

# insurance Worker

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## WHY THIS PUBLICITY OVERDRIVE?



IF ACHE DIN,  
NAYEE SUBAH  
HAD ARRIVED

PEOPLE THEMSELVES  
WOULD HAVE CELEBRATED

**HISTORICAL RESPONSIBILITY  
OF WORKING CLASS  
TO CHALLENGE  
THE DANGEROUS MIX  
OF NEO-LIBERALISM  
& DIVISIVE AGENDA**



India's  
Growth Story



Construction of A.P Capital  
Nightmare for  
Working Class



भारतमाता-धरतीमाता  
पर मँडराता खतरा

The Two Sides of BJP



Lab of Mischief  
is Cradle of Music



# MUHAMMAD ALI (1942-2016)

**M**uhammad Ali, the Greatest Athlete ever on planet passed away on June 3, 2016 at the age of 74. He suffered from Parkinson's disease for over three decades.

Muhammad Ali dominated the boxing ring after winning the Olympic Gold Medal in 1960. He became the world heavyweight boxing champion in 1964 defeating Sony Liston, the defending Champion. Ali was three times the world heavyweight champion. He showed exemplary bravery in his fights with Joe Frazier and George Foreman. He fought 61 professional fights and won 57 of them.

Ali was great not only in the boxing ring; he was also great in his political convictions. His political bravery made millions world over, especially the black people, see him as a unique hero and a huge inspiration. He was the champion at a time when American society was going through great turbulence. There were massive movements against racism and for civil rights. Unlike many other great black boxers and athletes, Ali never hesitated to identify himself with the epic struggle against racism. He openly spoke against racial discrimination and demanded dignity in life to the blacks in America.

Ali's refusal to fight in Vietnam was an explosive act of defiance. He said "my conscience won't let me go shoot my brother, or some darker people, or some poor hungry people in the mud for big powerful America. And shoot them for what? They never called me Niger, they never lynched me, they didn't put no dogs on me, they didn't rob me of my nationality, rape and kill my mother and father ... shoot them for what? How can I shoot them poor people? Just take me to Jail". Through this statement he made it clear that he is opposed to both racism and imperialism. This defiance cost him his title, three and half peak years of his career and millions of dollars in endorsements. This was an act of real heroism. This earned him many enemies in white America but he succeeded in implanting the seeds of anti-war movement which later compelled the United States to a shameful withdrawal from Vietnam.

In 1984, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Ali did not allow the disease to prevent him from his work to help the poor across the world and contribute to research on Parkinson's disease. He was an ambassador of peace. He was the most well-known personality across the world. He inspired generations. Ali taught people to speak truth to the power and stand up to one's belief, however difficult the odds may be.

Ali was the Greatest not only in the rings but in the wider world too. Insurance Worker celebrates the glorious life of Ali and salutes this great personality.

## NOTHING MUCH TO CHEER

The Modi Government completed two years in Office. The event was celebrated with massive publicity overdrive. The newspaper advertisements and television screens came alive with the government boasting of its achievements. This celebration is at a time when nearly 50 crore of Indians are leading a miserable life due to drought conditions. If the Modi government had delivered on its promises, why was it necessary for this massive campaign spending hundreds of crores of public money? The people themselves would have celebrated if there were changes for the better in their living conditions. This publicity overdrive was necessary to hide the failures of the government. The Modi government has not been able to deliver on the promises and failed to meet expectations of the people by following the same discredited neo-liberal policies. While the government says that it is following different economic policy, the double

standards of this government stands clearly exposed in the passage of the Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill and the Aadhar Bill and its investment of quite a lot of energy on GST Bill. Therefore, there is nothing much to cheer about these 2 years of Modi government.

The BJP led NDA came to power promising development and a zero tolerance for corruption. On both these important promises, the government has clearly failed. Let us take a look at the state of the economy. The economy grew in the range of 7.2 to 7.4 percent during the two years of this government. But this growth figures are determined after changing the methodology of estimating the GDP. There is a huge euphoria that economy grew at 7.9% in the first three months of 2016. This estimation is being contested by a number of economists as the discrepancies shown is nearly 7 to 8 times larger than the earlier period. The sectoral performances

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also raise doubt about this estimate. It is a fact that agriculture is in distress, industry is stagnant, there is decline in the growth of services, exports are at an all-time low and food inflation is very high. Despite this the government is gung ho and claiming that India is the fastest growing in the large economies of the world. The Prime Minister even on foreign soil drummed this as the biggest achievement of his government.

Assuming that the economy is growing at a very high rate as claimed, why this growth is not reflected in the improvement in the living conditions of the people? The economic conditions of the people have been pretty bad measured in terms of hunger, malnutrition, per capita food availability and access to basic services like health and education. It is a shame that nearly 45000 mothers die due to causes related to childbirth every year. According to World Health Organisation, India accounts for 17 percent of such deaths globally. Secondly, a growing economy necessarily has to create jobs. The data from the Labour Bureau suggest that India created a measly 4.3 lakh jobs in the first 20 months of the Modi government showing huge gap between promise of creating 10 million jobs a year and the achievement. India is facing a huge unemployment problem which cannot be solved by catchy slogans.

But the situation is not bad for everybody. While vast majority of people are still awaiting achche din, for the rich and powerful, achche din have already arrived. A number of studies show that the top 10 percent of Indians own 76.3 percent of the national wealth while the remaining 90 percent have to share the balance of 23.7 percent. Such inequalities in wealth and income distribution are unprecedented and are the result of aggressive neo-liberalism.

There is widespread euphoria that India today is a Super Power and has come on the centre stage of world politics with countless foreign visits by the Prime Minister. The rich and powerful are jubilant that Modi has been able to construct a sound relationship with United States. In its blind belief that it is already a super power and stands equal to United States, Modi has made India a junior partner of the US in its geo-political strategic interests.

However, this imagination of a super power is busted as the World Bank recently classified India as a lower middle income economy in South Asia. According to the World Bank data, India languishes on the world indicators like labour force participation, sanitation and access to clean drinking water.

The other claim that BJP is a party with a difference and provides clean governance is also busted. The scandals involving Foreign Minister, Finance Minister, Chief Ministers of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh say a different story. The Panama papers have named industrialists close to Modi and the son of Raman Singh, Chief Minister of Chattisgarh. The numbers of ministers involved in questionable deals in the Maharashtra government are too well known. It was only due to popular pressure that Eknath Khadse was shown the door.

The two years of Modi government has seen increasing communal polarization across the country. The rightwing brigades have been given a free hand to run amok. While the BJP President calls for Congress Mukh Bharat, Sadhvi Prachi calls for Muslim Mukh Bharat. Communal feelings are fanned on the issue of food habits. Though the Prime Minister says he is focused on vikas, one cannot forget his own speeches during elections when he spoke about pink revolution (beef export), matar (greenpeas) vs mutton or earlier in Gujarat when he attempted communal polarization with slogan of hum paanchhamare pachchees. The Prime Minister, who is eloquent on every other subject, refuses to speak and rein in his ministers or rightwing brigades when they polarize the society. These two years have also seen assault on freedom of speech, debates on ideas in universities and other democratic institutions. The most disturbing fact is denying the right to contest panchayat elections by the BJP ruled Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat on the basis of educational qualifications and property. This is the real dispossession of the already dispossessed and most vulnerable sections of the society.

The Working Class has experienced massive attacks on their hard won rights and benefits during this period. The States ruled

by BJP have amended the labour laws to make them employer friendly with full support of Central Government. The Modi government is engaged in amending the ID Act and the TU Act to make the trade union functioning and formation of unions extremely difficult. Profitable public sector units are put on sale. The job security and pension benefits of the workers are under attack. The Indian economy has become informal with contract and temporary employment. The workers are fighting back. September 2, 2015 witnessed the largest direct action by the working class in the post independent India. The Central Trade Unions and hundreds of independent federations and organisations of peasants, youth, women and students have decided to

confront the Modi government with another General Strike on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016.

The two years of Modi government has burdened the working class with enormous challenges that include protecting national unity and defending economic sovereignty. It is only the working class that is capable of challenging neo-liberalism and the divisive agenda of the Modi government and its rightwing brigades. The nation has invested in the working class hopes of a pluralistic, equal, just and fair society. These are massive and very difficult tasks. But the working class must take them on with confidence and succeed to protect national unity, deepen democracy and secular values in the Indian society.

## खुशी मनाने लायक कुछ नहीं

**मो**दी सरकार ने दो साल का कार्यकाल पूर्ण किया है। इस अवसर को बहुत तेज प्रचार अभियान के साथ उत्सव के रूप में मनाया जा रहा है। समाचार पत्रों के विज्ञापन से और टेलीविजन पर सरकार लगातार जीवंत रूप में अपनी सफलताओं के गुणगान करती नजर आ रही है। यह उत्सव उस समय हो रहे हैं जब 50 करोड़ से भी अधिक भारतीय नागरिक सूखे की स्थिति के कारण दयनीय जीवन की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं। यदि इस मोदी सरकार ने अपने वादे वास्तव में पूरे किये होते तो क्या यह आवश्यक होता कि जनता के पैसे से इस प्रकार के भयंकर प्रचार अभियान पर सैकड़ों करोड़ रुपये खर्च किये जाते? यही जनता स्वयं उत्सव मना रही होती यदि उनके जीवन में कुछ अच्छे परिवर्तन आये होते। ये बेतहाशा प्रचार सरकार की नाकामी को छिपाने के लिये ही आवश्यक था। मोदी सरकार अपने वादों को पूर्ण कर पाने में सफल नहीं रही है और उन्हीं विफल नव-उदारवादी नीतियों के रास्ते पर चलने के कारण लोगों की आशाओं को पूर्ण करने में नाकाम रही है। यद्यपि सरकार कहती है कि वो अलग प्रकार की आर्थिक नीतियों का पालन कर रही है, लेकिन सरकार के इस दोहरे चरित्र की कलई खुल जाती है जब इंश्योरेन्स लॉज (अमेंडमेंट) बिल और आधार बिल को पास करती है तथा जी.एस.टी. बिल पर जिस प्रकार बहुत सारी ऊर्जा खर्च कर रही है। अतः मोदी सरकार के शासन के दो वर्षों में ऐसा कुछ नहीं हुआ जिसका हर्ष हो।

बी.जे.पी. के नेतृत्व में एन.डी.ए. विकास तथा भ्रष्टाचार के प्रति पूर्ण असहनशील होने के वादे के साथ सत्ता में आयी थी। इन दोनों महत्वपूर्ण आश्वासनों पर यह सरकार बिल्कुल असफल है। आइये हम पहले अर्थव्यवस्था के

हालात की तरफ देखते हैं। इस सरकार के पिछले दो वर्षों के कार्यकाल में अर्थव्यवस्था 7.2 से 7.4 प्रतिशत के मध्य बढ़ी है। लेकिन विकास के यह आंकड़े जी.डी.पी. की गणना करने के तरीके में किये गये बदलाव के बाद प्राप्त किये गये हैं। लगातार खुशी का बोध कराया जा रहा है कि वर्ष 2016 के प्रथम तीन माह में अर्थव्यवस्था 7.9 प्रतिशत की गति के साथ बढ़ रही है। पिछली बार के अनुमानों से इस बार के अनुमानों में आठ गुना का अन्तर है ऐसी स्थिति में इन अनुमानों पर बहुत से अर्थशास्त्रियों ने असहमति व्यक्त की है। क्षेत्रवार प्रदर्शन के आंकड़े भी इन अनुमानों पर शक उत्पन्न करते हैं। यह एक सत्य है कि कृषि आज कठिनाई में है, उद्योग में स्थिरता है, सेवा क्षेत्र में वृद्धि गिरावट की ओर है, निर्यात अपने अब तक के सबसे निचले स्तर पर हैं और खाद्य पदार्थों की महँगाई उच्च स्तर पर है। इस सब के बावजूद सरकार बेहद उत्साहित है और दुनिया की बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के मध्य सबसे अधिक तेजी से बढ़ती अर्थव्यवस्था होने का दावा कर रही है। यहाँ तक कि प्रधानमंत्री विदेशी धरती पर इसे अपनी सरकार की सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि बताने का ढोल पीट रहे हैं।

अगर यह माना भी जाये कि अर्थव्यवस्था उनके दावे के अनुसार बहुत तेजी से बढ़ रही है तो फिर यह वृद्धि लोगों के जीवन स्तर में सुधार के रूप में प्रदर्शित क्यों नहीं हो रही? भूख, कुपोषण, प्रति व्यक्ति भोजन उपलब्धता तथा स्वास्थ्य और शिक्षा जैसी मूलभूत सेवाओं तक पहुँच के आधार पर लोगों की आर्थिक स्थिति बहुत खराब आँकी गयी है। यह एक शर्म की बात है कि प्रत्येक वर्ष 45000 माताओं की मृत्यु बच्चों को जन्म देने समय तथा उससे जुड़ी समस्याओं से

हो जाती है। विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन के आधार पर इस प्रकार की कुल मौतों में से 17 प्रतिशत भारत में होती हैं। दूसरी बात ये कि एक विकासशील अर्थव्यवस्था को आवश्यक रूप से रोजगार सृजित करने चाहिये। लेबर ब्यूरो के आंकड़े दर्शाते हैं कि मोदी सरकार के प्रथम 20 माह में भारत ने मात्र 4.3 लाख रोजगार पैदा किये हैं जो प्रतिवर्ष 1 करोड़ रोजगार उत्पन्न करने के उनके वायदे तथा उपलब्धि के बीच बड़े अन्तर को स्पष्ट करते हैं?। भारत अत्यधिक बेरोजगारी की समस्या का सामना कर रहा है जिसका हल इस प्रकार के आकर्षक जुमलों से नहीं हो सकता।

लेकिन यह स्थिति सबके लिए खराब नहीं है। जब बहुत विशाल बहुमत में लोग अभी भी अच्छे दिन की प्रतीक्षा कर रहे हैं, अमीर और ताकतवर के अच्छे दिन तो पहले ही आ चुके हैं। बहुत से अध्ययनों से पता चला है कि भारत में शीर्ष 10 प्रतिशत के पास भारत की कुल राष्ट्रीय सम्पत्ति का 76.3 प्रतिशत है जबकि शेष 90 प्रतिशत के पास बची हुई 23.7 प्रतिशत है। आय तथा सम्पत्ति के वितरण में यह असमानता अभूतपूर्व है जो आक्रामक नव-उदारवादी नीतियों का परिणाम है।

आज चारों तरफ लोगों के मन में यह बात बैठायी जा रही है कि भारत एक सुपर पावर है जो प्रधानमंत्री की असंख्य विदेश यात्राओं के बल पर विश्व की राजनीति में केन्द्रीय भूमिका में आ गया है। संपन्न एवं ताकतवर लोग इस बात को लेकर प्रफुल्लित हैं कि मोदी संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका से मजबूत रिश्ते बनाने में सफल रहे हैं। अपने आप को एक सुपर पावर तथा अमेरिका के बराबर मानने का अंधविश्वास रखने के चक्कर में मोदी ने भारत को अमेरिका के राजनीतिक एवं सामरिक हितों का एक जूनियर पार्टनर बना दिया है। हालांकि सुपर पावर होने की इस परिकल्पना की हवा निकाल दी गयी है जब विश्व बैंक ने दक्षिण एशिया की अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में भारत को निम्न मध्य आय वर्ग की अर्थव्यवस्था के रूप में वर्गीकृत किया है। विश्व बैंक के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, मजदूर वर्ग की सहभागिता, स्वास्थ्य-रक्षा तथा पीने योग्य पानी की उपलब्धता जैसे विश्व सूचकों में भारत बहुत नीचे है।

दूसरे अन्य दावे जैसे बी.जे.पी. ऐसी पार्टी है जो औरों से अलग है तथा स्वच्छ शासन देती है, ऐसे दावों का भण्डाफोड हो गया है। वे स्केण्डल जिसमें विदेश मंत्री, वित्त मंत्री तथा राजस्थान, मध्यप्रदेश एवं छत्तीसगढ़ के मुख्यमंत्री शामिल हैं, कुछ अलग ही कहानी बता रहे हैं। पनामा पेपर्स में मोदी के निकटस्थ उद्योगपति तथा छत्तीसगढ़ के मुख्यमंत्री रमन सिंह के पुत्र का नाम आया है। महाराष्ट्र के कई मंत्रियों के संदेहास्पद सौदों में फ्रॉसे होने के विषय में सभी जानते हैं। जनता के दबाव के कारण ही एकनाथ खडसे को बाहर का रास्ता दिखाया गया।

मोदी सरकार के दो सालों में देशभर में साम्प्रदायिक धुवीकरण की घटनाएँ बढ़ती जा रही हैं। दक्षिणपंथी बिग्रेडस को किसी भी तरह का पागलपन करने की खुली छूट दे रखी है। जब बी.जे.पी. अध्यक्ष कांग्रेस मुक्त भारत की बात करते हैं तो साध्वी प्राची मुसलमान मुक्त भारत का नारा देती हैं। भोजन में खाने की आदतों को साम्प्रदायिक भावना भड़काने

