union, Bangalore Divisions I & II together collected a sum of Rs.1,50,000/- and handed over the same to Vasantharatna Foundation for the welfare of families of war martyrs.Smt Subhashini who received the cheque highly appreciated this gesture of the insurance employees and hoped to work with AIIEA in the future too.

Com.U.V.Seema from Bangalore DO-II presided over the program. Com.S.K.Geetha, Vice-President, SCZIEF, greeted the audience. Com. V.Latha welcomed and Com.M.Vijayakumari presented the vote of thanks. As a prelude to this program all the base units submitted the memorandum to their respective incharges demanding ladies room, special leave for ailments due to menopause, recruitment and Internal complaints committees against sexual harassment of women, at work place on March 8th 2019.

WOMEN'S CONVENTION AT KOZHIKODE

The 28th Women's Convention of LIC Employees' Union, Kozhikode Division was held at "Saroj Bhavan", Kozhikode. Dr. TK Anandi, Gender Advisor, Government of Kerala inaugurated the Convention. She dealt in detail on the evolution of the society in Kerala with emphasis on women. Com. M. Kunhikrishnan, Vice President, AIIEA addressed the well attended meeting. The presence of Comrades P Padmini and MK Vilasini, former convenors of the Divisional Women's Sub Committee and the office bearers of LIC Pensioners' Association, Kozhikode Division enthused the comrades. One hundred and eighty women comrades and a good number of male

comrades from various Base units of Kozhikode Division participated. A presidium consisting of comrades AD Poornima, K Shailaja and CH Sapna guided the proceedings of the convention.

Com T Bindu, Convenor presented the report. Comrades KP Bindu, PG Thanuja, Preetha Thomas, K Shailaja, KC Preetha, MK Dhanya and PK Bhagyabindu participated in the debate on the report which was adopted unanimously by the Convention. Comrades IK Biju, President and Com. PP Krishnan, General Secretary, LIC Employees' Union, Kozhikode Division greeted the convention. The Convention adopted seven resolutions, including those on Wage revision and recruitment in LIC and on Women Reservation Bill. The Convention elected Com. T Bindu (Divisional office, Kozhikode) as Convenor and Comrades CH Sapna (CA Branch, Kozhikode), MD Rugmini (DO, Kozhikode), T Sreeja (DO, Kozhikode), AD Poornima (Thalassery II), K Shailaja (Kasargod), KP Bindu (Kalpetta), K Shailaja (Perinthalmanna) and Preetha Thomas (Ramanattukara) as Joint Convenors. Other twenty nine comrades were elected to the Women's Sub Committee. Com. T Bindu gave welcome address and Com. Preetha Thomas proposed the vote of thanks.





Seminar at Bangalore on Role of Insurance in National Economy

A one day National Seminar was organised by Bangalore Insurance Institute on 14th February 2019, in association with Vijaya College Bangalore, on the “Role of Insurance in National Economy” in the college auditorium.

About 150 persons comprising of commerce students, Faculty of college, Professionals from Insurance Industry and representatives from Christ College and Media reporters participated in the Seminar. Com. B.C. Srinath, Hon Secretary, Bangalore Insurance Institute welcomed the gathering. Com C.V. Kumar, Council Member, III, giving a brief introduction about the Seminar pointed out that it is important for the Students of commerce to know the contribution of Insurance to the National Economy. The concept of Insurance is “One for All and All for One” and this underlying theme has to be understood and kept in mind.

The main speaker on the subject was Com. Amanullakhan, President, AIIEA. Com Amanulla said that it was a pleasure to talk to students as they are the future of the country. He gave a background of how several Private Life Insurance companies were functioning prior to 1956 and why the Govt then took the measure of nationalising these companies and formed Life Insurance Corporation of India. This was done to protect the savings of the people and also use the resources for nation building activities. He said unlike trading in other goods, in Life Insurance no goods are sold. It is a promise that is sold and the insured keeps paying premium for long duration. These savings have to be safe. He said, Insurance companies have provided enormous funds for the nation’s economy. He said nearly 25% of the borrowings of the government used as investments on road building, Railways,

ports, Dams etc, is provided by LIC alone. He said insurance has noble objectives. It is only next to our Defence forces. While the Defence forces protect us from external aggression, Insurance protect us from uncertainties of Life. He appealed to Govt that GST on Insurance premium should be reduced from 18%. While Diamond and Gold carry marginal GST, it is not fair to charge higher GST on Insurance premium. He said Insurance business deserves to be the natural monopoly of Govt as it has to

protect the long term savings of people, cross subsidies products to the poorer sections and help nation building activities.

Earlier, the Seminar was inaugurated by Sri A. K Atre, Dean of Vijaya College. Sri Atre said that Public Sector Insurance has played a dominant role in today’s economy.

Sri P. Venugopal Secretary General, Insurance Institute of India, delivered the Key Note Address. In his speech he said that Insurance companies mobilise savings of the common people and they have to invest the funds safe for long durations and earn interest. Though returns are less in Govt investments, the money will be safe.

