

# insurance Worker

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**2ND  
SEPTEMBER  
2016**

**STOP**

**EIGHTEEN CRORE WORKERS  
GIVE REBUFF TO HOLLOW CLAIMS**



AT LEAST 28 CRORE JOBS TO BE CREATED, WHICH THE NEO-LIBERAL DEVELOPMENT CAN NOT.



**UNEMPLOYMENT  
WAITING TO EXPLODE**

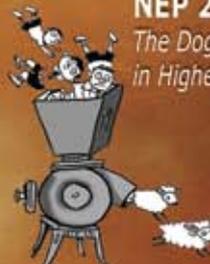
Labour's  
love's lost



Indian Economy  
in the trap of  
Foreign Capital



Unsustainable  
Growth under  
Liberalisation



**NEP 2016**

The Dogma of Neo-liberalism  
in Higher Education also



प्रधानमंत्री की  
भावरा यात्रा

**AIIEA CONGRATULATES  
INSURANCE EMPLOYEES AND  
THE WORKING CLASS OF INDIA**



HYDERABAD ▲

In the insurance sector, the General Strike action on 2nd September 2016, was near total with many divisional units in LIC reporting high performance of strike action. The insurance employees joined the strike with their demand to stop FDI in insurance sector and disinvestment of PSGI along with other demands like one more option for pension and recruitment of Class III and IV employees etc.



NEW DELHI ▲

▼ ALLAHABAD

▼ CHENNAI



RAIPUR ▼



MADURAI ▼



## THE GRIM UNEMPLOYMENT SITUATION

It is widely reported in the newspapers that over 1 lakh candidates have applied for 915 vacancies of sweepers in Varanasi Municipal Corporation. Of them 6700 are graduates and post-graduates; some holding engineering and MBA degrees. Such reports appear with such regularity that they fail to shock the nation or its policy makers any more. This has come to be accepted as the new norm for the Indian economy and the Indian society.

This Report shows the grim unemployment situation in the country. It looks India is sitting on a time bomb and the unemployment situation will explode to destabilise the entire society. According to the 2001 Census data, 20 percent of the youth between ages 15-24 or 4.7 crore Indians are jobless today. Every year more than 10 million youths enter the job market. It is expected that 17.5 million youth in 2016 and 17.6 million in 2017 will be seeking jobs. The United Nations Development Program Report suggests that between now and 2050;

India would need to generate more than 280 million jobs to keep the unemployment rate at a reasonable level.

Is the Indian economy capable of meeting this massive challenge? It looks difficult to meet this challenge as the government continue to place its faith in neo-liberalism for the development of the economy. The 2001 Census again shows that while the average growth rate of economy was 7.7 percent per annum, the growth in employment was at an abysmal rate of 1.8 percent. It is also seen that while the productivity has increased, jobs are declining. The employment in government sector declined from 19.5 million in 1996-97 to 17 million today. It is also estimated that more than 6.4 lakh jobs would be lost in the IT sector in the next few years due to automation.

Therefore what India today is experiencing is a job-loss growth. The Modi government had promised creation of 20 million jobs annually but could succeed in creating just around 4 lakh

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jobs in the last 25 months. The government is boasting that it has put the economy back on rails and GDP is growing at an impressive rate; but it must know that mere GDP growth cannot be taken as a measure of national welfare or equality in the society. That the economy failed to create any jobs is the greatest failure of the Modi government.

The government is blaming this grim unemployment situation to the existing labour laws and is therefore aggressively pursuing to bring changes in the laws to suit the interests of the industry and capital. The policy makers associated with the government are arguing that due to rigidity of the labour laws, industries are not developing and employment is not growing. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Less than 10 percent of the jobs of the total of 52 crore work force is in the organised sector. The rest of the jobs are just temporary, casual and on contract. These jobs are precarious and badly paid because of the informalisation of the economy. The workers in the organised sector are forced to work in the most exploitative conditions without any guarantee of employment or a social security measure. Therefore, blaming the labour laws for the terrible unemployment situation is outright dishonesty and an effort to hide the most inhumane exploitation of the workers.