का आधार बनाया जा रहा है। यद्यपि प्रधानमंत्री कहते हैं कि उनका ध्यान विकास की ओर है फिर भी उनके चुनाव के दौरान दिये गये भाषणों को कोई कैसे भूल सकता है जिसमें वे 'पिंक रिवोल्यूशन' (बीफ एक्सपोर्ट), मटर और मटन, तथा इससे पहले गुजरात में जब वे हम पाँच हमारे पच्चीस' जैसे नारे देकर साम्प्रदायिक धुवीकरण का प्रयास करते थे। प्रधानमंत्री जोकि सभी अन्य विषयों पर अपने वाक्यटुता प्रदर्शित करते हैं लेकिन जब उनके मंत्री या दक्षिणपंथी बिग्रेड के साथी समाज में धुवीकरण का कार्य करते हैं तो वे स्वयं तो बोलने से मना कर देते हैं तथा उनको ऐसा करने से रोकते भी नहीं।

इन दो वर्षों ने विश्वविद्यालय तथा अन्य लोकतांत्रिक संस्थाओं में बहस तथा तर्कों पर एवं बोलने की आजादी पर हमले देखे हैं। सबसे बुरी बात तो यह है कि बी.जे.पी. शासित हरियाणा, राजस्थान तथा गुजरात राज्यों ने शैक्षिक योग्यता तथा सम्पत्ति रखने के आधार पर पंचायत चुनावों में शामिल होने पर रोक लगा दी है। यह तो वास्तव में समाज के सबसे कमजोर तथा पहले से ही बेदखल व्यक्ति की पूरी तरह से बेदखली है।

इस अवधि में श्रमिक वर्ग ने कड़े संघर्षों से पाये अपने हितों तथा अधिकारों पर बुरी तरह हमले होते हुए देखे हैं। बी.जे.पी. शासित राज्यों ने केन्द्र सरकार के सहयोग से श्रम कानूनों में इस प्रकार के परिवर्तन किये हैं जिससे वे पूरी तरह मालिकों के पक्ष में हो गये हैं। मोदी सरकार इंडस्ट्रियल डिसप्यूट एक्ट (आई.डी.एक्ट.) और ट्रेड यूनियन एक्ट (टी. यू.एक्ट.) में इस प्रकार के संशोधन के प्रयास में लगी हुई है जिससे मजदूर संघ बनाना तथा संचालन करना अत्यधिक कठिन हो जाये। लाभदायक सार्वजनिक उद्योगों की इकाईयों को बिक्री के लिए रखा जा रहा है। कर्मचारियों के रोजगार की सुरक्षा तथा पेंशन के लाभों पर आक्रमण हो रहे हैं। भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था में अस्थायी तथा ठेके पर रोजगार कोई बुराई नहीं रह गया है। श्रमिक इसके विरुद्ध फिर से संघर्ष कर रहे हैं। 2 सितम्बर 2015 ने स्वाधीन भारत में श्रमिक वर्ग की सबसे बड़ी सीधी लड़ाई देखी है। केन्द्रीय श्रमिक संगठनों, सैकड़ों स्वतंत्र फेडरेशनों तथा किसान, युवा, महिला एवं छात्रों के संगठनों ने एक बार फिर 02 सितम्बर 2016 को आम हड़ताल के माध्यम से मोदी सरकार के विरोध का निर्णय लिया है।

मोदी सरकार के इन दो वर्षों ने श्रमिक वर्ग के ऊपर राष्ट्रीय एकता तथा आर्थिक संप्रभुता की रक्षा जैसी अत्यन्त गंभीर चुनौतियों का भार डाल दिया है। यह सिर्फ श्रमिक वर्ग ही है जो इस नव उदारवादी तथा मोदी सरकार एवं उसके दक्षिणपंथी साथियों की विभाजनकारी नीतियों को चुनौती देने में समर्थ है। राष्ट्र श्रमिक वर्ग के हाथों से ही एक बहुलतावादी, समान, न्याय संगत और सभ्य समाज की स्थापना की आशा रखता है। यह बहुत बड़ा तथा अत्यन्त कठिन काम है। और श्रमिक वर्ग को भी यह जिम्मेदारी पूर्ण विश्वास के साथ उठानी होगी और राष्ट्रीय एकता, मजबूत लोकतन्त्र तथा धर्मनिरपेक्ष मूल्यों की भारत के समाज में रक्षा करने में सफल होना होगा।

# AIIEA SECRETARIAT MEETS AT HYDERABAD DECIDES TO CELEBRATE DIAMOND JUBILEE OF LIC AND OPPOSE TRANSFER AND MOBILITY POLICY

The Secretariat of AIIEA met at Hyderabad on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 to review the current political and economic developments and their impact on the insurance industry and the issues of the employees. The Secretariat noted that the world capitalism continues to be crisis ridden with the United Kingdom and Japan slipping into recession. There is also fear that the United States is going to slip into recession. The crisis has devastated the life and living of the working class across the globe with the ruling elites continuing to attack the jobs, wages, pensions and social security measures of the workers. The workers are heroically resisting these attacks. The Secretariat discussed the impact of this crisis on the Indian economy and noted that the Indian Government has learnt no lessons from the global crisis and continues to pursue the discredited neo-liberal policies. Despite the claims of the fastest growing economy in the world, there is no evidence to suggest that the living conditions of the people have improved. The economy has failed to create jobs and India is confronted with huge problems of unemployment. The Government is vigorously pursuing the policy of opening the economy for foreign capital and privatizing the public sector. The latest decision to allow full freedom to foreign capital in vital areas

like Defence and civil aviation is bound to have adverse impact on the country in the long run.

## DIAMOND JUBILEE OF LIC

In this background, the Secretariat decided to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of LIC in a befitting manner. The Secretariat took pride in the fact that LIC is the conceptualization of AIIEA when it raised the demand for nationalization of insurance business in 1951 and launched a struggle to achieve the same. In the last 60 years, LIC has become the finest financial institution of the country. Today with a total assets of over 20 lakh crore, assets under management of 18.72 lakh crore and a policyholder base exceeding 30 crore, LIC has played a great role in the nation building exercise. It is the most popular brand in the country and through its contribution to the nation building ensuring total security to the policyholders; LIC is both admired and trusted by the nation. This is the reason that even after 16 years of opening up of the insurance sector to private players LIC has continued to dominate the life insurance market. But it also faces huge challenges with the decision of the government to hike FDI limit to 49 percent and the process of mergers and acquisitions that is set in motion. The continued faith placed by government in neo-liberalism also makes the attack



on LIC imminent. In these circumstances, it was decided by the Secretariat to vigorously campaign for the defence of LIC by organizing various programs in the first half of September. The Secretariat also decided to organize a two day national seminar at New Delhi before the end of this year involving leading economists, social activists, intellectuals and prominent citizens of the country. The Secretariat called upon the LIC employees to pledge to rededicate to take this institution built by their sweat and toil to still greater heights.

### **CAMPAIGN AGAINST PRIVATISATION OF PSGI COMPANIES**

The Secretariat endorsed the decision of the Standing Committee to campaign against move of the government to list the PSGI companies on the stock exchanges. The campaign is designed to educate the employees and seek public support to the struggle. It is also decided to observe a day's strike by employees of general insurance companies on the day the shares of any company is opened for initial public offer.

### **TRANSFER AND MOBILITY POLICY**

The Secretariat noted that LIC management is taking unilateral steps to implement a transfer and mobility policy despite widespread opposition. The stand of the AIEEA and the reasons of its opposition to TMP are made clear through four letters addressed to LIC on this issue. It is regrettable that LIC is using Chief Vigilance Commissioner's orders as a pretext to implement this policy. It is acknowledged even by the Parliament that LIC is one of the few institutions in this country that is free from corruption. Therefore invoking the vigilance angle to bring a TMP is insulting the honesty and integrity of the employees whose devotion has made LIC a giant financial institution. **The Secretariat noted that AIEEA has been successful in pushing the TMP for over ten since LIC and government tried to bring it in the year 2004. The AIEEA had also organized strike actions on this issue. The resistance has to continue.** The Secretariat warned LIC that any arbitrary and unilateral implementation of TMP will be injurious to the peace and harmony of the industry. The Secretariat noted that there is acute shortage of staff in all offices of the corporation and LIC would do well to find ways and means to go for a massive recruitment rather than expending their energies on the TMP.

**A Fax message was sent to the Chairman from the meeting urging upon him not to be unilateral on this issue. The Secretariat also adopted a resolution**

**and warned LIC that if they proceed to implement the TMP, AIEEA will resolutely oppose it including through direct industrial actions. The resolution is sent to the Chairman. It was decided to hold demonstrations in front of all offices during lunch recess on 28<sup>th</sup> June and handover the resolution to the Zonal Managers and heads of the divisions. The Secretariat assured the LIC employees that AIEEA will protect the interests of the employees and ensure that unnecessary disturbance is not caused to them in the name of TMP.**

### **OTHER ISSUES**

The AIEEA had expressed apprehensions on profiling of employees and security of data in the name of biometrics. But with the government undemocratically passing the Aadhar Bill, these concerns have been ignored. The LIC has decided to introduce biometrics and is introducing this on experimental basis in few centres. The AIEEA has not raised any objection to this experimentation but has expressed reservations on the log out provision. The Secretariat has asked LIC to reconsider the log out provision.

The Secretariat decided to continue to pursue the demand for another pension option. With both LIC and PSGI companies recording good results in the financial year 2015-16, the Secretariat demands the managements to vigorously push this demand at the Government level. The AIEEA will continue its efforts in this direction.

The Secretariat noted the delay in the government issuing notifications on five day week, accumulation of PL and a number of others issues. It demanded LIC to follow up with the government in order to ensure early implementation. The Secretariat urged LIC to immediately implement its commitment on upgradation of the remaining RPT employees.

The Secretariat also noted with concern the changes that have been unilaterally brought about in the Sports Policy of the Corporation. The changes in functioning of the LIC Sports and Recreation Clubs are a direct infringement of the democratic rights of the General Body and violation of the bye-laws of these Clubs. The Secretariat demanded a review of this policy and urged LIC to hold discussions with AIEEA on this issue.

The Secretariat concluded with confidence that despite the great challenges posed by the political and economic environment and LIC's policy on issues of the employees, the organization is capable of meeting them successfully through struggles.





## Standing Committee (GI), AIIEA decides on

- Extensive campaign against privatisation
- One more option for Pension
- Pursuing vigorously Promotion Policy and other issues

The meeting of Standing Committee (General Insurance) AIIEA was held at Hyderabad from 22<sup>nd</sup> May to 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2016. Com.Sunil Kumar, President, EZGIEA, presided over the meeting. Com.Amanulla Khan, President, Com.K.Venu Gopal, Vice President, Com.V.Ramesh, General Secretary, Com.B.S.Ravi, Treasurer and Com.K.S.Rajasekhar, Asst. Treasurer, AIIEA participated in the meeting and guided the deliberations. The Standing Committee was convened to analyse the present situation in the industry and our struggle against privatization and consolidation of the organization.

The Standing Committee noted with great satisfaction that despite a difficult economic environment, the PSGI companies have done very well in the just concluded financial year 2015-16. The four PSGI companies earned a combined gross direct premium income of Rs.47717.56 crore registering a growth of 12.14% over the preceding year. These companies earned impressive profits and increased their asset base. The public sector general insurance continued to maintain its dominance in the market. The Standing Committee noted that despite this impressive growth, there are areas of concern and felt that the administration must address these concerns and give a new thrust towards individual and personal line of businesses.

It is the firm belief of AIIEA that the working of public sector should not be driven only by profit consideration but also by the larger

good to the society. The Standing Committee noted that the Public Sector has undertaken the responsibility of underwriting an accident insurance of Rs 2 lakhs for a premium of Rs.12 per annum under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY). The Public Sector has also been contributing immensely to the socially driven programs of the government. This great work requires strengthening of the public sector and adequate support from the government. Unfortunately the NDA government is doing just the opposite. It has decided to sell the equity of PSGI companies and GIC Re despite the fact that these institutions are adequately capitalized and are capable of raising additional capital through generation of internal resources if required. The privatization of PSGI companies is only to help raise resources for the government.

The Standing Committee decided to firmly oppose the privatization policy of the government. It decided on an extensive campaign among the public to win over their support to our struggle. It also decided to educate the employees and organize them in resistance against these policies. The Standing Committee also decided to project the demand for merger of PSGI companies into a single monolithic corporation on the lines of LIC. The government has no reason to deny this demand when it is pushing for consolidation in the banking sector.

The Standing Committee noted that employees across the country are very appreciative of the role played by AIIEA in securing a very good wage revision. This appreciation is coming from sources cutting across the union and class affiliations. This provides an opportunity for the organization to consolidate the organization both in terms of increased membership and financial strength. Though some progress is made on these counts, there is huge scope for further improvement. Therefore, it was decided to organize campaign for consolidation of AIIEA on the basis of the groundswell of goodwill that can be seen across the country.

The Standing Committee discussed various other issues. It expressed satisfaction over the relief secured on the issue of reopening of fixation of salary of ex-servicemen appointed after 1.8.2012 and also other improvements brought about such as education loan etc. It decided to pursue other pending issues. It decided to work for a joint movement on the issue of pension option.

The meeting also endorsed the call given by the central trade unions for nationwide strike on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016.

### **The Programme of Action**

- 1) All India Demonstrations – If proposal is submitted by any company to SEBI for listing.
- 2) One Day Strike – If Initial Public Offer is floated, on the first day of IPO.
- 3) Holding seminars/conventions/press meet/ round table meets in all the major centres.
- 4) Holding employees' meetings at all offices.
- 5) Signature campaign against disinvestment among employees from 1<sup>st</sup> July to 15<sup>th</sup> July.

During the conduct of Standing Committee a cultural programme based on a brief narration of the work of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar and events in his life was also held and appreciated by all.

## **Improvements in Promotion Policy for Class III & IV in General Insurance**

The AIIEA has been pursuing for improvement in promotion policy for the last several years in the General Insurance Industry. Several discussions were held with the representatives of GIPSA on this issue. These efforts have resulted into GIPSA agreeing for some improvements. Standing Committee (GI) AIIEA received a communication from GIPSA on 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 stating that the Governing Board approved the improvements in the promotion policy of Class III & IV and same is being sent to the member companies for their placing with the respective Boards for approval. We have come to know that the following are the improvements:

- 1) Restoration of provision of contingency.
- 2) The period of non-consideration for promotion due to refusal of promotion has been reduced to one year only from the existing two years clause.
- 3) Promotion under Para 25A: Special provision of minimum one promotion for employees who joined in service as Assistant, the service and age criteria of the employee has been reduced to 20 years of service and 50 years of age from the existing 25 and 55 years.
- 4) The weightage of marks for seniority is increased to 50 instead of 40 for Assistant to SrAssistant promotion and 30 to 35 for promotion to the cadre of Officer (Scale I).
- 5) Preparation of panel of candidates for competitive channel under Para 13.2 of promotion to the cadre of Officer (Scale I): The marks obtained in the competitive examination will be reckoned while preparing the panel itself instead of ranking list.
- 6) Eligible candidates who could not be successful in the promotion to the cadre of Officer (Scale 1) under Para 13.2 in the zone will be considered for promotion

against the unfilled vacancies of other zones on their request.

- 7) Assured Career Progression Scheme (ACPS) for employees in the cadres of Sub Staff, Driver and Record Clerk: The word "who fail to qualify for promotion to higher cadre and "have created confusion while releasing the running scale to the eligible employees in the cadres of Sub Staff, Driver and RC. Now the word "who fail to qualify for promotion to higher cadres and" stands deleted.

- 8) Employees who have passed the departmental examination and computer test and failed to get the promotion have to appear again for computer test in the next year promotional exercise. Now the validity of computer test to be reckoned for three promotional exercises following the date of passing the computer test.
- 9) Marks for Technical Qualifications: The marks for MBA and PGDBM are reduced to 5 instead of 15.

## CITU Condemns Retrograde Move to Sell Out Public Sector Companies with Huge Assets

The Centre of Indian Trade Unions condemns the retrograde move by the Govt of India to fast track selling out the Central Public Sector Enterprises with its huge asset base to private hands. With this dubious intent, the NITI Ayog has been made to submit a list of CPSEs to Prime Minister's office recommending fast track sale of those companies on various pretext.

It is a matter of alarm that in order to facilitate sale-out of the CPSEs, the NITI Ayog has been made to recommend further capital investment from national exchequer in some of those CPSEs like Air India, FACT, Chennai Petroleum, Madras Fertilisers etc, not just to revamp their operational efficiency, but to make them saleable to private hands.

The history of such strategic sale of around nine CPSEs, like IPCL, BALCO etc during the previous NDA regime reveals that each of those CPSEs with their huge asset-base were sold at prices less than one fourth of their real asset value at then market prices, that too, virtually to a single bidder, as observed by CAG at that material time. The Narendra Modi Govt at present has become more desperate in selling out huge national assets in the chosen CPSEs to its private corporate constituency, both domestic and foreign, at a throw away price, much to the detriment of national interest. Two years' BJP regime could not create nor facilitate any new establishments for productive employment generation in any significant scale except making loud noises through media-hype and creating statistical illusions on GDP growth; on the other hand the Govt is desperately moving ahead for

mega-sale of huge national assets through sale of CPSEs.

The NITI Ayog while making such disastrous recommendations along with the list of CPSEs for sale went to the extent of arguing that "non-priority sector CPSE, once revived, could always be considered for strategic disinvestment". Could devilry go further? Can Airlines, petroleum companies, fertilizer producing units be construed as "non-priority sector" in our country by any stretch of imagination? But a Govt in a hurry to establish its corporate loyalty and also so called "reforms-credential" can certainly go to such devilish extent totally unconcerned of national interest.