He briefly narrated about the activities of Insurance Institute and requested the students and the college authorities to get in touch with BII and take Insurance Institute examinations.

Sri Asish Kumar, Sr. Divisional Manager, LIC of India & Chairman, Bangalore Insurance Institute, while speaking said that Insurance plays a major role both at Micro and Macro level. Life Insurance has emerged as a tool to mitigate and meet the needs of ordinary people. It serves as a tool to meet the long term economic goals of individuals. He said Life companies are playing a great role at macro level. The huge build up of resources is used in Nation building activities. The reserves of LIC itself have grown one hundred times in last 25 years. These funds are invested in Debentures, Railways, Highway construction etc., He said LIC is doing a yeoman service to the Nation.

Sri Surender, Regional Manager, National Insurance company Ltd, spoke about the need to increase Insurance penetration. Sri K Arun, Manager (sales) spoke about the career opportunities in the Insurance sector.

Report : C V Kumar

SEMINAR ON RISK MANAGEMENT AT ERNAKULAM



Experts who spoke at a national seminar on “Risk Management Lessons from Kerala Floods” lamented about the lack of insurance culture at the grass-root level in Kerala society. Severe floods, last year, damaged both public and private properties, causing an economic loss to the tune of Rs.26000 crores and claimed 433 lives.

While the economic loss is huge, insurance officials who participated in the seminar, organised by the Ernakulam Insurance Institute, said insured loss and claims were only amounted to Rs.1600 crores.

P. Venugopal, Secretary General of the Insurance Institute of India, Mumbai, who inaugurated the seminar, lamented lack of insurance culture at local level and asked why intermediaries like brokers, development officers and agents could not promote insurance service at local level, that would have financially helped the flood victims. He said motor policies were promoted widely but policies providing protection against weather perils were ignored and hence the huge loss to general public.

P. Venugopal, who is an Executive Director of Life Insurance Corporation of India, said for making good the flood loss insurers should be the lender of the first resort, and the government, lender of the last resort. He said people belonging to the weaker section of the society were further pushed down the poverty line by the unprecedented floods.

Dr. George Thomas, College of Insurance, Mumbai, who set the seminar theme, observed that total insured claims was just 8 per cent of the total losses. He said insurance penetration was low in India and people at local level showed any interest in insurance products

that financially supported them, when disasters struck. He explained how the insurance support worked during disasters and catastrophes. He hoped that seminar and interactive sessions would go a long way in propagating the importance of insurance products to general public.

Prof. Santhosh Kumar, National Institute of Disaster Management, New Delhi, in his detailed presentation explained disasters from international, national and local perspectives. He stressed the importance of development strategy with an eye on disaster investment and loss recovery strategies. He said India’s geography had made the country prone to hazards like seismicity, sea-borne risk like cyclone, floods, and droughts. Earlier if one disaster struck in ten years, now ten disasters struck in one year, he added. He said natural disasters, climate change, environmental degradation had the potential to undermine and even reverse development progress. There were many countries and fragile States who had lower capacity to cope.

Prof. Santhosh also spoke about the importance of post disaster loss scenario, need assessment, recovery and inclusive disaster risk reduction strategies. In his concluding remarks Prof. Santhosh said the challenge was to strive towards high levels of understanding, preparedness, mitigation efforts and response mechanism. He also stressed the importance of insurance cover as a tool to disaster recovery and mitigation.

P. H. Kurian, I A S, former Additional Chief Secretary, holding charges of Disaster Management in Kerala, then, said the State was highly vulnerable to natural disasters and the changing climatic dynamics, given its location along the sea coast and with a steep gradient along the slopes of the Western Ghats. The Kerala State Disaster Management Plan identified 39 hazards categorized as natural and anthropogenic, he added. He said Kerala was one of the most densely populated Indian State, making it more vulnerable to damages and losses on account of disasters. He said nearly 14.5 per cent of the State’s land area was prone to floods and landslides were a

major hazard along the Western Ghats.

He said between June 1 and August 18, 2018, the State received cumulative rainfall that was 42 per cent in excess of the normal average. The heaviest spell of rain triggered several landslides and forced the release of excess rain water from 37 dams across the State aggravating the flood impact he revealed.

He said apart from the damages to public and private properties, flood and landslides affected 5.40 million people, displaced 1.40 million people and claimed 433 lives. The total estimated damage of Rs.26720 crores didn't include damage to private properties and business units, he observed. He said according to a conservative estimate, close to 2.60 per cent of Kerala's gross State domestic product (GSDP) got washed away by the floods, instantly. These losses and damages could slow down Kerala's economic growth, he explained.

A panel discussion among senior insurance officials and surveyors analysed insurance policies covering weather perils and claim process. Interactive session with stakeholders saw complaint being raised about valuation of property taken for insurance coverage and application of under insurance. When financial institution provided loans to small business entities and insurance is arranged by them, premium is paid for the loan amount only and when the property was damaged under insurance applied, resulting in partial claim settlement.