The situation is turning worse with the neglect of the small and medium enterprises that employ 40 percent of the work force. The government is convinced that only foreign capital and big corporate houses can help generation of jobs. It has become clear that Make in India, Start Up India and Stand Up India initiatives have failed to deliver. The foreign capital which is accorded a red carpet welcome is purchasing the existing capacities rather than creating additional capacities in the economy. The big corporate houses which are the beneficiaries of the government policies and corner a large share of over Rs. 5,50,000 crore of tax exemptions have failed to create any jobs.

The grim unemployment situation is creating social tensions. The Patidar in Gujarat and Jats in Haryana have been agitating for reservation in jobs. The country is witnessing a new assertion by the Dalits especially after

the Una incident in Gujarat. Increasing number of Dalits are rightly refusing the do the menial jobs that are forced upon them due to caste prejudices. They are absolutely justified in demanding jobs that give them dignity and have planned for a struggle for land. The country will see many more such agitations. The rural distress is forcing migration to the cities. The recent violence witnessed in Bangalore on the issue of Cauvery Water also reflects the anger and frustration of the deprived, unemployed and migrant workers.

The situation is no different in LIC. There is no recruitment for nearly two decades now to adequately staff the offices and meet the increasing expectations of the policyholders. Taking the excuse of legal issues, the government and LIC are continuing with temporary employment instead of filling the existing vacancies with permanent employment. This stand of LIC is unacceptable and it has to be confronted by the movement of the employees.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 strike has sent clear warning to the government that the workers will no longer endure with the exploitative working conditions. The unprecedented success of the strike which was participated by 180 million workers is a demand to reverse the neo-liberal policies. The success of the strike has to be seen in the background of the manipulations of the government and the shameless stand of a Union to break the strike. Across the world a consensus is developing that the imperialist led globalisation has failed humanity. It has not only created huge inequalities but has also created ecological and environmental imbalances. Such an economic system is unsustainable. Unfortunately, the Modi government continue to remain committed to neo-liberalism. It has decided to bring legislations soon to amend the labour laws to benefit the foreign capital and big corporate houses. The workers will challenge this policy. The insurance employees too will join this battle with the correct understanding that their jobs cannot remain safe and secure as long as millions remain without jobs and many more millions continue to work in precarious conditions.

# बेरोजगारी की चिंताजनक स्थिति

समाचार-पत्रों में यह रिपोर्ट व्यापक रूप से प्रकाशित हुई है कि वाराणसी नगर निगम में 915 सफाई कर्मचारियों के रिक्त पदों के लिए एक लाख से भी अधिक लोगों ने आवेदन किया है। उनमें से 6700 स्नातक व स्नातकोत्तर हैं, और उनमें से कुछ के पास एम0बी0ए0 व इन्जीनियरिंग की डिग्री है। ये खबरें इतने नियमित रूप से प्रकाशित होती हैं कि अब इनसे देश को या उसके नीति निर्माताओं को आघात नहीं लगता है। भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था और भारतीय समाज के लिए अब इसे नये मानक के रूप में स्वीकार किया जाने लगा है।

यह रिपोर्ट देश में बेरोजगारी की चिंताजनक स्थिति को दर्शाती है। ऐसा लगता है कि भारत एक टाइम-बम पर बैठा हुआ है और बेरोजगारी की स्थिति फूटकर पूरे समाज को अस्थिर कर देगी। 2001 की जनगणना के आँकड़ों के अनुसार 15-24 वर्ष की आयु के युवा भारतीय जिनकी संख्या 20 प्रतिशत अर्थात् 4.7 करोड़ है आज बेरोजगार हैं। प्रतिवर्ष एक करोड़ से भी अधिक युवा रोजगार के लिये बाजार में आते हैं। ऐसी उम्मीद की जा रही है कि 2016 में 1.75 करोड़ तथा 2017 में 1.76 करोड़ युवा लोग रोजगार तलाश करेंगे। संयुक्त राष्ट्र विकास कार्यक्रम की रिपोर्ट यह सुझाव देती है कि बेरोजगारी की दर को उचित स्तर पर बनाए रखने के लिये भारत को अब से लेकर 2050 तक 28 करोड़ रोजगारों का सृजन करना होगा।