Such retrograde move of frittering away national assets in country's CPSEs must be combated and resisted by the working class movement of the country. The united platform of country's trade union movement comprising almost all the trade unions and federations of the country has already decided to go in for countrywide general strike on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 demanding, inter alia, the withdrawal of such disastrous move of sale-out of national assets and CPSEs, in order to defend the working people as well as to defend the national economy.

The CITU while calling upon the working people and trade unions in the country irrespective of affiliations to prepare for staging the countrywide General Strike on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 2016 in a massive way, also calls for organizing united protest in workplaces and industrial centres against such retrograde move of privatization by the BJP Govt.



# INDIA'S GROWTH STORY:

## Not An Occasion For Celebration

● Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

### INTRODUCTION

The RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan in a recent interview described Indian economy as a case of the "Andhonmein kana raja" or one-eyed man being the king in the land of the blind. This remark of RBI governor has embarrassed NDA government which is on a publicity blitzkrieg to showcase its achievements. The interview became moderately controversial, with the implication that he was denigrating India's success rather than emphasizing the need to do more. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley responded to Rajan's "one-eyed king" remark by saying a growth rate of 7.5% would be a cause of celebration in any other country. Commerce Minister Nirmala Sitharaman too did not take Raghuram Rajan's remarks lightly, saying better words should have been used.

### THE MEANING OF ANDHON MEIN KANA RAJA

RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan, a former chief economist of the IMF and an on leave Professor of Finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, known to have candid views on state of affairs in the Indian and global economy. Though, RBI under Rajan has also been credited with necessary steps to minimise the impact of external shocks on the country's financial system, in past he has been sucked in to controversy for telling the bitter truth that exposes the weakness and hollowness of government. Ideally, he should not have been called upon to explain his "andhon me kana raja" remark, but after it proved contentious for some, the central banker was compelled to defend himself.

Addressing the 12th annual convocation

*People will not eat growth. The importance of growth lies with boosting citizens' livelihoods and their welfare, which has not been experienced despite high growth. The so-called high growth has spawned rampant inequality leading to concentration of wealth in the hands of few with impoverishment of many. The supercilious growth story of India is not an occasion for celebrations as claimed by Finance Minister.*

of the National Institute of Bank Management (NIBM) in Pune on 20 April 2016, RBI governor sought to quash the controversy over his "India is a one-eyed king" comment, saying that it was an "off-hand" remark and was misinterpreted beyond context. Even as he apologized to the visually impaired for implying the blind were otherwise than capable, Rajan cited the Mahatma's historic quote to drive home the point why some words are used when they are used. Gandhiji used to say, "An eye for an eye will only make the whole world go blind". Yet Gandhiji's focus was on the absurdity of a policy of revenge, not on blindness, and his intent was not to disparage the blind.

In reality, there is nothing wrong in comment. What is important is not words, but intent. The proverb has a long multinational history. The Dutch philosopher, Erasmus, used it in Latin when he wrote "In regione caecorum rex est luscus". This idiom means if surrounded by less capable or able, someone who would not normally be considered special could shine. The statement by the RBI governor was a relative statement about the economy in

comparison to the rest of the world and he was right about it. Raghuram Rajan's statement reveals that despite high growth we have a long way to go before we can claim we have arrived.

## PROBLEMS GALORE

RBI Governor was absolutely right to signal that India's outperformance was accentuated because world growth was weak. He is also fully justified being pragmatic rather than "euphoric" on India's growth story. Growing from a lower base is easier. Growth, however, is just one measure of performance. The level of per capita GDP is also important. We are still one of the poorest large countries in the world on per capita basis, and have a long way to go before we reasonably address the concerns of each one of our citizens. According to a United Nations report (2015), nearly 300 million people live in extreme poverty in India and face deprivation in terms of access to basic services, including education, health, water, sanitation and electricity. More than half the rural population of the country still opts for open defecation according to the recently released Swachhta Status Report by the National Sample Survey (NSS) Office. While 87.9 per cent of the urban households were found to have access to water for use in toilets, only 42.5 per cent rural households had this facility.

Despite the debatable high growth, the share of non-performing loans in the total (gross) loans is the highest among Asian nations, a report released by the International Monetary Fund on May 3, shows. What is important that growth should be reflected in the rise of taxes, (i.e., generation of resources)

India is ranked

- \* at 130 among 188 countries in Human Development Index, 2015
- \* 118th in the list of 158 countries in World Happiness Index-2016,
- \* at 143 out of 162 nations in Global Peace Index (GPI) 2015.
- \* at 55 out of 76 countries in the Global Hunger Index

which can be utilized for developmental activities such as poverty alleviation, reduction of inequality and employment generation etc. Unfortunately, India is having one of the lowest tax -GDP ratio in the world. From 1991 to 2014, India's tax-to-GDP stayed roughly constant between 16% and 17% while GDP increased 4.5-fold. India's rate of tax revenues did not grow commensurate with its GDP growth post the 1991 reforms are baffling.

## LAGGING BEHIND CHINA

India is often compared with China. But over the past 35 years China has outpaced India in almost all economic aspect except computer software and agricultural research. The ratio of China's GDP to India's was 1.18 in 1913 (\$241 billion/\$204 billion); in 1950 it was 1.08 (\$239 billion/\$222 billion. In 1992, Chinese GDP was \$423 billion compared to \$293 billion for India. In 2015 estimates, India's GDP is around of \$2.182 trillion (7<sup>th</sup> position in world) as against China's GDP of \$11.212 trillion mark. It means the Chinese economy, which was nearly same as Indian economy in 1950, is now five times our size at market exchange rates. China occupies second position in world just behind USA. In term of purchasing power parity (PPP), China GDP in 2015 is estimated at \$18976 while for India it is only \$8027. While China occupies number one position in world; India is placed at number three. By 1978, the per capita income of China was estimated at \$979 as against India's \$966. Since then the chasm between China and India has increased enormously. As per 2015 estimates, Chinese per capita income of over \$8154 is five times that of India's \$1688. It



Cartoon courtesy:  
Satish Acharya,  
Karnataka

means the average Chinese citizen is over five times richer than the average Indian. Even in term of purchasing power parity per capita income of China stands at \$13801 while India's per capita is at \$6024.

### **HUMBUG OF SUPERCILLIOUS GROWTH STORY**

NITI Ayog envisages India to be a \$10 trillion economy by 2032. Though India has achieved 7.6 per cent GDP in last fiscal, it is not the highest growth rate achieved by India. India had achieved highest growth rate of 10.2 per cent in 1988-89. India had also achieved consecutively more than 9 per cent growth rate for three years (9.5 per cent in 2005-06, 9.6 per cent in 2006-07, and 9.3 per cent in 2007-08) during UPA-1 rule. There has been some debate about the economic numbers generated after India adopted a new data series. Suspicion is also raised by many economists over the veracity of GDP estimates of India recently where subsidy is deducted and indirect taxes are added. If in a budget government reduces subsidy and increases indirect taxes, GDP of country will automatically rise. There is some disconnect between the GDP numbers and the situation on the ground. In reality, the GDP data remain wildly inconsistent with numerous other indicators that point to continued sagging in the economy.

Our government may claim to be world conquerors with economic growth. But accelerated economic growth has not created enough jobs for growing workforce. Not only should we be growing faster than we are doing now, we should be generating more jobs for India's burgeoning youth population. But India's employment growth is beginning to show signs of a slowdown even as official data showed a pick up in GDP growth, according to a study by Care Ratings. The Labour Bureau has compiled statistics for job creation in labour-intensive sectors in the country each quarter since the 2008 global financial crisis. The latest figures show that 1.35 lakh jobs were created in 2015, the lowest figure by far of any year since then — lower than the 4.9

lakh new jobs in 2014 and 12.5 lakh in 2009. In fact, the last quarter of 2015 recorded job losses.

India's rapid economic growth over the past two decades masks its abysmal performance on social indicators. India ranked abysmally at 130 among 188 countries in Human Development Index (HDI) Report 2015 released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In World Happiness Index-2016, out of 158 countries India is ranked 118th in the list, down one slot from last year on the index. Similarly, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) ranked India a lowly 143 out of 162 nations in its Global Peace Index (GPI) 2015. India occupies abysmally at 55 out of 76 countries in the Global Hunger Index based on a new, improved formula that reflects the multidimensional nature of hunger by combining four indicators related to undernourishment, wasting, stunting, and child mortality. Though, India has improved its ranking, by moving up to 55 from 63, but fighting hunger remains a challenge. Undernourishment and mortality among children remain alarmingly high.

### **CONCLUSION**

People will not eat growth. The importance of growth lies with boosting citizens' livelihoods and their welfare, which has not been experienced despite high growth. The above analysis reveals that despite high growth, most Indians are not only languishing under poverty, hunger but lack happiness and do not lead a peaceful life. The so-called high growth has spawned rampant inequality leading to concentration of wealth in the hands of few with impoverishment of many. According to IMF, India is sitting on a social inequality time bomb since the rich are getting richer and poor are getting poorer. IMF also warns that despite reform push there is steep jump in disparity, inequality since 1990s which poses serious threat to political stability and growth unless situation is addressed. Hence, in view of above, the supercilious growth story of India is not an occasion for celebrations as claimed by Finance Minister. Despite high growth, we have a long way to go before we can claim we have arrived. ■



# The Victory of the Left in Kerala Elections

Ganapathy Krishnan

The victory of the Left Democratic Front in Kerala in the recently held assembly elections shows the increased relevance of parliamentary left politics in our country. The LDF won the assembly elections by securing 91 seats out of 140 seats with the vote share of 43.44%. The defeated Congress led United Democratic Front faced much erosion of votes by getting only 47 seats. The Congress as a party has been able to get only 22 seats with the other constituents getting the major share of 25 seats. Four ministers, speaker as well as deputy speaker and other top leaders suffered a major defeat.

It showed the public anger and opposition to the corrupt and the misgovernance of the UDF front led by the Chief Minister Oommen chandy, who himself was also involved in scandals. Innumerable scandals and scams had affected the credibility of the Government to such an extent that almost all the ministers including the CM had vigilance cases. The nefarious activities of liquor barons, land grabblers, exploiters of natural resources with the connivance of the corrupt ministers along with the unholy relationship of a businesswoman with the chief minister and other major congress people has caused the

The LDF has been campaigning against all the misdeeds of the UDF by acting as an effective opposition under the leadership of the opposition leader Com. V. S Achyutanandan who is admired by all with his political integrity and sincerity to the common man. The appeasement policy of the UDF towards the caste organizations and the minority outfits has contributed to the increased space to the majority fundamentalists in extracting major concessions .

This has prompted the BJP to form an alliance with the BJDS, propelled by a liquor baron with the OBC status. A 13 party alliance was formed with the tacit support of the Chief Minister, who has intended that this alliance will help the Congress to retain power which may ultimately cause the defeat of the LDF. But the LDF has effectively campaigned against this alliance also by adhering to the principles of secularism. Thus the strategy of combining the opposition to the corruption of the UDF ministry along with the attack on the communalism of the BJP alliance has paid the dividends for the LDF. Thus LDF has been able to win the minds of all sections of the population by gaining absolute majority in the new assembly.



The victory of the Left in Kerala is a victory of the working class politics in India. It helps to consolidate the struggles of the working class by showing that there is an alternative path of development against neoliberalism. The danger of communalism can be checked only with the strong intervention of the working class.

The political consciousness of the Kerala people with secular credentials has also contributed for the coming of LDF in Kerala. There is total domination of the left in northern and southern parts of Kerala particularly in the capital Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Aleppuzha, Trissur, Palghat, Kozhikode and Kannur. But one concern is that BJP has entered the assembly for the first time in Kerala by winning the Nemom constituency in Trivandrum. This has been made possible with the tacit understanding with the Congress.

The LDF manifesto is indeed unique that it has promised an alternative path of development by combining growth and social protection. The importance given to the development of public sector in the industrial development and the increased emphasis on the protection of environment is also a good promise. It has also promised the restoration of the participatory pension for the employees. Social welfare measures are promised to all unorganized sections. Stringent measures against corruption and the safety of women will also be ensured. Comrade Pinarayi Vijayan who belongs to the working class and a member of the CPM Politburo has been elected as the new Chief Minister of Kerala. A nineteen member ministry along with the Chief Minister was sworn in in a grand ceremony attended by more than 10000 people in the central stadium in Trivandrum.

The victory of the Left in Kerala is the victory of the working class politics in India. It helps to consolidate the struggles of the working class by showing that there is alternative path of development against neoliberalism. The danger of communalism can be checked only with the strong intervention of the working class. Organized as well as the unorganized sections should be organized and ideological education should be given to maintain the working class unity.

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प्रगतिशील कवि केदारनाथ अग्रवाल की कविता धरती जमीन और किसान के अन्तसंबंधों की मार्मिक और सजीव व्याख्या करती है। कविता की कुछ पंक्तियाँ इस प्रकार हैं -

यह धरती है उस किसान की  
जे मिट्टी का पूर्ण पारखी  
जे मिट्टी के संग साथ ही  
तपकर, गलकर, जीकर, मरकर  
खपा रहा है जीवन अपना  
देख रहा है मिट्टी में सोने का सपना  
मिट्टी की महिमा गाता  
मिट्टी के ही अन्तस्तल में  
अपने तन की खाद मिलाकर  
मिट्टी को जीवित रखता है  
खुद जीता है  
यह धरती है उस किसान की !

उक्त पंक्तियों में कवि ने किसान का उसके खेतों के साथ जीवन्त अनुभवों को जिया है। न केवल भारत में बल्कि जहाँ कहीं भी खेत और किसान बचे हैं वहाँ? दोनों के बीच माँ और उसके शिशु जैसा संबंध है और जहाँ संबंध केवल हानि-लाभ का बचा है वहाँ दोनों का विनाश हुआ है। जहाँ तक भारत की बात है जमीन का ऋय-विक्रय किसान आपस में करते रहे हैं और आजादी के बाद कल-कारखाने, रेल-परिवहन, शिक्षण संस्थान आदि के नाम पर सभी सरकारों ने अंग्रेजों के द्वारा बनाये भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून 1894 का प्रयोग कर किसानों की जमीन को अपने कब्जे में किया और नियमानुसार उनको मुआवजा भी दिया।

यूँ तो जमीन हमेशा से महत्वपूर्ण रही है और जीविका का अहम साधन रही है, परन्तु नई विश्व व्यवस्था के अन्तर्गत जो भारत में 1991 से निर्बाध गति से जारी है, के बाद यह अचानक व्यवस्था के केन्द्र में आ गयी। औद्योगिक पूंजीवाद के लिए तो जमीन अनिवार्य थी ही परन्तु वित्तीय पूंजीवाद के दौर में तो मानो जमीन लूटने की होड़ लगी हुई है। कार्पोरेट और कार्पोरेट नीत मोदी सरकार ने तो भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून 2013 को संशोधित कराने को अपनी प्रतिष्ठा से जोड़ रखा है। यह तो भला हो इस देश की जनता का जिसके किसान संगठन, श्रमिक संगठन तथा नागरिक संगठनों का जिन्होंने मोदी सरकार के तीन अध्यादेशों के बावजूद इसे ठंडे बस्ते में डालने के लिए मजबूर कर दिया। भूमि अधिग्रहण अध्यादेश भले ही ठंडे बस्ते में है परन्तु किसानों से उनकी जमीन छीनने की सारी योजनायें बन चुकी है। किसानों की जमीन छीनी जानी है, यह लगभग तय है। इसके मुख्य रूप से दो कारण हैं- भूमि का निवेश के लिये सबसे उपयुक्त साधन होना तथा भारतीय कृषि को योजनाबद्ध तरीके से बरबाद करना।

पहले बिन्दु पर विचार करने पर हम यह पाते हैं कि



अविनाश कुमार मिश्र

## भारतमाता-धरतीमाता पर मँडराता खतरा: कार्पोरेट की किसानों की जमीन पर गृह्य दृष्टि

भारत सरकार वर्तमान में जिस प्रकार से भूमि अधिग्रहण अध्यादेश को पारित कराने में जुटी हुई है उसके तार कहीं न कहीं से वित्तीय पूंजी से जुड़े हैं जो पूरी दुनिया में घूम-घूम कर उत्पादन के प्राकृतिक और मानवीय संसाधनों के शिकार में जुटी है। हम जानते हैं कि प्राकृतिक संसाधनों में जल, जंगल, जमीन, खनिज आदि पर कब्जा जमाने की जैसे होड़ लग गई है। होड़ केवल भारत की जमीन को हथियाने की नहीं बल्कि पूरी दुनियाँ विशेष कर एशिया और अफ्रीका के गरीब देशों में हर प्रकार के हथकण्डे अपनाकर किसानों के हाथ से जमीन कार्पोरेट हाथों में जा रही है। जमीन की यह छीना झपटी विकास को लेकर है जिसके खिलाफ बोलकर आप जनता को आसानी से आंदोलित भी नहीं कर सकते। भारत में जमीन की सांख्यिकी और विकास के नाम पर इसे किस प्रकार हथियाने की योजना है इसकी पड़ताल इस प्रकार है।

सन् 2013 के राष्ट्रीय नमूना सर्वेक्षण की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार भारत में रहने वाले परिवारों के स्वामित्व में 1992 में 11.74 करोड़ हेक्टेयर कृषि योग्य जमीन थी जो 2013 में घटकर 9.24 करोड़ हेक्टेयर रह गयी है। अर्थात् 20 वर्ष में ग्रामीण भारत के परिवारों के पास जमीन के स्वामित्व में 20 प्रतिशत की कमी आ गई है। बढ़ती आबादी के कारण कृषि जोतों के क्षेत्रफल में दिनों दिन कमी होती जा रही है। 2013 के सर्वेक्षण में प्रति परिवार औसत 0.59 हेक्टेयर जमीन रह गई है। इसे यदि देश के कुल परिवारों के आधार पर आकलन करेंगे तो प्रति परिवार औसत 0.37 हेक्टेयर जमीन रह जाती है। भारत में वैश्विक विनिर्माण और अनेक बहुराष्ट्रीय तथा राष्ट्रीय (निजी) कंपनियों के भयंकर दबाव में दिल्ली-मुम्बई इण्डस्ट्रियल कॉरिडोर का निर्माण शुरू हो चुका है। इस औद्योगिक कॉरिडोर में नये औद्योगिक क्षेत्र, मौजूदा औद्योगिक क्षेत्र के विस्तार, बंदरगाह, आधुनिक हवाई अड्डे, सेज, औद्योगिक पार्क, आई.टी./आई.टी.ई.एस/बायोटेक केन्द्रों और कृषि प्रसंस्करण केन्द्रों, स्मार्ट शहरों, एकीकृत टाउनशिप, बुनियादी सुविधाओं, विद्युत संयंत्रों, राष्ट्रीय राजमार्गों का विस्तार, डेडीकेटेड फ्रेट कारिडोर, उच्च गति रेल/सड़क परिवहन नेटवर्क आदि का निर्माण किया जायेगा। दिल्ली-मुम्बई इंडस्ट्रियल कारिडोर की लम्बाई 1483 किमी, चैड्राई लगभग 300 किमी तथा इसके



courtesy: <http://politica-economica-nsic.blogspot.in>

The present Government, while raising emotional slogan of 'Bharat Mata ki jai', is, in fact, trading away the Dharti Mata, the land of the tiller. Safeguarding this from the greed of the Corporate is the duty of every Indian.