Hon. Secretary Mr. John Mathew, welcomed the gathering and E.P. Joy, Council Member, Insurance Institute of India, proposed vote of thanks. Mr. P Radhakrishnan, Chairman, Ernakulam Insurance Institute presided over the function.

Report: *M. Ajith Kumar Ernakulam*

Seminar at Cooch Behar on Joblessness & Employment

A seminar on the subject of "JOBLESSNESS AND EMPLOYMENT" was organised jointly by DIEA, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar Branch Base Unit, DYFI, Coochbehar District Unit and SFI, Coochbehar District Unit at Karmachari Bhawan Auditorium, Coochbehar (West Bengal) on 10th March 2019. The speakers were Com. Saikat Choudhury, General Secretary, DIEA, Jalpaiguri and Com. Satarup Ghosh, State Secretariat Member of DYFI, West Bengal. Com. Saikat analysed the problem of unemployment in depth and pointed out to its root in the large scale non-industrialisation in the post liberalised era by the Central Government and also the West Bengal State Government. On the contrary, it persisted on privatisation policy of the nationalised industries that deteriorated the problem of unemployment to such a grave situation. So, it is the anti-people policies of the governments that is to be fought against, first to create more job opportunities. Com. Satarup Ghosh, in his lucid language, delivered on the subject right from the educational field. He said that our governments are lacking in building pro-employment educational policies on the one hand, and on the other, they fail to maintain proper environment in educational institutions. And such a situation leads to frustration among the young generation of today and so is the havoc migration of

the young people from West Bengal state to another or to the abroad. The only solution to this problem of unemployment is to build up a system in the country that guarantees job for everybody, skilled or unskilled, to which dream we, students, youths, farmers and workers are moving ahead with united aim for left alternatives.

The seminar was conducted by a three-member Presidium constituted of Com. Kajal Roy, President, DYFI, Coochbehar District, Com. Kaushik Ghosh, President, SFI, Coochbehar District and Com. Snehasis Ghosh, President, DIEA, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar Branch Base Unit. The seminar organised as per the call of last Secretariat meeting of AIIEA was attended by the people from different sections of the society specially a large numbers of students and youths.



Com.R.Govindarajan Remembered in Thanjavur

A Commemorative meeting was held in Thanjavur on 18.02.2019 in memory of our Great leader Com R.G. More than 200 Comrades of Thanjavur Division and fraternal Trade Unions participated in the meeting. Comrade Venkatesh Athreya, Renowned Economist delivered special address on 'PEOPLE'S ECONOMY'.

He fondly recalled his association with Comrade R.G. He remembered Com R.G.'s extraordinary work in the Trade Union and political movements.

He chided the present and previous central governments for following Neo liberal and pro Corporate policies which totally ignored the common masses. He pointed out the irony that when a few Corporate house get concessions, they are called incentives and at the same time when the millions of farmers of this country demand livelihood concessions they are called doles or subsidies. The media and the intelligentsia ridicule such just demand from the more deserving sections of the people. He

said that whatever economic path a country may follow but needs and welfare of the people must be placed above everything which would ensure inclusive growth of the country. He lambasted the present Central dispensation for implementing GST and demonetization which were really intended for destroying small and medium enterprises to facilitate the bigger Corporate houses to complete their total control of the markets in the country. He concluded that real tribute to Comrade R.G. would be to follow his ideals and walk in the path shown by him.

Before the start of the convention, a candle light vigil was organized to pay tributes to the CRPF jawans who were martyred in a terrorist attack in Pulwama.

The Meeting was presided over by Comrade R. Punniamurthy, President, ICEU, Thanjavur Division. Comrade S. Selvaraj, General Secretary welcomed the gathering and Com V. Sethuraman, Joint Secretary proposed the Vote of thanks

..& Com.Chandrasekhar Bose book introduced in Chennai Div-II

A special meeting was convened by Com. Sunil Maitra Readers' Forum of ICEU, Chennai Division-II on February 26, 2019, which was presided over by Com.K.Manoharan, President, ICEU. Com M.Dhanaselvam, Gen. Secretary welcomed the Leaders and Comrades assembled in the meeting.

After a brief address by the President, Com.K.Dayalan, President, Ambattur Branch Unit under Chennai Division-II, explained the contents of a book under the title "Talking About Times Past" written by Com.Chandrasekhar Bose, doyen of the trade union movement in LIC and founder of the AIIEA. He said that according to Com.Bose, he joined the Hindustan Co-op. Insurance Company in the 1940s when all insurance companies were in private hands owned by corporates and multi-millionaires. Com.Bose's life fully mingled with the AIIEA and he took steps to publish the *Insurance Worker* journal with great difficulties. . Com.Bose's book also dealt with the Emergency in 1977, the struggle for bonus by AIIEA, the positive and historic judgment by Shri V.R.Krishna Iyer, Judge of the Supreme Court, the struggle against the Malhotra Committee's recommendations and the struggle for pension. He concluded his elaborate presentation quoting a few lines from

the poem of Robert Lee Frost. Com.Dayalan was honoured by Com.S.Rajappa, senior leader of the AIIEA.