अन्तर्गत 4.36 करोड़ हेक्टेयर जमीन अधिग्रहीत की जाने वाली है जिसमें से बहुत सारी जमीन अधिग्रहीत की भी जा चुकी है। एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार इसमें 150 से 200 वर्ग कि.मी. के नौ औद्योगिक जोन होंगे।

भारत में 6 इण्डस्ट्रियल कॉरिडोर बनाने की योजना है। नार्थ ईस्ट म्यांमार कारिडोर छोड़कर देश के 16 राज्यों को प्रभावित करने वाले 5 कारिडोर की कुल लंबाई 6749 किमी है और इसके अन्तर्गत ली जाने वाली कुल प्रस्तावित जमीन का क्षेत्रफल 20.14 करोड़ हेक्टेयर आता है जो देश में मौजूदा जमीन 30.59 करोड़ हेक्टेयर का 66 प्रतिशत है। किसी भी परियोजना के लिए कितनी जमीन आवश्यक है यह प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट में दिया जाता है। दिल्ली-मुंबई औद्योगिक कारिडोर की प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट में इसकी स्पष्टता नहीं है। फिर भी जितना अनुमान लगाया जा रहा है उसके आधार पर भारत में मौजूदा कृषि भूमि का लगभग 20 प्रतिशत हिस्सा दिल्ली-मुंबई औद्योगिक कारिडोर की भेंट चढ़ जायेगी।

खेती का बोझ कम करने की बात कहकर सरकार किसानों को खेती से हटाकर उनकी संख्या 20 प्रतिशत रखने की योजना पर काम कर रही है। कृषि में विदेशी निवेश कराने के लिए किसानों की इतनी बड़ी संख्या को कम रखना ही पड़ेगा। इसके लिए कार्पोरेट फार्मिंग, कांटेक्ट फार्मिंग आदि शब्दों का जाल बिछाकर किसानों को उनकी जमीन से वंचित कर उसे दशी-विदेशी कार्पोरेट के हवाले किया जा रहा है। जिस दिन दिल्ली मुंबई औद्योगिक गलियारे के लिए आवश्यक सारी जमीने किसानों से वापस ले ली जायेगी। उस दिन प्रति कृषक

परिवार 0.25 हेक्टेयर अर्थात कुल 27000 वर्ग फीट जमीन खेती के लिए बचेगी। यह घोर विडम्बना की बात है कि दुनिया का सबसे अधिक रोजगार देने वाला भारत का कृषि क्षेत्र आज भूमण्डलीकरण की नीतियों का शिकार बन रहा है जिसे भारत सरकारें लगातार बर्बाद करने पर तुली हुई है।

मोदी सरकार तो किसानों से उसी प्रकार जमीन छीनने पर आमादा है जिस प्रकार श्रमिकों से उनका रोजगार। भूमि अधिग्रहण अध्यादेश 2013 में संशोधन तथा श्रम कानूनों में संशोधन दोनों को सरकार समानान्तर पारित कराना चाहती है क्योंकि ये दोनों कानून जब तक रहेंगे भारत में भूमण्डलीकरण का एजेण्डा अधूरा रहेगा।

देश को गुमराह करके सरकारें अपनी उपलब्धियों का झूठा जश्न मना रही है। उत्तर प्रदेश में प्राकृतिक आपदाओं और सूखे के चलते जब किसान आत्महत्या कर रहे थे तो मुलायम सिंह यादव तथा अखिलेश यादव अपने पूरे कुनबे के साथ सैकड़ों करोड़ रुपये खर्च करके सैफई उत्सव के नाम पर फिल्मी डांसरों का लुत्फ उठा रहे थे।

इसी प्रकार केन्द्र में मोदी सरकार ने दो वर्ष पूरा किया है। 26 मई को राजपथ पर उपलब्धियों का ढिंढोरा पीटा गया। सभी केन्द्रीय मंत्री अपने विभागों की उपलब्धियों को प्रेस कांफ्रेंस करके बता रहे हैं। वे इस तथ्य से बच रहे हैं कि पिछले एक वर्ष में मराठवाड़ा में किसानों द्वारा आत्म हत्या करने की दर में 22 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हो गई है। पूरे देश में किसान सूखे के चलते महाविपत्ति झेल रहे हैं। जहां फसलें अच्छी हो गई हैं वहाँ उन्हें उपज का उचित मूल्य प्राप्त नहीं हो रहा है। इस वर्ष मध्य प्रदेश तथा महाराष्ट्र में प्याज की फसल अच्छी हो गई जिसका भी खामियाजा किसानों को ही भुगतना पड़ा। दस कुन्तल प्याज बेचने पर महाराष्ट्र के किसान को मात्र एक रूपये की बचत हुई। नीमच (मध्य प्रदेश) में प्याज 30 पैसे प्रति किलो बिकी। यह खबर किसी को भी झिंझोड़ सकती है परन्तु न तो केन्द्र सरकार को इसकी चिन्ता है और न ही राज्य सरकारों को। इन स्थितियों में किसान आत्महत्या नहीं करेगा तो क्या करेगा ?

एक हजार करोड़ रूपया खर्च कर के मोदी सरकार अपनी झूठी उपलब्धियों का विज्ञापन कर रही है और महाराष्ट्र के किसानों पर कुल बकाया कर्ज मात्र सात सौ करोड़ रूपये हैं। सरकारों की संवेदन हीनता का अब यह आलम हो गया है। ऐसी स्थितियों में किसानों पर विपत्तियों का पहाड़ लगातार टूट रहा है और वे सरकारी उपेक्षा के चलते खेती छोड़ने के लिए विवश हो रहे हैं तथा जो किसान खेती में लगे हैं वे देर सबेर अपनी जीवन लीला समाप्त करने के लिए बाध्य किये जा रहे हैं। वैसे तो आजादी के बाद से ही कृषि की तुलना में नौकरी करना ज्यादा प्रतिष्ठा का विषय माना जा रहा है फिर भी कृषि और जमीन की महत्ता तथा उपयोगिता लगातार बनी हुई है। 1980 से वर्ष 2009 तक भारत में कृषि उत्पादन का स्वर्णकाल था और इसी के बदौलत भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था

में भी जबर्दस्त संवृद्धि देखी गयी।

परन्तु कृषि में तथाकथित पूंजीनिवेश और बहुप्रचारित इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर का निर्माण दो ऐसी अवधारणायें भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था में प्रस्तुत की गईं जिनका उद्देश्य भारत की जमीन पर वित्तीय पूंजी के कब्जे को सुनिश्चित कराना था। बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों के एजेण्डे को जीवन के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र का दर्शन मानने का परिणाम यह हुआ कि चैतरफा विकास का ताना-बाना बुना जाने लगा। इस विकास का दर्शन बिल्कुल वर्गीय है। प्रचारित-प्रसारित इसे आम जनता के लिए किया जा रहा है परन्तु इसके बड़े हिस्से का लाभ सीधे-सीधे कार्पोरेट और पूंजीपतियों को मिल रहा है।

इस विकास के दुष्चक्र के चलते बड़े पैमाने पर लोग अपनी जीविका से हाथ धो रहे हैं और विस्थापन बढ़ रहा है। रीयल स्टेट की बड़ी-बड़ी कंपनियाँ दलालों के माध्यम से किसानों को झंसा देकर उनकी जमीन को हथिया रही हैं। जमीन की लूट के मामले में सरकारी क्षेत्र की कंपनियाँ किसी भी मामले में निजी कंपनियों से पीछे नहीं हैं। जमीन का सौदा तय करते समय उचित मुआवजा और परिवार के एक सदस्य को नौकरी देने की बात की जाती है परन्तु कुछ भी नहीं किया जाता है।

जमीन से हाथ धोने के पश्चात मुआवजे का पैसा किसानों के हाथों में कुछ दिन ही टिकता है और इसके बाद उनकी दुर्दशा का दौर शुरू हो जाता है। पैसा प्राप्त होने के पश्चात किसान भी लापरवाही से खर्च करते हैं और कुछ दिनों बाद उनका हाथ खाली हो जाता है। गुडगांव की जमीन जब अधिगृहीत की गई तो किसानों के हाथ में खूब पैसा आया। जैसे पैसा आया वैसे ही खर्च होने लगा। हीरो-होण्डा कंपनी की बड़ी-बड़ी डिलेवरी गाड़ियाँ गावों में आयी और ग्रामीणों ने हाथों-हाथ मोटर साइकिलें खरीद ली। कुछ किसानों की शादी में दूल्हे हेलीकाप्टर से बारात जाने लगे। इसी प्रकार अन्य प्रकार के खर्च बेतहाशा बढ़ते चले गये और किसान कुछ दिनों में पैसे-पैसे के लिए मोहताज हो गये। यही है ग्रामीणों के भूमि अधिग्रहण से मिलने वाले मुआवजे का अर्थशास्त्र जिसके मोहपाश में फँसकर किसान अपनी जड़ों और जीविका से हाथ धोते जा रहे हैं।

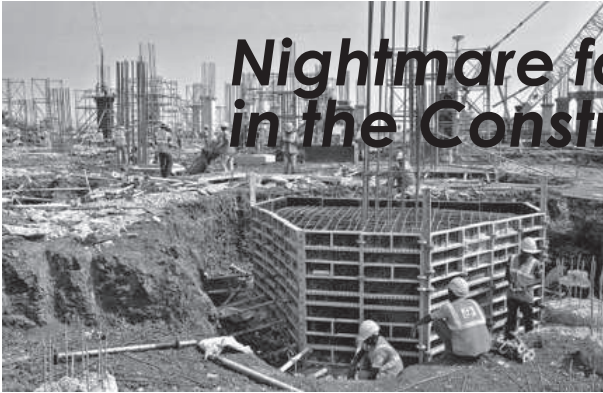
हमारे देश के राजनेता और हुक्मरान पश्चिम के विकास के जिस मॉडल को दैव-विधान समझकर शिरोधार्य करके भारत में अंधाधुंध लागू करते चले जा रहे हैं कदाचित उस मॉडल की दुर्दशा पर या तो उनका ध्यान जाता नहीं अथवा जानबूझकर देश के लोगों को जीती मक्खी निगलने के लिए बाध्य किया जाता है। जिस विकास के मॉडल की तरफ आज हम बढ़ रहे हैं, इस मॉडल की शोषणकारी और असमानता परक नीतियों के चलते आज समूचे यूरोप, अमेरिका तथा जापान में हाहाकार मचा हुआ है और लगभग दुर्जेय सी मानी जाने वाली चीन की अर्थव्यवस्था के पांव भी डगमगाने लगे हैं।

अब प्रश्न यह उठता है कि बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों के

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# Nightmare for Working Class in the Construction of A.P Capital

P Satish



A 22-year-old construction worker named Devendra, from Jharkhand, was killed in an accident at the A.P. temporary Secretariat complex construction site at Velagapudi Village on 10<sup>th</sup> May. The incident took place when the worker was cleaning a cement mixer with a crow bar. He was trying to clean the inside of the drum when he was sucked in and got crushed to death.

It emerged later that the worker was not wearing mandatory crash helmet. The delay in rendering first aid to the victim also came to light. Earlier in March, Samrat Rout (20), a native of West Bengal, was crushed under a rig. This is the second incident at the construction site where the State Government is building a temporary secretariat to relocate hundreds of personnel from Hyderabad. These accidents are not isolated incidents, they show the contempt and utter disregard of ruling classes towards sufferings of hapless workers.

Ever since coming into power in May, 2014, Chandrababu government is leaving no stone unturned in trying to usher in a World Bank Raj once again in Andhra Pradesh. It is a well-known fact that AP had become laboratory for World Bank reforms during the 1990s. Andhra Pradesh was the first state in the country for the World Bank to set its foot at the state level with its unconcealed intention to gain political, administrative and economic control over the state.

Chandrababu Naidu was the 'poster boy' of reforms propounded by the World Bank and his government religiously implemented all the discredited anti-people policies, unmindful of the suffering of the people and resistance

The CM of A.P chose to be a mute spectator in the unsavoury hurry to complete the Government Interim Complex, leading to bloodshed of hapless workers, where every norm of safety and labour welfare has been flouted with impunity. Instead of cancelling licenses of construction companies and initiating punitive action against culpable executives and officials, the AP Government is resorting to Police repression on those who raise voices against unbridled exploitation.



offered to it by trade unions and Left forces. He relished being called as CEO, instead of CM. The living conditions of the people deteriorated and the struggles against Power reforms were brutally dealt with. People reacted by voting TDP out in 2004 elections.

It looks no lessons are learnt. Making true the assertion of Shakespeare that "will leopards ever change its spots", Chandrababu has once again started implementing dictates of WB, this time with renewed vigour.

TDP Govt led by Chandrababu ambitiously started construction of new capital at Amaravathi, in grandeur fashion, on the lines of Singapore. It is being touted as People's Capital, but in reality it is Corporate Capital. Till

now 33,000 Acres of land have been acquired from farmers to build the capital promising suitable jobs,pensions etc. With each passing day hopes of the land givers have been evaporating as Singapore, Malaysia,China companies are refusing to part with the lands they took over from Government. The fervent hopes of locals to get jobs to their wards, have dried up as the jobs in the Capital region are only Contract and Outsourcing jobs, which doesn't require any skills. Local youth is disenchanted with these menial jobs as jobs with minimum technical skills have been given to outsiders brought by contractors.

The Construction plans,Seed plans are all shrouded in secrecy. Secret agreements were inked with MNCs without obtaining the approval of Cabinet also. The Government orders and Agreements on construction of capital have been termed as Classified documents and they are not being put in public domain for scrutiny.

In the meanwhile, the Andhra Pradesh government is building six towers which would house the interim Secretariat, Assembly and offices of Chief Minister and Ministers until permanent buildings come up in the Core Capital area on the banks of Krishna. Two leading construction firms — Larsen & Toubro and ShapoorjiPallonji — are executing the work which is expected to be completed by the second week of June. Anxious to complete the Government Interim Complex before June 15, the construction agencies put the lives of construction workers at risk.

The accident sparked outrage among the construction workers numbering more than 2,000 who set ablaze an ambulance, ransacked

furniture and rained stones on police personnel trying to shift the body. Under pressure from the workers, police brought the body back to the site. Leaders of various parties too reached the site to support demands of workers. CPI (M) leaders led the agitation and demanded a compensation of Rs. 25 lakh to the next of kin of Devendra. These demands were met with police brutality and the agitating workers and leaders were arrested to be released only the next day.

Despite severe repression workers stood their ground and relented only after they were assured of fool-proof safety measures. The State government had to announce a compensation of Rs. 20 lakh to the victim's family bowing to the huge backlash from the workers.It is only a respite for the working class as the Construction Firms are a huge force to reckon with.

L&T Company often boasts itself in the media as a biggest Construction giant with a catchy slogan "We build India". If we delve deep into its operations at work stations,we will realize to our horror that L&T exploit workers to the hilt. It engages sub contracts for its works to avoid implementing even modicum of labour laws. Workers under these sub and mini-sub contractors can never fathom the fact that they are working under L&T. It ruthlessly imposes 2 shifts on workers (Each 12 hours) instead of 3 shifts and makes them slog in the nights too.There is only 5 Minutes break for taking meals as well as to attend natural calls.These restrictions were more agonizing for women workers, who are at the receiving end. Exploiting the workers even when they are sick has become a routine



Chandrababu Naidu was the 'poster boy' of reforms propounded by the World Bank and his government religiously implemented all the discredited anti-people policies, unmindful of the suffering of the people and resistance offered to it by trade unions and Left forces. He relished being called as CEO, instead of CM. People reacted by voting TDP out in 2004 elections.

But no lesson seems to have been learnt.He once again started implementing dictates of WB, this time with renewed vigour.

one. It stealthily engages workers in night shifts for extracting work so as to keep them out of Public and Media glare. If the workers slog uninterruptedly for long time without sleep, they naturally loose grip over the tools and machinery and become vulnerable for fatal accidents.

Most of the accidents in Delhi Metro happened in this manner. It never employs locals and engage workers from different language states with a view to segregate them from the local people. These migrant workers are being virtually treated as bonded labour and they are not being allowed to mingle with local people. They will be confined to isolated rooms away from the work spots and minimum amenities are being provided to them. The sinister agenda is to isolate them from main stream so that they shouldn't air their grievances and seek redressal.

L&T never faces trouble from inspectors of labour department as it mostly undertakes the works of the Government and have the patronage of ruling classes. It has the dubious distinction of fudging the number of casualties of workers at its work spots. The official statistics from DMRC (Delhi Metro) reflect the fact that 109 construction workers died as at Aug, 2010. Media reports are agog that the exact number of deaths of workers in the construction of Delhi Metro is much more than this.

The Chief Minister of A.P chose to be a mute spectator in this unsavory episode leading to bloodshed of hapless workers, where every norm of safety and labour welfare has been flouted with impunity. Instead of cancelling licenses of construction companies and initiating punitive action against culpable executives and officials, Chandrababu Government is resorting to Police repression on those who raise voices against unbridled exploitation.

The Chandrababu government has been going ahead with jet speed in snatching away the lands of farmers and small tillers in utter violation of provisions of the 2013 Land Act. In utter disregard to parliamentary procedures, the Chandrababu government

started implementing the provisions of the land ordinance issued by the Modi dispensation though it didn't secure parliamentary approval. Land grabbing in the guise of creating land bank is taking place with the government acting like bulldozer, stifling the voices of dissent of farmers and peasants. The AP government is in a tearing hurry to create land bank with 15 lakh acres to pander to the interests of the capitalist class while usurping the lands from farmers and subjugating the rural farm workers

The indecent haste of the Chandrababu government in implementing the dictates of the World Bank will jeopardize the interests of the working class. Sensing the ire of workers, Chandrababu Government had announced cosmetic financial measures like Death Insurance, Accidental insurance etc, trying to deflect their attention from the root cause of the problems viz 12 Hours uninterrupted work without rest, no minimum wage. These are aimed to hoodwink the gullible workers as no concrete measures were undertaken to address the real problems of Workers.

The Corporate Media is planting stories that there is broad consensus among the people to the initiatives of Naidu Govt. Unfortunately, the reaction from the civil society is not to expectations to the Anti-Labour measures of Chandrababu Govt. This is providing ammunition for the Chandrababu Government to intensify its pursuit of building Corporate Capital at the expense of poor and marginalized sections.

It is time all sections of toiling masses and Progressive sections join hands against these pernicious labour practices and force the A.P Government to initiate suitable measures to effectively monitor implementation of safety and labour welfare norms for workers in the construction and other allied activities taking place in the State of A.P. Till such time, there will be no respite for the working class from the nightmares.

*(The author is*

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# In Modi And Amit Shah Speeches, The Two Sides Of BJP

Mihir Swarup Sharma

Courtesy: NDTV.COM



For a shining example of the Narendra Modi-era BJP's ability to be two things at once, look no further than the *parivartan* rally in Allahabad that effectively launched the Uttar Pradesh election campaign. At practically the same time you could hear, with unusual clarity, the two sides of the BJP: Narendra Modi, the "development-minded" Prime Minister, declare that UP just needed to grow once to catapult India into the first world; and Amit Shah, the "tough-guy" party president, further the party's core agenda of ensuring that every Hindu remembers that they are constantly threatened by Muslims.

Almost simultaneously with Modi reminding his party to be committed to "service, balance, restraint, coordination, constructiveness, sensitivity and dialogue", Shah gleefully broke several of these Seven Commandments by warning the voters of UP that they had better sweep the BJP to power in Lucknow unless they wanted a repeat of the "exodus" of Hindus from the town of Kairana. It was an "eye-opener", he said, "no ordinary event".

What earth-shattering event was Shah talking about? Well, the sequence of events is instructive. More than a week ago, the local member of parliament for the west UP district where Kairana is located, one Hukum Singh - watch the name, he's both villain and hero of this story - declared that

Hindus were leaving the area, changing its demography permanently. The BJP set up a fact-finding mission to investigate Hukum Singh's startling claim. (With the attention to institutional strength for which the party is justly celebrated, it was reported at first that the team examining Hukum Singh's claims would be led by - Hukum Singh.)

Singh's accusations certainly were startling. He said Hindu families had been forced to sell their property at reduced rates; that some were outright grabbed by Muslims; and that this process, which certainly sounded like ethnic cleansing the way he told it, was spreading from the town of Kairana to the surrounding countryside.

Naturally, the Internet went mad. #StopHinduExodus and various other such phrases trended on Twitter. Tens of thousands of young men online had simultaneous aneurysms at the thought that this ethnic cleansing was being ignored by the mainstream media. Except of course for the television channel Zee News, which, with its trademark restraint and accuracy, spread the news far and wide. "You've heard of the exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits," began the award-winning anchor. "But can you believe that Hindus are being forced to leave their homes barely 124 km from the nation's capital? The national media is ignoring it." He went on to claim that the proportion of Hindus in Kairana had dipped from 32 per cent to just eight per cent. I literally lost count of the number of times he said "Hindu" in a seven-minute segment. As is appropriate in a well-functioning republic, once



Cartoon courtesy:  
Gokul  
Deccan Chronicle

A warning though Indian political history is backwards - it can frequently repeat itself - the first time as farce, but the second time as tragedy. The farce that was the BJP's attempt to create a Kashmir out of Kairana has genuinely dangerous implications for Muzaffarnagar riots a few years ago is indeed a move towards ghettoisation in Western UP. Communities that were once integrated are separating from each other - which is, of course, just what the BJP wants.

something trends on Twitter, the awesome majesty of the Government of India steps in. The Union Minister Shripad Naik declared that Modi was watching matters himself, and that three Union Ministers would shortly travel to the small town to discover what happened (presumably by talking to Hukum Singh). The National Human Rights Commission, hated by the BJP during the previous government as being full of Congress meddlers, but now of course proudly independent, demanded an explanation from UP's Chief Secretary and its Director General of Police, etc, etc.

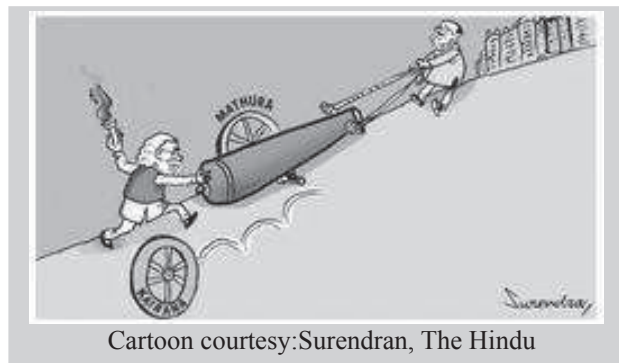
You see, for the BJP, this was a godsend. It fit perfectly into the narrative they prefer to craft: of Muslim thugs and terrorists intimidating good Hindu families and making "their own country" unsafe for Hindus. So the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's Joint Secretary declared that it was "jihadi elements" who were behind the exodus, and that they were protected by the "anti-Hindu" leadership of the Samajwadi Party. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh's leading intellectual, Rakesh Sinha, went further, and blamed Jinnah, according to news agency ANI: "Any intervention would be welcomed to rehabilitate Hindus there. It is not only the question of rehabilitation but also fighting the mindset of Jinnah. It is a vestige of Jinnah which is creating such a situation. It is this ideology which parted the country in 1947." Kairana, he added helpfully, in case any newspaper was short of a sensational headline, was "becoming Kashmir". (Frankly, we should all be glad both Kairana and Kashmir start with K, given how compulsory alliteration is for the BJP these days.)

Worst of all, to my mind - because it came from a man directly responsible for law and order in India - is the statement of the junior Home Minister Kiren Rijiju, who spoke of people having to leave their villages "in their own country".

So the message was so clear it doesn't even deserve to be called subtext: Hindus "in their own country" are under threat from aggressive *jihadi* Muslims who want to turn Western UP into Kashmir. (And pinko liberal media in Delhi doesn't want you to know.)

Unfortunately for the junior Home Minister, the BJP president, various functionaries of the Sangh Parivar, and all those apoplectic tweeters, the story soon fell apart. The first few reporters to reach Kairana discovered that the place was in fact in the grip of various local gangs, and the law and order situation was terrible - but there wasn't really a Hindu vs Muslim angle to it. According to one report, at least 150 Muslim families had moved out of the crime-hit town too. Then the list of ethnically-cleansed Hindus that Hukum Singh released was discovered to have various cringe-inducing errors - people who were dead, or still in the town, or had left a decade earlier. News reports began to be filled with delightful quotes from locals, along the lines of "What, him? No he hasn't gone anywhere, unless it's the liquor store. He's bound to be back after dark", and that kind of thing.

The upshot of all this was that just as a high-powered BJP team arrived in the area, poor Hukum Singh had to bend to the facts and say that he was shocked - shocked! - that people were giving a "communal angle" to



Cartoon courtesy: Surendran, The Hindu

things. "This is not a question of Hindus and Muslims," said the poor MP. "It is about law and order."

This, incidentally, is why Hukum Singh is both villain and hero of this story - for, after all, who in today's politics is actually willing to change their mind when presented with facts? Not Twitter, which, when I last checked, was trending #MediaLiesOnKairana.

A warning though Indian political history is backwards - it can frequently repeat itself - the first time as farce, but the second time as tragedy. The farce that was the BJP's attempt to create a Kashmir out of Kairana has genuinely dangerous implications for the future. Because the fallout of the Muzaffarnagar riots a few years ago is indeed a move towards ghettoisation in Western UP. Communities that were once integrated are separating from each other - which is, of course, just what the BJP wants. A time may well come, unless action is taken soon, when Muslim and Hindu-majority localities actually become homogenous in terms of religion, no-go areas for people of the other creed.

What we just saw was the harbinger of what will in fact happen unless UP politics reverses course. Both the BJP and the SP benefit from polarising voters. The SP needs to keep Muslim voters on its side and prevent them from defecting to Mayawati - which means they need to feel insecure, and confined to their own ghettos.

And the BJP needs to remind Hindus that they are constantly under threat, and that only the SanghParivar is awake to the dangers posed to Hindus in "their own country". Shah's party will carry this message aloft on their *trishuls* through India's largest state - the world's fourth-largest democracy - as it prepares for its election.

And in the middle of it all, Narendra Modi will talk serenely about development.

*(Mihir Swarup Sharma is a fellow at the Observer Research Foundation.)*

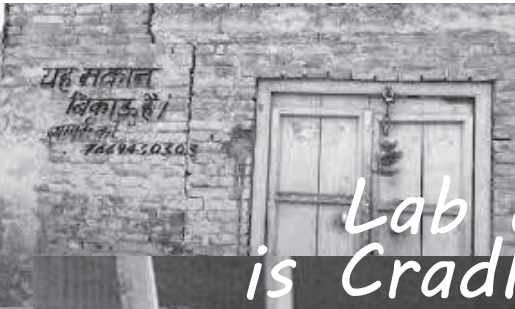
**K**airana, chosen by the BJP for a transformation into a discordant dateline, has a mellifluous past. Kairana is the birthplace of Kirana Gharana, one of the most emotional schools in Hindustani classical music, whose practitioners include legendary singers such as Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Begum Akhtar, Gangubai Hangal, Mohammed Rafi and Roshan Ara Begum.

The town in western Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district is in the news for BJP parliamentarian Hukum Singh's discredited claim of a Hindu exodus because of extortion by criminals from the minority community. Kairana was home to many families of musicians from the Mughal court, who migrated from Delhi after the empire fell in 1857. The Kirana Gharana was founded by Ustad Abdul Karim Khan and Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan in the late 19th century. Its three disciplines are rudraveena, sarangi and vocals. The Kirana school is known for its individual *swaras* or notes and emotional pukars. Ustad Wahid Khan evolved the classical Hindustani music by extending recitals of a raga from approximately 20 minutes to up to an hour. It is also influenced by Carnatic music, which Ustad Karim Khan picked up in the Mysore Durbar.

The life of Ustad Karim Khan has a parallel with that of many named in Hukum's list. Although the MP claimed they were driven out, it has been established that many left in search of greener pastures, not recently but between 10 and 15 years ago. Ustad Karim Khan, too, had left Kairana. "Ustad Karim Khan sahib (born in 1872) moved out of Kairana when he was 10 to the court of Jaipur and then to Baroda. He finally settled down in Miraj in present-day Maharashtra," explained Bhimsen Joshi's Pune-based son and Kirana exponent Shrinivas Joshi. Kairana's legacy lives on in the south.

Kirana is the principal school of Hindustani classical music practised in Karnataka and Maharashtra. Ustad Karim Khan's daughter Hirabai Barodekar was a prominent Kirana vocalist who trained under Wahid Khan and his grandson Nishikant Barodekar is a tabla expert, now based in Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh.



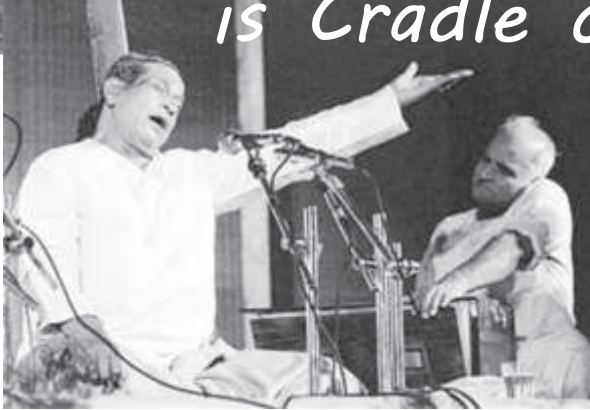


## Lab of Mischief is Cradle of Music



Pheroze L. Vincent

(Courtesy: The Telegraph 16/6/2016)



"A Hindustani vocalist is truly a devotee of all Gods. Most of the descendants of the family are Muslim but some, like the Barodekars, are also Hindu. Even among the Muslims in the family, many of our cultural practices are Hindu. We use *mehendi* and turmeric paste on couples that are about to be married. We also wear sacred threads on our wrists. Our gotra is that of Kosle Brahmins," said Ustad Mashkoor Ali Khan, also born in Kairana and now a teacher at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy in Calcutta. The urge to "wander" appears to have been sprinkled in the soil of Kairana.

Ustad Mashkoor Khan was born in Kairana in 1956 but migrated when he was aged four to Delhi, where his father Shakoor Ali Khan was a sarangi maestro at All India Radio. "We Kirana Gharana families have historically been wanderers. The men spent their days in the courts of princely states and returned to peaceful Kairana for a few months every year. Nowadays, we have all moved to bigger cities and the ancestral homes are looked after by distant relatives, whom we visit whenever we get the time, which is rare," Ustad Mashkoor Khan said.

He added: "The centres of the great Kirana Gharana music have always been outside

"Every other Muslim family in Kairana will tell you how Hindus made them stay back during the Partition. The troubles now are mere politicking before the Assembly polls"

Kairana. But until the 1980s, there were the highly respected *mehfils* (soirees) hosted by Pandit Chandra Bhan, the then MLA, in the city. Later, we occasionally performed at weddings in Shamli but I haven't performed there lately."

Culture critic Ziya Us Salam said classical music had suffered twin blows in 1857 and 1947. "In 1857, they lost Mughal patronage and in 1947, the landed gentry moved to Pakistan, mainly to Karachi. The *ghazal* tradition still exists in Rampur - home to the Rampur Gharana. But without patronage, Hindustani classical music could not survive in western Uttar Pradesh." (Ustad Wahid Khan had died in Lahore)

"Ragini or folk music is the popular music of western Uttar Pradesh and Haryana," explained Delhi-based Kirana vocalist Amjad Ali Khan. Amjad, aged 40, has relatives in Kairana and often visits the town and takes classes there. "Today, with music reality show contests, everyone wants their child to be a singer. The interest is strong in both Hindu and Muslim households." He added: "Every other Muslim family in Kairana will tell you how Hindus made them stay back during the Partition. The troubles now are mere politicking before the Assembly polls (scheduled for early next year)."