After the Book introduction, Com.E.M.Joseph, former Vice-President, SZIEF, a prominent speaker and writer, talking about the several roles played by the legendary leader of the AIIEA, Com. R.Govindarajan, said that he was appointed in LIC in the year 1960 at Madurai, worked there only for about 10 months and then got transferred to Trichy, When the Thanjavur Division was bifurcated from Madurai Division in 1962, he became Joint Secretary of ICEU, Thanjavur Division. He along with Com.R.Narayanan of Dindigul, played a very important role in the struggle against automation. When Com.NMS was elected as General Secretary of AIIEA and the headquarters of AIIEA was shifted from Calcutta to Chennai, Com.RG became the Joint Secretary of AIIEA and joined Com.NMS in Chennai to assist him in his multifarious activities.

Com.M.Dhanaselvam, General Secretary, ICEU, Chennai Division-II, honoured Com.E.M.Joseph.

Vote of thanks proposed by Com. Kubendiran, Joint Secretary, ICEU, the meeting came to a close.

Agents Workshop at Jamkhandi

Insurance Employees' Union, Belgaum Division organised a workshop at Jamkhandi Branch for Jamkhandi and Mudhol SO agents on 9th February 2019. Com. R.Subramanya from Mysuru dealt the topic "Challenges before field force". He dealt with the selling skills, problems arising out of demonetisation, GST and falling interest rates, dwindling renewal premium etc., He exhorted the agents acquire full knowledge about working style of our competitors and their products that alone will give edge to our agents. He expressed his happiness about nil lapsation of many agents and called upon them to close the year by creating new record for the Jamkhandi Branch.

Com. S.Sridhara, Hon.Secretary of Mysore Insurance Institute dealt with latest changes such as non-printing of notices, NEFT registration. He also analysed the IRDA Report in detail. He appealed the agents derive confidence from the strengths of LIC and at the same time he cautioned about our rivals trying to gain grounds by adopting newer technology. He announced the competition for Jamkhandi branch Top 3 agents (both NOP & Premium) for the period from 11th February to 28th February 2019.

Around 100 agents attended 2 1/2 hour programme. The agents in their feedback requested the union to hold such programme atleast for a day.

Sri K R Jambage, Sr.Branch Manager and ABM(S) congratulated the IEU Belgaum Divisional unit for taking initiative and arranging the programme in a meticulous way and urged the agents to take advantage and excel in the remaining part of financial year.

IEU Jamkhandi led by Com. Shashikala Bangareppannavar, President, Com. A Y Janmatti, Secretary and their team arranged necessary infrastructure for the success of the workshop.

The impact of workshop was such that Jamkhandi branch was No. 2 to the Division by procuring 2223 policies and total first premium of Rs.214.37 lakhs during 18 days from 11th February 2019. Jamkhandi Branch stood first to the division in NSP by garnering Rs.157.49 lakhs during the same period.

Sri Shantinath Savadi and Sri Gurulingappa K.Pattanshetti topped the branch with 25 in NOP category while Sri Prasanna Hajare bagged 1st position by collecting Rs.13.93 lakh first premium

SHELTER TO A GAJA VICTIM

Gaja Cyclone hit parts of Tamilnadu on 16th November 2018. AIIEA rushed to the areas hit by Cyclone with relief materials. The Employees of LIC and GIC of Tamilnadu and Kerala State contributed generously towards relief to the affected people. The relief work was carried out with commitment.

In the process of distributing the relief, it was found that the house of a visually challenged Smt.Sudha in the Pudukottai Branch area. It is unfortunate that she has a daughter Kum. Chella who is also visually challenged. Com N.Kannammal and comrades of Pudukottai decided to construct a new house in place of the totally damaged house. Funds were raised by Madurai Division LIC Women Coordination Committee, Shri Subburam,



a relative of Com N.Kannammal and from others. The house was constructed at a cost of over Rs.1 lakh.

The house was handed over to Smt Sudha on 20.02.2019. A function was arranged in which Comrades Aruna, Nagarajan and Rameshkannan of Madurai Division, R. Punniamurthy and S. Selvaraj of Thanjavur Division, Comrades of Pudukkottai Branch Unit, Leaders of Left parties and mass organization participated.

Insurance News in brief

■ A.M.KHAN, DHARWAD

A Report by ClimateWise says that increasing catastrophes lined to climate change could triple losses on property investments over the next 30 years. This will lead to a slump in property values and could spark a wide financial turmoil causing a heavy damage to the economy.