## भारतमाता-धरतीमाता पर मंडराता खतरा..

Contd from Page 16

एजेण्डे को लागू करने के बाद जब पूरी दुनिया में दुर्दशा का दौर चल रहा है तो हमारे देश की सरकारें आंख मूदकर उन्हीं नीतियों को क्यों लागू कर रही है? जो नीतियां दुनिया से रोजगार समाप्त कर रही हैं उन्हीं कम्पनियों को हम भारत में रोजगार उत्पन्न करने के लिए मेक इन इण्डिया कार्यक्रम चलाने के लिए बुला रहे हैं। जिन कंपनियों की नीतियों के चलते पूरी दुनिया में आय की असमानता बढ़ रही है और 1 प्रतिशत बनाम 99 प्रतिशत जैसे आन्दोलन अमेरिका में चलाये गये उन्हीं कंपनियों के आगमन से भारत में आय के न्यायपूर्ण वितरण की उम्मीद किया जा रहा है। जिन नीतियों के चलते यूरोप और अमेरिका में मात्र दो प्रतिशत किसान बचे हैं उन्हीं कंपनियों को भारतीय कृषि का नीति नियन्ता बना दिया गया है। वर्ष 2005 में भारत और अमेरिका के बीच कृषि, शिक्षा, शोध व्यापार से संबंधित एक समझौता हुआ जिसने भारत की कृषि, जमीन तथा व्यापार पर बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों के शिकंजे को कस दिया। इस समझौते को India - US knowledge Initiative on Agriculture Education Research, Services and Commercial linkage नाम दिया गया है।

यह समझौता कृषि व्यापार करने वाली अमेरिकी कंपनी मोनसेंटो की पहल पर किया गया। मोनसेंटो की पहल पर जी.एम. बीजों को जबर्दस्त विरोध के बावजूद भी भारतीय कृषि में प्रवेश कराया जा रहा है। दिनों दिन बढ़ते खर्चे और उत्पाद का उचित मूल्य न मिलने के कारण किसान खुद खेती को छोड़ने के लिए विवश हो रहे हैं। किसान आयोग के अध्यक्ष एम.एस. स्वामीनाथन ने कहा कि यदि रोजगार का दूसरा विकल्प मिल जाय तो आधे किसान तुरन्त खेती छोड़ देंगे। किसानों को खेती से जोड़ने के लिए उनको लागत में पचास प्रतिशत लाभ जोड़कर यदि न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य दिया जाय तभी किसानों के लिए खेती करना संभव हो सकेगा, इस प्रकार की संस्तुति डा. स्वामीनाथन ने किया है। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने 2014 के लोकसभा के चुनावों में किसानों को स्वामीनाथन की संस्तुति के आधार पर समर्थन मूल्य देने का वादा किया था परन्तु प्रधानमंत्री बनते ही इस मुद्दे पर मौन साध गये। ऐसे हालत पैदा किये जा रहे हैं। जिससे किसान खुद खेती छोड़ दें और बहुराष्ट्रीय तथा दश्री कार्पोरेट के हाथ में जमीन आ जाय।

भारत माता की जय का भावनात्मक नारा उछाल कर वर्तमान सरकार धरती माता का सौदा कर रही है। भारत माता दश की संपूर्ण जनता, सम्पूर्ण भौगोलिक भूमि, यहां की आबोहवा सबको सम्मिलित स्वरूप की अभिव्यक्ति हैं न कि इससे इतर कोई दूसरी सत्ता। पूंजीवादी कार्पोरेटी हमले से इसे बचाकर रखना प्रत्येक भारतवासी का कर्तव्य है।

**The Greatest** is gone. We might never see one like him again.

**Muhammad Ali**, the lyrical heavyweight showman who thrilled the globe with his sublime boxing style, unpredictable wit, and gentle generosity – especially later in life – **died on Friday**. He was 74. Ali, the former Cassius Clay, was not just an athlete who embodied the times in which he lived. He shaped them. His conscientious objection to the Vietnam war, and reasoned rants against a country fighting for freedom on the other side of the globe, while its own black citizens were denied basic rights of their own, energized a generation. Ali refused to serve in Vietnam, was convicted of draft evasion, and stripped of the heavyweight crown he won from Sonny Liston in 1964.

Imagine, for a moment, a 21st-century athlete who could command an audience with presidents and the pope, the Dalai Lama, Castro, Idi Amin and Saddam Hussein. Ali might have been the most famous man on earth. Disease robbed Ali of his speech late in life. But his peacekeeping trips, fundraising efforts for Parkinson's research, and support for UNICEF and the Special Olympics and many more charitable organizations were more powerful than his poetry.

"Muhammad Ali was not just Muhammad Ali the greatest, the African-American pugilist; he belonged to everyone," poet Maya Angelou wrote in the 2001 book *Muhammad Ali: Through the Eyes of the World*. "That means that his impact recognizes no continent, no language, no color, no ocean."

Ali was also a reminder of what boxing has lost. Ali's classic fights, like "The Rumble in the Jungle" and the "The Thrilla in Manila" were masterpieces of the form. Though Ali fought George Foreman in Zaire, the electricity spilled into your living room.

### From Bike Theft to Boxer: Clay's Beginnings

Muhammad Ali was born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr., in Louisville, at 6:35 p.m. on Jan. 17, 1942. His father, Cassius Sr., was a sign

# Why Muhammad Ali Matters to Everyone

Sean Gregory

(Courtesy: TIME - This is an abridged version of the article)



painter “with minor artistic talents and a major taste for gin,” according to *Sports Illustrated*. His mother, Odessa, worked as a household domestic. Clay’s ancestors were slaves on the plantation of his namesake.

In October of 1954, when Clay was 12, he and a friend rode their bicycles to a Louisville bazaar and spent the day eating free popcorn and candy. When it was time to head home, Clay discovered that his red-and-white Schwinn had been stolen. A white police officer named Joe Martin was downstairs, in a boxing gym, and a crying Clay reported the theft to him. Clay swore that he would beat up whoever took it. Martin, who also happened to train fighters and produced a local television show, *Tomorrow’s Champions*, showcasing Louisville’s best boxing talent, responded: “Well, you better learn how to fight before you start challenging people you’re going to whup.” The world’s greatest boxer was born. Clay started training the next day at Martin’s gym.

After qualifying for the 1960 Rome Olympics, Clay almost skipped the trip. Airplanes terrified him. “He wanted to take a boat or something,” Martin said in Hauser’s definitive 1991 oral history, *Muhammad Ali: His Life And Times*. After a three-hour chat in Louisville’s Central Park, Martin convinced Clay that if he wanted the heavyweight title, he had to go to Rome and win gold. Fighting in the 178-lb. light-heavyweight division, Clay cruised through his first three fights before meeting Zbigniew Pietrzykowski of Poland in the finals. Pietrzykowski had Clay beat through the first two rounds, but in the last round, Clay unfurled a steady stream of combinations at that his worn-out opponent couldn’t handle.

When Clay arrived back in Louisville, he was greeted as a hero—although his gold medal could not get him a glass of juice at a Jim Crow luncheonette. Wrote *TIME*, in 1963: “People who hadn’t been to a fight in ten years began turning out to see him box. Half of them adored him; half wanted to be on hand when the loudmouth got his comeuppance. Everyone wanted to know what happened next.”

Clay’s career was headed straight towards a title bout with the reigning heavyweight champ, Sonny Liston. “He whipped Sonny Liston as thoroughly as a man can be whipped,” *Sports Illustrated* wrote. “I am the greatest! I am the greatest! I’m the greatest,” Clay shouted, arms raised and shimmying in the ring, after Liston did not come out for the seventh round, thanks to what he said was a bum shoulder (some critics suspected he just threw in the towel.) “Well, I’m still pretty,” Clay crowed to reporters afterwards.

But to many, Clay was no longer just an athlete. Two days after the fight Clay and Malcolm X talked to reporters while they ate breakfast at a Miami motel. “Clay is the finest Negro athlete I have ever known, the man who will mean more to his people than any athlete before him,” Malcolm X said. “He is more than Jackie Robinson was, because Robinson is the white man’s hero.” Clay confirmed, for the first time in no uncertain words, that he was a member of the Nation of Islam. “Black Muslims is a press word,” Clay said. “It’s not a legitimate name. The real name is Islam. That means peace. Islam is a religion and there are 750 million people all over the world who believe in it, and I’m one of the m. I ain’t no Christian. I can’t be, when I see all the colored people fighting for forced integration

get blown up.”

The night of March 6, 1964, would further alienate many Americans. ‘This Clay name has no meaning,’” Elijah Muhammad pronounced in a radio broadcast. “I hope he will accept being called by a better name. Muhammad Ali is what I will give him as long as he believes in Allah and follows me.”

### **The Enemy**

Ali called the name-change “one of the most important things” to happen in his life. “It freed me from the identity given to my family by my slavemasters,” he told Hauser.

In May of 1965, Ali defended his title against Liston, knocking him out in the first round. Six months later, Ali fought former heavyweight champ Floyd Patterson, who Ali dubbed “the rabbit” because he was “afraid of his own shadow,” in Las Vegas. “No decent person can look up to a champion whose credo is ‘I hate whites,’” Paterson said before the fight. “I have nothing but contempt for the Black Muslims and that for which they stand. The image of a Black Muslim as the world heavyweight champion disgraces the sport and the nation. Cassius Clay must be beaten and the Black Muslims’ scourge removed from boxing.”

Ali labeled Patterson an “Uncle Tom. Ali toyed with Patterson throughout the fight, and scored a 12th round TKO. At just 23, Ali now had a 22-0 record, and was the undisputed heavyweight champ. Some experts wondered if Ali would ever lose a fight.



With the Vietnam War escalating, Ali was drafted for military service in February 1966. His request for a deferment would be denied. When reporters hounded him for his reaction, Ali uttered words that would make him a national pariah, while at the same time framed the debate about America’s role in the Vietnam conflict. “Man, I ain’t got no quarrel with them Vietcong.”

Ali voiced his contempt for American policy before the anti-war movement gained steam. Newspaper editorial writers called Ali “the most disgusting character in memory to appear on the sports scene” and the “bum of all time.” The governor of Illinois labeled Ali as “disgusting,” while the governor of Maine said Ali “should be held in utter contempt by every patriotic American.” Ali next fight, against Ernie Terrell, was scheduled for Chicago in late March of 1966, but the Chicago Tribune urged the Illinois State Athletic Commission to cancel the bout.

By refusing to join the military, Ali was costing himself millions in endorsement money. Still, he didn’t flinch. Ali filed for status as a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War. His conscientious objector claim bounced around the court system until April 28th, 1967, when Ali was to be inducted into the U.S. Army, in Houston. When the name “Cassius Marcellus Clay” was called out at the induction hearing, Ali refused to step forward. Ali was now facing a five-year prison sentence. He was immediately stripped of his titles and boxing licenses: Ali, 25, would not fight for another three-and-a-half years. “I can’t take part in nothing,” he’d later say, “where I’d help the shooting of dark Asiatic people, who haven’t lynched me, deprived me of my freedom, justice and equality, or assassinated my leaders.”

### **Exile – And Return**

In June of 1967, Ali was convicted of draft evasion and given a five-year sentence. Though the appeals process kept him out of jail, no one let him back in the ring.



With Fidel Castro

While Ali was in exile, he made \$2,500 a pop lecturing on college campuses (he also tried his hand at a Broadway musical, and received surprisingly positive reviews). "We've been brainwashed," Ali said in one speech. "Everything good is supposed to be white. We look at Jesus, and we see a white with blond hair and blue eyes. Now, I'm sure there's a heaven in the sky and colored folks die and go to heaven. Where are the colored angels? They must be in the kitchen preparing milk and honey. We look at Miss America, we see white. We look at Miss World, we see white. We look at Miss Universe, we see white. Even Tarzan, the king of the jungle in black Africa, he's white. White Owl Cigars. White Swan soap. White Cloud tissue paper, White Rain hair rinse, White Tornado floor wax. All the good cowboys ride the white horses and wear white hats. Angel food cake is the white cake, but the devils food cake is chocolate. When are we going to wake up as a people and end the lie that white is better than black?"

As the 1960s drew to a close, Americans turned against the Vietnam War, elevating Ali's popularity. And during an era when the government was giving false scores when it came to Vietnam, people knew that Ali was spouting truths, as he saw them. You might not agree with him, but you respected him. "I think Muhammad's actions contributed enormously to the debate about whether the United States should be in Vietnam and galvanized some of his admirers to join the protests against the war for the first time," the late Sen. Edward Kennedy told Hauser. "I respect the fact that

he never backed down from his beliefs, that he took the consequences of refusing induction, and endured the loss of his title until after his conviction was reversed." Ali told The Mirror newspaper of Great Britain, during a 2001 interview: "My refusal to go to Vietnam did not just help the black people, it helped more white people. More whites rebelled against Nam. It made me a hero to many white people as well as black people because I had the nerve to challenge the system, and all the people who hate injustice backed me for that."

With Ali's stature as a political and social force growing, the time was ripe to reassert his greatness in the ring. Since Georgia had no state boxing bureaucracy, Ali was able to secure his first fight in Atlanta, the deep South, against Jerry Quarry, a white man, on October 26, 1970. In the build up to the fight, Ali himself shied away from the anti-white rhetoric he sometimes employed at the height of his Nation of Islam allegiance. But he knew the fight had social consequences. Quarry was gone in the third round

### **Frazier, Foreman, And Ali As King of The World**

Ali and Frazier bout is hyped as the "Fight of the Century". Frazier, the body puncher, came out swinging for Ali's head. Ali, the ring dancer, tried matching Frazier hook-for-hook. In the 11th round, however, Frazier pummeled Ali with two left hooks. Ali staggered and barely survived the round. In the 15th and final stanza, Frazier landed one more roundhouse

The Mirror newspaper of Great Britain, during a 2001 interview: "My refusal to go to Vietnam did not just help the black people, it helped more white people. More whites rebelled against Nam. It made me a hero to many white people as well as black people because I had the nerve to challenge the system, and all the people who hate injustice backed me for that."

left, sending Ali to the canvas. He got back up, but by that point it was finished: Frazier won the fight on a unanimous decision.

Though he lost to Frazier, a few months later, on June 28, 1971, Ali scored his biggest victory: the Supreme Court, by a vote of 8-0 overturned his draft evasion conviction. Ali won his next ten fights, before Ken Norton broke his jaw and beat him in a split decision in March of 1973. Ali won his rematch against Frazier in January 1974, but that wasn't a title bout, since George Foreman had beaten Frazier in Jamaica, taking the heavyweight title from him. With his win over Smokin' Joe, however, Ali would now get his second shot to reclaim the title, against Foreman, in the "Rumble in the Jungle."

The fight was staged in a soccer stadium, under an African moon. In the first round, both men came out throwing haymakers. Ali plan was to dance all night, and make Foreman chase him. Ali ditched the script, however, and hung against the ropes in the second round, absorbing punishment from Foreman. Ali figured he'd save more energy getting hit than running around the ring, and that Foreman would tire out while attacking him. It was the most brilliant tactical move of Ali's career. By seventh round, Foreman was lumbering, in slow motion. "I got a feeling that George is not gonna make it," said Frazier on television before the eighth round. He didn't. Right before the bell, Ali caught him with a left-right combination, and Foreman stumbled to the floor. He got up, but couldn't go on: the ref stopped the fight. Muhammad Ali, over a decade after he first grabbed the heavyweight crown from Sonny Liston, seven years after his objection to Vietnam service cost him the championship, had regained the title.

Ali was, indeed, king of the world. In December he visited Gerald Ford in the White House; such a meeting would have been unthinkable just a few years earlier. In October of 1975 in the 100-degree heat, before an estimated 700 million closed-circuit television viewers in some 65 countries, Ali and

Frazier fought their most famous brawl. Frazier refused to wear down, but by the 14th round, Ali was pounding him at will. Both men were slogging. Before the final round, with Frazier's eyes swollen shut, Frazier trainer Eddie Futch stopped the fight.

In 1984, Ali was first diagnosed with Parkinson's syndrome – later, it was changed to Parkinson's disease. Despite the ailment, Ai reinvented himself yet again, spending the last three decades of his life as a spiritual force and became one of America's great humanitarians. He has delivered food and medical supplies to children in Indonesia, Morocco, and to an orphanage for Liberian refugees in the Ivory Coast. Three billion people watched him light the Olympic torch in Atlanta, in 1996: Ali steadying his trembling hand to light the flame remains the most iconic image of those Olympics. President Bill Clinton confided to Ali that he cried: Clinton was far from alone.

In 1990, Ali met with Saddam Hussein and helped secure the release of 14 American hostages from Iraq. He has traveled to Afghanistan as a United States messenger of Peace. Jimmy Carter called him "Mr. International Friendship." After September 11, Ali publicly defended Islam, reminding Americans that terrorists don't represent the millions who practice the religion.

George W. Bush awarded Ali the Presidential Medal of Freedom that same year. Ali lived to see a black man in the White House, and attended Barack Obama's inauguration. "Asked why he is so universally beloved, he holds up a shaking hand, fingers spread wide, and says, "It's because of this. I'm more human now. It's the God in people that connects me to them," Obama wrote in USA Today in 2009. "This is the Muhammad Ali who inspires us today – the man who believes real success comes when we rise after we fall; who has shown us that through undying faith and steadfast love, each of us can make this world a better place. He is and always will be the champ."The Greatest, even.

# 16<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of GIEA, South Zone



The 16<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of GIEA, SZ got off to a flying start on June 6, 2016 at RTTC Center, Mysore. Com P R Sasi, President, GIEA, SZ hoisted the flag of AIIEA amidst thunderous slogans reverberating the air in the presence of leadership of AIIEA, Chairman of the Reception Committee, Com Janardhan, Com V J K Nair, President of CITU Karnataka State Committee and the Delegates and Observers of the Conference. More than 200 delegates and observers from the Five States and a Union territory from Southern India participated in the conference.

Com. Janardhan, popularly called as Janni, the Director of Rangayana and the Chairman of Reception Committee rendered welcome address. He explained the historical and cultural heritage of Mysore as also the situation prevailing today in the country and also the challenges before the public sector insurance industry and hoped that the conference will dilate all the issues confronting the people and come out with decisions matching with the challenges of time.

Com K V V S N Raju, Secretary, Standing Committee in his inaugural address made a brilliant analysis about the performance of public sector insurance both life and general for the economic

development of the country. He ridiculed the claim of BJP government about their achievements of two years of governance which has resulted in widening inequalities between the rich and poor in the country.

He congratulated the employees of general insurance industry for solidly rallying behind AIIEA which helped the organization to clinch a spectacular wage revision in a most difficult economic

situation confronting the authoritarian regime of Modi government. He outlined the dangers before the public sector general insurance and the threat of listing the companies in the stock market which is nothing but privatization of most successful public sector insurance industry which needs to be fought and won. He exhorted the employees to be in preparedness for a bitter struggle including strike actions to defeat the attempts of the ruling classes, and to strengthen the public sector general insurance. He called upon the employees to unleash a powerful campaign amongst the general public on the role played by public sector insurance in national development and integrate our struggles with other sections of the society and make the one day strike action of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 call given by Central Trade Unions which is also endorsed by AIIEA a thumping success. He concluded with the confidence that the challenges that are confronting also throws open an opportunity for us to develop the organization and only by strengthening AIIEA in general sector the interests of employees as well as the industry can be strengthened to meet the challenges.

Com V J K Nair, President, CITU Karnataka State Committee and a veteran trade union leader in

his special address congratulated the insurance employees led by AIIEA for waging a heroic struggle against the government policies for the last three decades and thwarting successfully the attempts to privatise the public sector insurance so far. He explained in detail the socio political situation prevailing in the country and how the Modi government is making all out attempts to impose its communal agenda on the people and dividing the unity of the people threatening the secular fabric of our country. He called upon the insurance employees to understand the society from a class perspective and to work for an alternative political force which will ensure that the life and living of the vast masses of the country are better by pursuing the alternative economic policies and work to strengthen the left and democratic forces in the country. He appealed to the insurance employees to work for the success of the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 strike by taking lead in carrying out massive campaign amongst the people.

Com. Srikanth, President, Vikrant Tyres Employees' Union, Mysore and Com. Subramanya, Vice President, BSNLEU, Mysore in their fraternal greetings wished the conference all success.

The inaugural session was presided by Com P R Sasi, President, GIEA, South Zone. The inaugural session came to an end with vote of thanks by Com. Umapathi, convenor of the Reception Committee.

**Delegates Session :**

The report of the working committee was placed by Com G Anand, General Secretary to the



conference. The report analysed in detail with sharp focus the developments that are taking place in the world with. The report was placed in three parts and the discussions on the report was also divided into three parts viz International and national situation, industrial developments and organisation. There was lively debate on the Report. Thirtyfive comrades including 3 women participated in the debate. The Report was unanimously adopted with the summing up by Com G.Anand, General Secretary. The statement of accounts were also unanimously approved by the house.

Com V Ramesh, General Secretary, AIIEA in his special address to the Conference congratulated the insurance employees for rallying around AIIEA steadfastly which resulted in clinching a wonderful wage revision in a most difficult situation. He outlined the developments that are taking place around the world where the capitalism is facing its worst crisis. The crisis has created massive unemployment. The world capitalism in order to overcome its crisis has decided to attach the rights and benefits

of the working class. The wages, pensions and all social security measures are under attack in the name of austerity measures. These attacks are not going unchallenged. The working class is heroically resisting these attacks. Com Ramesh pointed out that the 2 year of Modi government rule has been a disaster for the workers and the poorer sections of the population. The aggressive pursuance







of neo-liberalism has created massive inequalities in the society. The rich are becoming richer and the poor poorer. He pointed out that along with the neo-liberal economic policy, the government is also following a divisive agenda. Therefore, it is necessary to fight these policies to protect the unity of the working class and the nation. He exuded confidence that insurance employees under the leadership of AIEA play their role in defending the economic sovereignty and national unity.

Com Amanulla Khan, President, AIEA intervening in the debate made a brilliant presentation analysing the situation obtaining across the world and its impact on the insurance industry as well as the insurance employees as part of working class. He pointed out that the present crisis of capitalism is comparable only to that of the great depression of 1929-30. He also said that the crisis of capitalism then was resolved through the State ensuring full employment and introduction of social security benefits to the workers. But the present crisis is sought to be overcome through attacks on jobs, wages, pensions and social security. He said that the crisis of Greece clearly points out that the austerity measures cannot revive the economy. On the other hand these measures will further land the economies into deeper crisis. He analysed the performance of four public sector general insurance companies and congratulated the comrades for their contribution in strengthening the public sector insurance industry. He called upon the rank and file to be in preparedness to intensify the struggles to defeat the attempts of the government to list the four public sector general insurance companies which is nothing but an attempt to privatise the insurance sector. He called upon the insurance employees to properly understand the policies being pursued by the

authoritarian regime at the centre and the dangers that are being posed to the unity and integrity of our country. Com Aman said today AIEA is acknowledged as the leader of the insurance employees even in the general insurance industry due to its role in securing an unprecedented wage revision. The situation is very conducive for consolidation of the organisation. He appealed the delegates and observes to develop unity and take up the task of building an organisation both in terms of quality and quantity to meet the present day challenges.

The delegates session was also addressed by Com KVVS N Raju, Secretary, Standing Committee. He gave details of the industrial issues. Com J Suresh, Joint Secretary, SCZIEF and Com Gautam Maitra, General Secretary, EZGIEA also greeted the Conference.

The highlight of the Conference was the address by Professor B. Sheik Ali, founder Chancellor of Goa and Mangalore Universities. Aged 92 and a noted historian, he passionately spoke about the attempts of the BJP government to rewrite the history as well as to communalise the society



posing a great danger to cultural heritage of our country as well as to the nation and called upon the insurance employees to take up the issues to fight the communalisation and to protect Mother India from the evil forces.

There was a cultural programme under the auspices of SHAMBULINGESWARA JANAPADHA KALA BALAGA, a National cultural outfit based at Mandya towards promoting folk arts.

The conference unanimously elected Com P.R.Sasi as President, Com G.Anand as General Secretary and N.Karthik as Treasurer for the ensuing term.

The conference adopted a number of resolutions on industrial and national issues. The Conference also placed on record the services rendered by the outgoing office bearers Com. M. Kumar, Treasurer and Com. H.S. Krishnamoorthy,

Vice-President for the organisational work.

The conference placed on record the wonderful efforts put in by the Reception Committee and the members of BRGIEA for making it a successful one.

In fine, the 16th General conference was a conference of Challenges, Confidence and Consolidation. The discussions and the decisions have given the necessary impetus to carry out organisational activities with more determination and commitment to further bolster the organisation and to identify ourselves with the Left and Democratic forces in the country. Let us march forward with conviction and confidence and defeat the challenges squarely.



## WALKATHON IN MYSORE

their opposition to the privatization of the four general insurance companies and the GIC. The signature campaign was inaugurated by Com H.S.Manjunath, former President of GIEA (SZ).

There was enthusiastic response. A large number of people gathered to sign the canvas. Prominent citizens of Mysore also expressed solidarity with the struggle of insurance employees by signing the canvas. It was a unique and very successful program.

As part on the GIEA (SZ) Conference a walkathon was organized on the morning of 7th June 2016. The delegates and observes along with the local comrades of LIC assembled at the venue wearing T Shirts with slogans to protect the public sector general insurance industry. The rally led by the President of AIIEA and other leaders marched 1.5 kms to Kukkarahalli Lake which is a favourite spot for the morning walkers. Enroute leaflets were distributed to the onlookers and leaflets were also distributed to the morning walkers. At the main entrance of Kukkarahalli lake a giant canvas was placed requesting people to record





## 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of NZIEA, Shimla Division

The 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of NZIEA, Shimla Division was held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016. The comrades from Shimla based branches and DO branch had beautifully decorated the conference hall with banners, posters and flags of NZIEA and AIIEA. On this occasion, the Divisional Committee also exhibited the 50 posters on intolerance prepared by SAHMAT. The exhibition came in for lot of appreciation. The inaugural session had the presence of the entire membership in the headquarters. Nearly all women comrades from Shimla based units attended the conference. The women comrades from Solan, Rampur and Hamirpur Branches too attended the conference.

The inaugural session began with Com Surinder Singh, President, Shimla Divisional Committee in the chair. Com Devi Dass, Divisional Secretary delivered the welcome address. Com Sanjay Chauhan, Mayor, Shimla greeted the conference.

Com Shreekant Mishra, Joint Secretary, AIIEA inaugurated the conference. In his inaugural address, Com Shreekant dealt with all important developments in the international and national arenas. He was critical of the neo-liberal economic policies being pursued by the Modi government along with a divisive agenda. He said that the unity of the working class and a joint struggle is necessary to defeat both neo-liberalism and the communal policies. He placed before the house the efforts of the AIIEA in securing a very good wage revision

in the most difficult political situation. He said it is necessary to heighten our campaign in defence of the industry as LIC is bound to face the hostility of the neo-liberal regime. Com Shreekant appealed for strengthening of the AIIEA both numerically and ideologically to meet the enormous challenges of the present times.

Com R.C.Sharma, President, NZIEA in an elaborate submission exposed the anti-worker and anti-people policies of the Modi government. He warned that the government would step up efforts to change the labour laws to favour the employers and therefore it is necessary to keep vigilance and fight back the attacks on the hard won rights and benefits.

Com Anil Bhatnagar, General Secretary, NZIEA complimented the Shimla Division comrades for their commitment and loyalty to the AIIEA and its principles. He said that Modi government came to power on the slogan of sab kasaath sab kavikas, but its policies are heaping miseries on people while nourishing the interests of Ambanis and Adanis. He said that the Hindutva forces have launch an all out attack on the Ganga JamunaTehzib and it is the responsibility of the working class to defend the plurality of the Indian nation. He explained the struggles that helped achieve the charter and said that the moves of the management to introduce transfer and mobility policy will also be effectively fought by the AIIEA.

The inaugural session was greeted by Com Kashmir Singh, General Secretary, CITU, HP, Com Vijender Mehra, Secretary, Shimla Nagrik Sabha, Com Balbir Prasher, DFYI, Com Pawan SFI, Com VP Negi, NFIFWI, Coms A.C. Chauhan and HS Verma of AIIPA.

In the delegates session, the Report presented by the Divisional Secretary evoked good response. 20 comrades including three women and three youngsters who joined in 2009 participated in the debate and contributed to make it rich. The Report

and the Statement of Accounts were unanimously approved by the conference. The conference also adopted a number of resolutions relating to the industry and the national situation.

The Conference unanimously elected Coms Surinder Singh, Devi Dass and Ashutosh Gautam as Divisional President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively for the ensuing term.

The Conference came to a successful conclusion with a vote of thanks by Com Surinder Singh. ■

## Annual Conference of Rajkot Division

The Annual General Meeting of our Rajkot unit held on 05.06.2016. The meeting was participated by over 110 members including a large number of women. Com M.D. Brahmbhatt, President, Gandhinagar was the chief guest. He remained present throughout and guided the conference.

The Conference began with paying of tributes to all the men and women of eminence who contributed to the struggle for making earth a better place to live. Com Falguni Velani Presided over the Conference.

Com. GS Harshad Popat, General Secretary placed a brief Report on the activities of the organization since the last conference. He also highlighted the efforts of the AIIEA in securing a glorious wage revision and other monetary benefits for the employees. He laid focus on the challenges the LIC is facing in the present neo-liberal environment and stressed on the need for a massive campaign among the people to defend the institution. He laid emphasis on the need to

consolidate the organization to meet the present day challenges.

There was a lively debate with the participation of the Branch representatives. The Report was unanimously approved along with the Statement of Accounts presented by Com Apoorva Popat.

Com. Falguni Velani gave a very motivating presidential address and appealed for the strengthening of the AIIEA to protect the industry and the interests of the employees.

In his inspiring address, Com. M.D. Brahmbhatt elaborately dealt with the international situation and the crisis of capitalism; the sticking to the same economic direction by the present Modi government and the social tensions created by the implementation of the communal agenda and the need to fight these policies to defend the unity of the people and the nation. He pointed out that bigger struggles are necessary to secure one more pension option. He said that the AIIEA is aware of the problems that would come up with the proposal of LIC to implement TMP and Bio-metrics but assured the audience that AIIEA will take all necessary steps to protect the interests of the employees. He urged the audience to take encouragement and confidence from the glorious history of AIIEA in meeting the challenges of the present times.

Coms Mahesh Danger, Harshad Popat and Apoorva Popat were unanimously elected as President, General Secretary and Treasurer for the ensuing term. ■



## Drought Relief Work in Mahabubnagar

ICEU, Hyderabad & Secunderabad Divisions (along with HRGIEA) have taken-up a noble cause of organizing an "Ambali Kendram" (Gruel Distribution Center), as part of Relief measure, to the Drought affected population of Lal Kota Village under Devarkadra Mandal of Mahabubnagar District. Lal Kota is a small village, 25 kms away from Mahabubnagar, with a population of around 4000 (mainly from Dalit and underprivileged communities) depending on agricultural labour for livelihood. The people are facing abject sufferings due to the severe drought conditions prevailing. As there is no agricultural work, there is acute shortage for food.

Com. V Ramesh, General Secretary, AIEA inaugurated the Center on 02.05.2016 at Lal Kota,



in a function held there. He expressed solidarity with the sufferings of the villagers gathered there.

He informed that it is the tradition of AIEA to come to the rescue of the needy in times of natural calamities like drought and floods etc. he condemned the



State and Central governments for their inaction of not coming to the rescue of the suffering masses. He assured the villagers of Organisation's continued help in times of need in future too. Com. Clement Xavier Das, General Secretary, SCZIEF, other leadership of SCZIEF, ICEU (both the Divisions), HRGIEA, the village sarpanch, Sri K Srinivasulu and Market Committee Chairman, Sri Buddanna were also present on the occasion. A good number of villagers (many of them children and women) have enthusiastically attended the inauguration.

The hunger stricken villagers (mainly children and women) are being served Gruel, which is highly nutritious and a staple diet in these parts, each day from 9.00 am to 11.00 am. The camp originally scheduled for 40 days, is still continuing and is well appreciated by the villagers. Local CITU, helped identifying the village for setting up the relief camp and also in running the camp without interruption.

## Drought relief by WZIEA in Maharashtra

Vidarbha and Marathwada regions are under severe drought for consecutive three years. The life in these regions has become extremely difficult and miserable. More than 2900 farmers committed suicide in the year 2015. There is terrible scarcity of drinking water. Water was provided by train from western Maharashtra to Latur a district place in Marathwada.

Wziea appealed for donation and amount of 8 lacs was collected within short period.

In a function organized at Mumbai on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016, an amount of Rs. Five lakhs was handed over to Smt. Anju Pradhan of NAAM foundation by Com. V. Ramesh General Secretary AIEA. NAAM foundation has been carrying out noteworthy relief activities in

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# INSURANCE NEWS IN BRIEF

Consolidation process is on. Now that the increasing of the foreign direct investment in the insurance companies is brought under automatic route, the number of foreign partners increasing their share in the joint ventures has increased. Notable thing is that the Indian partners are selling their shares to their foreign partners. No fresh shares are created. Latest in the pipe line are: SBI Life, the country's largest private life insurer, is a 26:74 joint venture between France's BNP Paribas Cardiff and State Bank of India, State Bank of India has decided to sell 10 per cent to its foreign partner BNP Paribas Cardiff. Thereafter Cardiff's stake will go up to 36 percent. US-based insurance major Prudential Financial Inc (PFI) has signed definitive agreements to increase its shareholding in private life insurer DHFL Pramerica Life Insurance (DPLI) to 49 per cent from existing 26 per cent. UK's Bupa Insurance has raised stake in its Indian health insurance venture, Max Bupa, to 49 per cent. And so goes on the process of hike in FDI in insurance sector. International health care Group Bupa has increased its stake in health insurance joint venture Max Bupa from existing 26 per cent to 49 per cent. Bupa purchased additional 23 per cent stake, it has paid Rs. 207 crore to Max India. Max Bupa, which took birth in 2010, is the seventh largest private health insurer in India.

- HDFC ERGO General Insurance is on to acquire 100 per cent stake in L&T General Insurance Company for Rs. 551-crore. A first instance of such consolidation that is taking place in India since the domestic general insurance was opened up. L&T General Insurance is a wholly owned subsidiary of L&T. During the financial year ended March 31, it wrote gross premium of Rs. 483 crore, 40 per cent over the previous financial year. HDFC ERGO, fourth largest private non-life insurance company, is a 51:49 joint venture between HDFC and ERGO International, Germany. During financial year 2016, HDFC ERGO grossed a premium income of Rs. 3,467 crore and reported a profit after tax of Rs. 151 crore. With this acquisition HDFC ERGO will be third largest private non-life insurance company in India.
- HDFC Life and Max Life and Max Financial Services entered into a discussion to merge their life insurance business. When this happens it will give birth to a largest private sector life insurance company in India touching a combined AUM of

Rs.1.10 lakh crore and the total new premium will be Rs.9400 crore.