All seems not so well with American International Group Inc. (AIG). Pain from old policies and volatile markets fuelled AIG's surprise loss in the 4th quarter of 2018. Desperate attempts are on to revive. Just six years ago, AIG had, as a cornerstone investor, bought 1.11 billion shares of People's Insurance Co. (Group) of China Ltd., (PICC Group). To tide over the financial crisis, AIG sells its entire stake in PICC Group to raise \$482 million.

BNP Paribas Cardiff, the foreign partner in SBI Life, sells nine crore shares for Rs.5445 crore to a global investment firm Carlyle Group. With this Cardiff's stake in SBI Life comes down to 12.8 percent from 22 percent.

Reliance Capital, which is Indian partner in Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management and owns Reliance General Insurance, has a debt of over Rs.18000/-crore. It is hopeful of garnering Rs.12,000 crore by divesting 43 percent share in Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management and 45 percent in Reliance General Insurance Company.

IRDA reports that LIC holds Rs.35.23 crore unclaimed amount and Public Sector General Insurance companies have Rs.15.67 crore unclaimed amount.

"Alexa will not replace doctors", (Not at present!), says Amazon, the Seattle-based tech behemoth. Continuing its advocacy Amazon says artificial intelligence (AI) can help hospitals become more efficient. It is now working with Harvard-affiliated teaching hospital in Boston to test how AI can help hospitals become more efficient. This is how powerhouse tech companies such as Amazon and Google are deepening their reach into America's \$3.5 trillion health-care market.

According to a data available with India International Pet Trade Fair, the Pet market is estimated at more than \$800 million and is expected to register an enormous growth in the coming years. Higher disposable incomes, smaller families, sensitivity to animals, and social-media craze contribute to the rise in pet ownership. This in view insurance companies are designing new products in pet insurance segment.

Even before it takes off fully, a working group has been formed by IRDA and National Health Authority (NHA) on Ayushman Bharat Pradhan mantra Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). This joint working group will have ten members from both organisations. It is to submit the

report on how to detect and deter fraud in six months.

Non-implementation of the decisions of the Ombudsmen by the insurers is making the whole system of insurance ombudsmen ineffective. According to IRDA the insurers are not abiding by the decisions of the ombudsmen both in the given timeframe and at times not abiding at all. IRDA has cautioned the insurers concerned that serious action would be taken if the insurers do not abide the rules and decision of the ombudsmen.

Right from the horse's mouth. National Health Accounts' latest release puts out a picture which depicts the true situation in which people are in today as far as the cost of their health-care. It says that patients shell out from pockets is close to double of what the Centre and State governments spend on public healthcare. The total expenses incurred on healthcare stood at Rs. 5,28, 484 crore in FY16, while out of pocket expense of the patients' households on health totalled Rs. 3,20,211 crore, 60.6 per cent of the total health spend.

A survey conducted by Exide Life Insurance finds that more than 80 per cent of the population save and invest to build a legacy corpus and life insurance is the most preferred financial instrument. Especially with regards to constructing a house, for the education and weddings of their children and retirement planning.

"Insurance companies and health providers must practice the highest standards of ethics and ensure that claims are settled quickly and grievances minimised" says the Chairman of IRDA. According to IRDA a disproportionately large number of complaints to it are related to health policies. Pointing out that many people realise only afterwards, at the time of making claim, that certain things are excluded and then they feel they could have bought other products. Hence people need simple products.

The Supreme Court has asked the Centre to examine the feasibility of setting up Motor Accident Mediation Authority (MAMA) in every district by bringing in necessary amendments to the Motor Vehicles Act so that road accident claims can be settled amicably at the earliest.

IRDA has issued an advisory to the insurance companies to use their own judgment and should not simply rely on the credit ratings assigned to their investment by the rating agencies.

Working Class Struggles

S.SRIDHARA, MYSORE ■

TEACHERS SITOUTS IN KENTUCKY, PROTESTS IN MARYLAND AND TEXAS

The Nationwide teachers revolt that begun in 2018 has continued to unfold, most recently with job actions and protests by teachers in Kentucky, Maryland and Texas. Actions by teachers, like those taken by workers across the US and internationally, have begun to develop. In Kentucky Maryland Schools were closed on 13th March. The development comes on the heels of a similar 2 day strike action held in the first week of March 2019. The workers actions have been called in response to multiple anti-public school legislative initiatives aimed at privatising public education.

THOUSANDS OF SRILANKAN TEACHERS DEMAND HIGHER WAGES:

Thousands of teachers from Srilankan Government Schools demonstrated outside the Ministry of Education on February 28th to call for higher salaries, Restoration of a pre-2016 Pension Scheme, Reduced workloads for teachers and other demands. The protest was organised by the CEYLON TEACHING SERVICE ASSOCIATION.

PAKISTAN SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE :

Pakistan sanitation workers strike and demonstrate over non-payment of wages. Sanitation workers employed by the Lahore Waste Management Company, the Water and Sanitation Agency in Hyderabad and the Shikarpur Municipal Committee in Sindh Province protested over the non-payment of months of outstanding wages. Workers have not received wages for over six months.