- "One of the major challenges before the industry is unhealthy competition which is bringing down prices. If you are pricing your products below the cost, naturally you incur losses and many of the products are in that phase. Due to this unhealthy competition, everybody wants to gain market share, which is not a good trend," laments CEO of Future Generali. This is exactly what AIEA was telling.
- Victim of low interest regime, Munich Re, the world's second-biggest reinsurer, plans to spend 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) by 2020 restructuring operations at its loss-making primary insurance unit ERGO in Germany. The plan for ERGO's German operations includes cutting 1,835 jobs, or about 13 percent of the Dusseldorf-based company's workforce in Germany. About a quarter of the industry's almost one million jobs may be lost in Europe over the next decade, including positions in policy issuing and claims management. ERGO had reported a net loss of 227 million euros [\$252.9 million] for last year. Modernising the computer systems, the company's sales force and administration will also be streamlined, generating total net savings of 280 million euros [\$312 million] by 2020. The changes will help put ERGO in a position to contribute 500 million euros [\$557 million] a year to Munich Re's earnings from 2021. German life insurers are being challenged by low interest rates because their offerings have traditionally featured guaranteed returns that were as high as 4 percent for policies sold in the second half of the 1990s. As life insurance contracts can run for 30 years or more, it has been difficult to meet these obligations with German 10-year government bonds paying less than 0.2 percent. The average interest guarantee of German life insurers was 2.59 percent last year. European insurers have become vulnerable to unpredictable levels of claims as premiums stagnate and investment income dries up amid record-low interest rates.
- LIC keeps up its growing trend as at 31-05-2016. With the new premium growing at 41.09 percent on year to year basis LIC's market share in new premium is 71.24 percent as compare to 68.74 percent as at 31-05-2015. ■

**A.M.KHAN, DHARWAD**

## ECONOMIC TID BITS

- ❖ The Federal Reserve has revised its forecast for US economic growth from 2.2% to 2% for 2016 and for 2017 from 2.1% to 2%. The GDP of USA grew by just 0.8% during the first quarter of current year. According to Fed Reserve, it is estimated that more than \$ 10 trillion worth of bonds are returning negative rate of interests. According to Bill Gross, former head of world's largest bond trading firm, this is lowest in 500 years of recorded history.
- ❖ According to the Institute of Supply Management the US manufacturing index has fallen from 52.9% from 55.7% in April. According to Labour department, the US economy added only 38000 jobs in May, the lowest monthly job growth since 2010. According to a report by Princeton University and the RAND Corporation, all the job growth in US over the last decade was accounted for by the growth of "alternative work arrangements". A Pew report says for the first time since 130 years, Americans aged 18-24 years are more likely to be living at home than with a spouse or partner due to unemployment. Under Obama, 95% of all income gains have gone to the richest 1% of society while median household income has declined by thousands of dollars.
- ❖ Australia's GDP grew by 1.1% in the first three months of current year. However, the output rose by 3.1% over the year to March, real national disposable income per capita slid by 2.6%. The Australian Bureau of Statistics says private sector capital expenditure shrank by 5.2% leaving it down by 15.4% year-on-year. The Federal and State government debt, which has tripled to about 34% of GDP over the past 10 years, has been outstripped by the doubling of private debt, to about 160% of GDP over the past 20 years. According to Morgan Stanley the government debt has reached 243% of GDP growth has reached to 2.4% a year from earlier average of 6%.
- ❖ According to a report by Centers for Disease Control (CDC), death rate in USA in 2015 has increased for the first time since 2005. Life expectancy at birth for white Americans had fallen between 2013 and 2014 from 78.9 years to 78.8 years after remaining flat between 2012 and 2013. The CDC report found that the death rate was 729.5 per 1,00,000 in 2015 up from 723.2 in 2014. The suicide rate in the US increased from 12.7 in the third quarter of 2014 to 15.2 last year. A report published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that income was the most critical factor in longevity and that the life expectancy gap between the richest and poorest is widening.
- ❖ According to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) the unemployment rate is 5.7%. The youth unemployment rate is 12.3% with another 20.2% of youth under employed. The number of young people starting apprenticeships has fallen by 1,00,000 or 40% in the past three years. However, according to an alternative survey conducted by Roy Morgan Research showed unemployment in Australia at 10.4%. On an average, Australian wages rose by just 2.1% in the past year.
- ❖ In Europe, 123 million people, almost quarter of European Union's population are living in poverty. Official unemployment rate is around 10% with 21 million people out of work. Youth unemployment is at around 21%, nearly 5 million youths are unemployed. In Greece the unemployment is 27% and youth unemployment is at 51%. In Spain, the unemployment rate is 21% and youth unemployment is 46.5%.
- ❖ In Italy, the unemployment rate is 11% and youth unemployment rate is 37%. The government debt of Italy is 132.7% of GDP. Italy has lost 9% points of GDP since 2008 crisis. In France youth unemployment is 25%. In Bulgaria 43% of people lives in severe poverty. In Poland and Romania, youth unemployment is 20% and in Albania it is 38%. In Macedonia youth unemployment is 50%, in Coratia it is 44%, Montenegro 41%, Bosnia 57%, Serbia 49% and in Kosava 60%.
- ❖ According to report published in Australian Financial Review's Rich 200 list, 200 individuals in Australia has a combined wealth of \$ 197.3 billion with number of billionaires increased to 53. The top 1% of the population has as much wealth as the poorest 60% of the population.

**J.SURESH, MYSORE**

# WORKING CLASS STRUGGLES

## ❑ Lecturers take action at two UK universities

Lecturers at the University of Kent in England held a one-day strike on 14<sup>th</sup> June. On 15<sup>th</sup> June, lecturers held a similar strike at the University of Sussex. The lecturers are members of the University and College Union (UCU), and are protesting a pay offer of 1.1 percent. Lecturers are seeking a substantial rise. According to the UCU, university lecturers have suffered around a 15 percent pay cut in real terms since 2009.

## ❑ Further strikes by Greek train and airline staff planned

Rail staff working for the Hellenic Railways Organisation (OSE) are due to strike for 24-hour on June 22. The strike follows an ongoing series of shorter stoppages in opposition to plans to privatize Trainose, the operating arm of OSE. If it goes ahead, the action will result in the cancellation of rail services connecting to Athens International Airport. June 22 is the date by which bids from companies wishing to run Trainose must be in. Civil airline staff members of the OSYPA union are due to begin a five-day strike on June 20. They are protesting against the pseudo-left Syriza government leasing 14 regional airports to the German operator Fraport, with plans to lease a further 23 regional airports. The Syriza government, at the behest of the European Union and International Monetary Fund, is carrying out the privatisations.

## ❑ UK train guards in dispute

Train conductors employed by the Abellio/ ScotRail franchise are set to hold a series of strikes beginning with a one-day strike on June 21 followed by a one-day strike June 23, a two-day strike on June 25 and further one-day strikes on July 3, 10 and 17. They are members of the Rail Maritime and Transport union RMT and voted in a 75 percent turnout to strike. The workers are opposing plans by the rail company to start operating Driver Only Operation (DOO) trains, abolishing the position of conductors.

## ❑ Spanish tram drivers on Costa Blanca to strike

Tram drivers working on the tram route that serves the Costa Blanca coastline in Alicante province are to launch a series of indefinite strikes, which will hit night services. The strikes, scheduled to begin on June 20, are to protest the decision of FGV, who operate the service, not to allow up to 30 tram drivers to reduce their working hours. Previously it had done so.

## ❑ South African fire fighters strike in Canada

Hundreds of South African fire service staff, sent

to help fight fires in the Fort McMurray area of Alberta, Canada, took industrial action June 8 shortly after arriving. They were sent there as the result of a deal struck between the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) and Kinshu Holdings (KH), a private company. KH a private company has a contract to train South African fire fighters. The workers walked off the job after discovering they were receiving well below the Canadian minimum wage.

## ❑ Nigerian state workers protest

Public-sector workers in several of Nigeria's 36 states are striking to demand the payment of outstanding wages and allowances. In Ondo state, civil servants confronted the state governor, stopping his car at his residency, where he was forced to address workers. He claimed the state did not have the means to pay workers their wage arrears. The governor's plea for them to return to work was met with chants of "No salary, No work". The Ekiti state governor's response to five months of unpaid wages was no different. Workers have been on strike for two weeks, insisting they would continue indefinitely until they were paid.

## ❑ Mexico's national teachers strike enters second month

The nationwide strike called on May 15 by the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE) in opposition to Mexico's 2012 regressive federal education law continues, along with protests and other militant actions. These are being met with increased repressions and threats by the government. In defiance of threat teachers marched in 22 municipalities in Michoacán state on 15<sup>th</sup> and blocked access to the commercial center of the Michoacan capital, Morelia. As part of the strike thousands of teachers have set up encampments in central locations in major cities in the poor southern states of Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas and Michoacán, which have long histories of militant teacher action.

## ❑ Strike by Argentine air traffic controllers over contract

Air traffic controllers at over 30 airports across Argentina began a 48-hour strike on the morning of June 10. In a press release, the State Workers Association (ATE) said that it had called the strike "in response to the grave situation that the sector is going through, with the loss of labor and salary stability."

**S.SRIDHARA, MYSORE**



## For our Field Force

### LIC Rs.4000 Cr to NIIF

The government has asked LIC to contribute 10% of the investment corpus of National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF). This would mean an initial contribution of Rs.4,000 crore by LIC.

### LIC persistency grows

LIC has seen an improvement in its persistency ratios (The higher the persistency rate, the higher the renewal premiums) for the year ended March 2016 as compared to the previous financial year.

### LIC MF again!

Japanese firm Nomura has completely exited LIC Nomura Mutual Fund and it became LIC Mutual Fund again. The new joint venture partners are GIC Housing Finance and Corporation Bank along with the existing partner LIC Housing Finance Ltd.

### e-commerce insurance

IRDAI has come out with the exposure draft on selling and servicing insurance policies through the e-commerce platform. Entities granted certificate of registration by insurance regulator such as insurers, insurance intermediaries, insurance agents and any other entity recognized by the Authority can set up the Insurance Self-Network Platform. IRDAI has allowed insurers to offer differential pricing for the same product when sold through the Insurance Self-Network Platform. Till now, the same product was not allowed to have different pricing on different channels.

### HDFC - Max Life Merger

Max Life Insurance is in talks to merge with HDFC Life. As of yet, this is only in its nascent stage, where the officials of the two companies will seek an in-principle approval for exploring the possibility of this deal from their boards.

### New Plan Approval

IRDAI has approved 227 new products (of all insurers) during 2015-16. In the previous financial year it was only 155. IRDAI ensured that new insurance products filed for approval were quickly approved.

### Web limit increased

IRDAI has proposed to increase the limit of insurance business done by web aggregators to Rs 1.5 lakh for making them a more remunerative distribution channel. As of now, they were permitted to do insurance business up to Rs 50,000. They will be allowed to sell more products including ULIPs while they were not allowed to sell ULIPs earlier.

### HDFC Ergo buys L&T Gen.

HDFC Ergo is planning to buy 100% stake in L&T Gen. Insurance for Rs.551 crore and will subsequently merge the insurer with itself. The merger will also involve rationalisation of products which will impact the

premiums, though products will continue on existing terms till their renewal. Experts say that, IRDAI is unlikely to allow for a steep hike in premium, Keeping the policyholders interests in mind. This opinion itself indicates that policyholders will be affected by premium hike. Policyholders will have to face difficulties in getting claims also, as, L&T Insurance currently processes health insurance claims through a third party administrator (TPA), whereas HDFC Ergo has an in-house process. HDFC Ergo is already saying that it will discontinue the TPA. The lack of knowledge of the products of the other company will create more difficulties in claim settlement. If the conditions of the rationalised health products are not acceptable to a customer and if he goes for another product, he will have to face waiting period etc. again.

### Disclose remuneration

IRDAI has mandated insurance companies to disclose Elements of remuneration package (including incentives) of managing director (MD), chief executive officer (CEO) and key management persons in its revised guidelines on corporate governance. This is following a directive from market regulator SEBI to disclose remuneration of top executives of mutual funds (MFs).

### Penalty, Warning

IRDAI had imposed a penalty of Rs.35 Lakhs on Future Genarali Life Insurance Co. for charges including undue payments to intermediaries, business through unlicensed and license expired persons and mis-selling. IRDAI has warned Sahara India Life Insurance Co for non-compliance of 'Expenses of Management' (EoM) norms, and asked it to bring the expenditure down. It's EoM was 135.89% for 2014-15. IRDAI has exempted Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Co. from complying with the EoM limits till 2020-21.

### Forced discharge

Insurance companies have often been accused of taking advantage of the weak spot the policyholders found themselves in, at the time of a loss and getting the discharge vouchers signed at a disputed amount thereby trying to absolve themselves of higher payment. Many such disputed cases have gone to higher courts. IRDAI has recently issued clear instructions to insurance companies that "Under no circumstances the Discharge Vouchers shall be collected under duress, by coercion, by force or compulsion. It should be clearly understood that execution of such vouchers does not foreclose the rights of policy holder to seek higher compensation before any judicial fora or any other fora established by law".

ARIVUKKADAL, THANJAVUR

## World Environment Day 2016 observed at Dhekiajuli and Tezpur

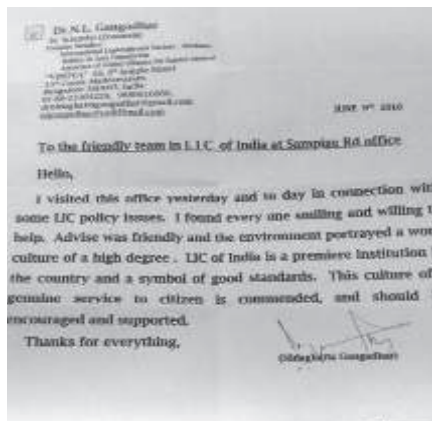


As a part of the Diamond Jubilee Year celebration of the Gauhati Division Insurance Employees' Association (GDIEA) various social activities are being organised by different base units of GDIEA

On 5<sup>th</sup> June the World Environment day 2016 was observed by the Dhekiajuli and Tezpur base committee jointly. In order to create social awareness among the public for plantation and protection of wild life, a meeting was organised at Dhekiajuli, Rabindra Bhaban complex. The meeting was presided over Com Bhabendra Kr Kalita, General Secretary, GDIEA. The adviser of Dhekiajuli Press

Club Sri Ramesh Bora addressed the meeting. Com Ranjit Bhuyan, Base Secretary Dhekiajuli Base explained the objectives of the programmes. Com Ghana Deka presented some beautiful songs including "Earth Anthem". After the meeting sapling were planted in the Rabindra Bhaban complex. In the afternoon of that day sapling were planted in the campus of Tezpur Medical College in the presence of Principal of the collage Dr. N C Bhattacharjee. Dr Bhattacharjee appreciated the initiative of GDIEA and extended full co-operation for successful conclusion of the programme.

Dr.N I Gangadhar, Senior Scientist who visited LIC , Malleshwaram BO under Bangalore-I Division, greatly appreciated the 'culture of genuine service' in LIC, as the following letter shows:



## Drought relief by WZIEA

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these areas. This organization is providing relief to the families of the farmers who committed suicides and has undertaken a number of water conservation projects.

RS.1 lac to Com. Mahendra singh of Kisan Sabha by Com. H.I.Bhat General Secretary, WZIEA handed over Rs 1 lakh to Com Mahndra Singh of Kisan Sabha. Kisan Sabha is engaged in organization both relief work and stru

Com K.Harvarte, Vice-President, WZIEA handed over a cheque of Rs. 1 lac to Com. Umesh Kulkarni General Secretary of Aurangabad Divisional unit of AIIEA. Comrades of Our Latur branch unit have provided water tankers to needy areas and emergency cattle shelters.

Smt. Anju Pradhan and Com. Mahendra singh thanked WZIEA for the donation.Com. V. Ramesh General Secretary congratulated Wziea and informed about various occasions where AIIEA undertook relief works. Com. Vasant Nalawade President Wziea presided and Com. Sharad Nandl conducted the proceedings. Activists from Mumbai, Thane, Pune and Satara attended the function held at Yogakshema Mumbai.

### DONATIONS

We are thankful to the following comrades for the generaoous donations :

Com.Ashok Kumar, Ludhiana Br-II	Rs. 500
Com.Kantibhushan Das, Singur Br.	Rs.1,000
Com.Rajib Chakraborty, Singur Br.	Rs.1,000
Com.M.Chandradekhar, Anakapalle Br.	Rs.10,000
Com. Bijay Kumar Mishra, Bonaigarh Br.	Rs. 3000
Com.Sheshgiri, Nanjangud Br.	Rs.3001
Com.Y.P.Ramesh, Guntur Br.	Rs.2000

### CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Month	Base2001	Base 1960
August 2015	264	6026.04
September	266	6071.69
October	269	6140.17
November	270	6162.99
December	269	6140.17
January 2016	269	6140.17
February	267	6094.52
March	268	6117.34
April	271	6185.81
		Base 1960=Base 2001x22.8259

Premium  
stops.



Benefits  
go on.

### Life Cover with attractive returns

Policy Term	Premium Paying Term
16	10
21	15
25	16

LIC's  
**JEEVAN LABH**

Limited Premium Endowment Plan

Plan No.: 836

UIN No.: 512N304V01

- Minimum Basic Sum Assured: ₹200,000/-
- Maximum Basic Sum Assured: No Upper limit
- Minimum Entry Age: 8 years
- Maximum Entry Age: 50/54/59 years for policy term 25/21/16 years
- Optional Benefits:
  - (i) LIC's Accidental Death and Disability Benefit Rider
  - (ii) LIC's New Term Assurance Rider

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*Marching On  
Towards Building  
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