TELSTRA TECHNICIANS ANNOUNCES STRIKE DATES:

The Communication Electrical Plumbing Union at TELSTRA, Australia's largest Telecommunications Company were on strike on March 12th. The Unions demanding 12% pay increase. The workers are also protesting against lay-off the Company, wants to eliminate 9500 jobs over the next 3 years. At least 3200 jobs have already been axed.

CLOSURE OF BRAZIL FORD PLANT TO DESTROY NEARLY 27000 JOBS:

The announcement of the closure of the second oldest Ford plant in Brazil, in the city of SAO BERNARDO, is threatening up to 27000 jobs across the auto production chain. The announcement comes against a back drop of continued economic slump in Brazil with stagnant economy and increase in unemployment. At the end of 2018, the job loss rate stood at 12%. The workers are protesting against the closure of Ford Plant across Brazil.

THE WORKING CLASS ENTERS INTO STRUGGLE IN ALGERIA:-

After weeks of youths protest against ALGERIAN Government, the working class is emerging as the leading force in the struggle against Government policy. The movement in Algeria is at the heart of

an International Resurgence of the class struggles.

THOUSANDS OF US STOP & SHOP WORKERS IN NEW ENGLAND VOTE FOR STRIKE ACTION:

More than 31000 Stop & Shop workers in Southern New England voted over strike action on 16th & 17th against the Supermarket chain. Workers contract expired on 23rd February 2019. STOP & SHOP giants has more than 400 locations in Southern England, Newyork and New Jersey. The Supermarket giants is seeking to drive down the wages and conditions of workers.

TEACHERS PROTEST IN MEXICO:

Teachers from the Southern State of Guerrero, Mexico blocked the State Legislature on 11th March. The teachers are demanding the cancellation of MEXICO's Education Reform Bill as it will affect thousands of teachers across Mexico.

ARGENTINA GARMENT WORKERS STRIKE OVER WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS:

Hundreds of Garment Workers went on strike on 11th March. Primarely Female Workers denounced the Company's new production system, which force each worker to perform tasks formerly done by four workers damaging their physical and mental health.

CALIFORNIA COUNTY WORKERS HELD TWO STRIKE:

Hundreds of workers for SAN MATEO COUNTY held two day strike on 5th & 6th March to protest a wide variety of issues including working conditions, health care and under staffing.

SOUTHERN ONTARIO ELECTRICAL WORKERS ON STRIKE:

Workers employed at TOWN OF LAKESHORE, EAST OF WINDSOR ONTARIO went on strike after negotiation between Union and Management broke down. The issues including wage revision , working conditions improvement in social security benefits.

VOLKSWAGEN ANNOUNCES THOUSANDS OF LAYOFFS:

The German Auto giant Volkswagen group has announced thousands of layoff at its VW & AUDI Brands. The slashing of 7000 jobs by the world's second largest auto maker is part of ongoing job cuts in the global Auto Industry. The move by VW follows General Motors announcement of 14000 job cuts and the closure of five plants in the US. Speculation is that FORD may cut 25000 jobs mostly in Europe and tens of thousands of job cuts in China by US and Korean based automakers.

BANGLADESH GARMENT WORKERS OCCUPY CLOSED FACTORY:

Hundreds of workers in LUMAN Fashion's Factory have been demonstrating since January 28th in Dhaka over company's sudden closure of its plant without paying outstanding wages and benefits. The factory which produces leather jackets for export.

Economic Tid Bits

■ J.SURESH, MYSORE

- ♦ According to a latest report by "Living Wage Foundation", in UK more than 6 million workers, including 1.2 million public sector workers are on low pay since 2008 financial crisis. They earn less than the Real Living Wage – a rate set by the Living Wage Foundation and independently assessed to determine the amount people need to get basic things. The Real living wage figure is set higher than the government's National living wage, which establishes the statutory minimum wage rates. The Real Living wage is set at 10.55 Pound an hour in London and 9 Pound in rest of the UK. The National Living Wage 7.38 Pound for those under 25s and 7.83 Pound for those older. Those under 21 get paid even less, with apprentice on a minimum rate of 3.70 Pound, under 18s on 4.20 Pound and under 21s on 5.90 Pound. There is no weightage to London due to the extra cost of living, where 5.8 million people work. From April, the national living wage is increase to just 7.70 for under 25s and 8.21 Pound for over 25s. According to the report, 1/3rd of working parents on low income have regularly skipped meals due to lack of money and almost half of them unable to pay household bills. According to another report, poverty amongst working people is higher than at any time during the last 20 years. Since 2004-05, the number of workers in poverty has increased at a faster rate than the total number of people in employment. In 2018, income inequality has increased from 31.4% to 32.5%. The income of the top 20% increased by 4.7% while the bottom 20% saw their income fall by 1.6%.
- ♦ The public sector workers in Hungary went on a strike recently demanding for an increase in their basic salaries, which have stagnated for last 11 years. Lower income workers sometimes receive less than Euro 800 per month for working full time. The workers are also protesting against "slave law" which raises the possible overtime hours from 250 to 400 a year. For public sector employees, it means an increase in daily working hours from 8 to 9 hours and reduction of five days leave per year. Despite official claims of full employment, Hungary is one of the poorest in EU. The differences between the city and the countryside are enormous. In villages 40% of people live below the subsistence level and the average net wage is just under Euro 700. According to Eurostat, in 2017 an average working hour in Hungary cost around Euro 9, by comparison the rate in Germany was Euro 34.
- ♦ The median income for 132 major US Corporations jumped to \$ 12.4 million in 2018, more than \$ 1million a month. Their pay rises about 6.4% compared to 2017. Ford President and CEO Jim Hackett received a 10% rise in 2018, raking in \$ 17.75 million, while the company continues to eliminate jobs in USA and in other countries. According to press reports, Ford CEO received 276 times the median pay for all Ford employees. CEO pay has risen 72% since 2009 and is now just 3.3% below the record levels of 2007. According to a study, CEO pay grew 17.6% between 2016 and 2017 alone, while average pay for workers rose by only 0.3%. The ratio of CEO pay to the pay of the average worker has risen from 20 – 1 in 1965 to 30 – 1 in 1978, 58 – 1 in 1989, 112 - 1 in 1995 and a record 344 – 1 in 2000. After a dip following 2008 crisis, the CEO to worker pay ratio rose back to 312-1 in 2019.
- ♦ According to the NSSO sample survey (suppressed data) the unemployment rate in India was 6.1%, a little lower than the CMIE estimate of 7.2%. This has been the highest in the last 45 years. According to NSSO survey, the labour force participation rate fell from 63.7% in 2004-05 to 49.8% in 2017 – 18. This means today in India out of total working age population of 860 million, only 428 million were economically active in 2017-18. the unemployment rate among rural male aged 15-29 years increased threefold from 5% in 2011-12 to 17.4% in 2017-18 and for young women it is almost doubled from 7.8 % to 13.6%. In the same period urban youth joblessness more than doubled, with female urban youth unemployment reaching 27.2%. The urban unemployment rate was 7.8% in 2017-18, far higher than the 5.3% that reportedly prevails in rural India. According to the latest NSSO data from 2011-12, 90% of Indians who were employed were either self-employed or employed in retail outlets and production facilities. Only 35 million workers are employed in formal economy, in private sector and state owned companies.

For our Field Force

■ ARIVUKKADAL, THANJAVUR

Insurance becomes cheaper: Life insurance industry is switching to the new mortality table next year and the premium for working-age Indians may become cheaper. The revised Indian Assured Lives Mortality table 2012-14, published by the Institute of Actuaries of India, showed that mortality rates among the insured fell 4-16% for those aged between 22 and 50 years. Earlier, the industry was using the 2006-08 table as the reference frame for pricing life insurance products.

Motor premium increases: The IRDAI committee on third party motor insurance costs for FY 2019-2020 has suggested an increase of 10-15%. It will be effective from April 01, 2019. The committee has also suggested a new vehicle classification and segmentation methodology.

Remove 18% GST: An activist from MP has asked the Prime Minister's office that the 18% GST on healthcare insurance be removed, citing healthcare to be a basic need. In his letter, he has pointed out the degrading healthcare facilities at government hospitals, which force common man to move to private hospitals. With no regulation on prices at private healthcare institutions, a middle-class man is forced to buy health insurance, now with huge premiums including 18% GST.

More unclaimed in banks: Unclaimed amounts with the Life and General insurance companies are Rs.35.23 Crores and Rs.15.67 crores respectively. Unclaimed amounts with banks are at Rs.9,500 crores. The unclaimed deposits by state-run banks under for more than 10 years are credited to Depositor Education and Awareness Fund and the unclaimed amount in public sector insurance companies and insurance firms each financial year for more than a decade is transferred to Senior Citizens Welfare Fund on or before the first day of March every year.

Not double compensation: The Madras High Court has made it clear that claiming compensation against the insurance company for an accident and also from the employer under the Workers Compensation Act did not amount to double compensation.

Health insurance again: Life Insurance Council is planning to request the IRDAI to allow them to offer indemnity health cover again. The regulator had barred life insurance companies from offering indemnity health products from July 2016. Currently, life insurers can only offer fixed-benefit health products. Being risk managers for a longer term, life insurers are at a natural vantage position to offer better value proposition to meet the healthcare

needs of their customers.

Standard health plan: According to the draft guidelines of IRDAI, a uniform health product will be made available to everyone in the country by the insurance companies. The minimum basic sum insured under the standard product shall be Rs 50,000 with a maximum limit of Rs 10 lakh. The product will be called Standard Medclaim Policy succeeded by name of the insurance company. It will only provide basic mandatory cover and no additional or add-on options. The proposed product shall be offered on indemnity basis only and standard exclusions may be specified by the IRDAI from time to time.

Video KYC: RBI is considering new modes of electronic verification methods, including Video KYC, as Aadhaar based biometric customer verification is out of the picture now.

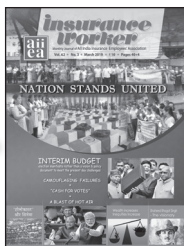
Leave Encashment Plan: This is an insurance plan from LIC, for companies or business owners who employ a workforce. The plan provides the facility of leave encashment to employees and also offers life cover to compensate the employer for resignation, death or retirement of an employee. The policy has to be taken in the name of the employer or the trustees of a company.

Bank locker insurance: IFFCO Tokio General Insurance has launched a bank locker protector policy. This is the first such cover in the industry specifically for bank lockers. At present, a list of home insurance covers offer protection for contents of the bank locker as well. However, these have sub-limits of around Rs 1-2 lakh.

Quitting insurance business: It is likely that several other PSU banks will exit their insurance joint ventures in the next 10-18 months. Banks like Allahabad Bank, Indian Overseas Bank and Andhra Bank are some of the PSU entities looking to exit their joint ventures.

Gig economy is future: The gig economy (Labour market of short-term contracts or freelance work) is becoming a core element of the labor market, pushed to the fore by platforms like Uber and Airbnb. Gig economy workers are not employed by these platforms, and therefore typically don't receive conventional employee perks, such as insurance or retirement options. This has created a lucrative opportunity to provide tailored insurance policies for the gig economy.

Response



This has reference to editorial 'Interim Budget.-election manifesto. The nation is gripped by fear psychosis. To write or not write, is the dilemma. Any criticism of government's failure to deal with the unemployment, agrarian distress, poverty illiteracy and health care is construed as anti-national. Freedom of expression and speech are under threat. It

seems that government is least bothered about grave unemployment crisis. It is a irrefutable fact that more than one crore jobs is lost due to demonetisation. The country needs increased public expenditure in health and education to move forward to achieve our developmental goals.

K.Narayana Rao,

Bangalore

At a time when the right wing hindutva forces are trying to appropriate our legendary leaders like Subhashchandra Bose, Swamy Vivekananda, Dr. Ambedkar and others, article "Shaheed Bhagat Singh, A Visionary" is an

eye opener giving a thorough insight into his ideals, vision, revolutionary patriotism and his concern on increased confluence of religion in politics. His criticism of misuse of irrational religious beliefs to exploit the masses by inciting fear in their minds is really an eye opener in the present context even nine decades after he sacrificed his life. Remembering and reflecting his ideas of alternative framework of governance which provides social, economic and political justice to all will be the real tribute to the great legend.

HKN Muthy, Kanakapura
Bangalore Div-II

Proceedings before CGIT

Contd from P.25

has never intended to mean its wordings as interpreted by LIC. Case laws on the question of instructions against the statutory provisions held to be invalid were placed before the court.

The AIIEA has forcefully placed its arguments and has also made written submission. Several Judgements of the Supreme Court justifying our position were also placed before the Court both orally and written. The arguments in respect of Petitioners 2 to 6 are complete and the rest of the petitioners will be heard from 27th March onwards. The AIIEA will be also making our final submissions on the concluding day and will also file our written arguments. Needless to say, AIIEA will make all efforts to secure justice.

DONATIONS

Com.Nripendra Kumar Baruah, Guwahati div.	Rs.2000
Com. G.Balaji, Thanjavur DO	5000
GENERAL SECRETARY SATNA DIVISION	1100
Com Kumudini Patra, Cuttack DIV.*	5000
Com.Latika Bose,Dev. Officer,Taiganj Br.	10000
Com. Barindra Kumar Suklabaidya ,Silchar Br.1	2000
Com..Kishan Singh Panwar, Jodhpur DO	1100
Com.Mohan Lal Goyal, Jodhpur DO	1100
Com. C Haridas, ErnakulamDO	10000
Com.K.V.Swarna Rani, Gudur Br.	2000
Com Vijay Kumar Singh ECZIEA	5000

* Com.Kumudini Patra, has also donated Rs.5000 to AIIEA.

Insurance Worker thanks all these comrades for their fine gesture.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Month	Base 2001	Base 1960
July 2018	301	6870.60
August	301	6870.60
September	301	6870.60
October	302	6893.42
November	302	6893.42
December	301	6870.60
January 2019	307	7007.55
Base1960 = Base2001x22.8259		

Read & Circulate

insurance Worker
aiiea



Philippines



Bangladesh



Spain

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2019 GLIMPSES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Kenya



Turkey



Australia



A week after this year's Women's Day, eight secular & democratic Women's organisations have presented a charter of demands to all political parties urging them to respond positively and make these demands a part of their Election Manifesto.

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5000 X 30 = 1,50,000.00

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