क्या भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था इस भारी चुनौती को स्वीकार करने में सक्षम है। इस चुनौती को पूरा करना मुश्किल प्रतीत होता है क्योंकि अर्थव्यवस्था के विकास के लिये सरकार नव-उदारीकरण पर विश्वास करना जारी रखे हुए है। 2001 की जनगणना पुनः यह दिखाती है कि जहाँ अर्थव्यवस्था की वार्षिक वृद्धि दर 7.7 प्रतिशत थी वहीं पर रोजगार में वृद्धि की दर केवल 1.8 प्रतिशत थी। यह भी देखा गया है कि उत्पादकता बढ़ी है परन्तु रोजगार काफी कम हुए हैं। सरकारी क्षेत्र में रोजगारों की संख्या 1996-97 में जहाँ 1.95 करोड़ थी वहीं वह 1.7 करोड़ रह गई है। यह भी अनुमान लगाया गया है कि सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी के क्षेत्र में अगले कुछ वर्षों में स्वचालन के कारण 6.4 लाख रोजगार नष्ट हो जायेंगे।

इसलिये आज भारत रोजगार नष्ट होती हुई वृद्धि का अनुभव कर रहा है। मोदी सरकार ने प्रतिवर्ष 2 करोड़ रोजगार सृजित करने का वादा किया था परन्तु पिछले 25 महीनों में वह केवल 4 लाख रोजगार ही सृजित कर सकी है। सरकार शेखी बघारती है कि उसने अर्थव्यवस्था को फिर से पटरी पर ला दिया है तथा जी0डी0पी0 प्रभावशाली दर से बढ़ रही है परन्तु उसे जानना चाहिये कि केवल जी0डी0पी0 की वृद्धि को राष्ट्रीय कल्याण या समाज में बराबरी के रूप में नहीं लिया जा सकता। अर्थव्यवस्था कोई रोजगार सृजन करने में सफल नहीं हुई है और यह मोदी सरकार की सबसे बड़ी विफलता है।

सरकार बेरोजगारी की इस गंभीर स्थिति के लिये श्रम कानूनों

के ऊपर दोष मढ़ रही है और इसलिये उद्योग व पूंजी के हित में श्रम कानूनों को आक्रामक तरीके से बदलने का अनुसरण कर रही है। सरकार से सम्बद्ध नीति-निर्माता यह तर्क दे रहे हैं कि श्रम कानूनों की कठोरता के कारण उद्योग विकास नहीं कर पा रहे हैं तथा रोजगार में भी वृद्धि नहीं हो रही है। लेकिन यह तर्क सच्चाई से कोसों दूर है। कुल 52 करोड़ की श्रम शक्ति में 10 प्रतिशत से भी कम रोजगार संगठित क्षेत्र में हैं। शेष रोजगार अस्थायी, आकस्मिक व ठेके के हैं। अर्थव्यवस्था के अनौपचारिक हो जाने के कारण रोजगार संकटपूर्ण स्थिति में है तथा उनसे बहुत कम पारिश्रमिक प्राप्त होता है। संगठित क्षेत्र के श्रमिकों को रोजगार व सामाजिक सुरक्षा के उपायों की किसी गारन्टी के बिना बहुत ही शोषणकारी स्थितियों में काम करना पड़ता है। इसलिये बेरोजगारी की भयानक स्थिति के लिये श्रम कानूनों को दोष देना पूर्णतः बेईमानी है और श्रमिकों के सबसे अधिक अमानवीय शोषण को छुपाने का एक प्रयास है।

छोटे व मझोले उद्योगों की उपेक्षा से जोकि 40 प्रतिशत श्रम शक्ति को रोजगार देते हैं, स्थिति गंभीर हो रही है। सरकार का विश्वास है कि केवल विदेशी पूंजी तथा बड़े औद्योगिक घरानों की सहायता से ही रोजगारों का सृजन किया जा सकता है। यह स्पष्ट हो चुका है कि *मेक इन इंडिया तथा स्टार्ट अप इंडिया एण्ड स्टेण्ड अप इंडिया* जैसी पहल परिणाम देने में असफल हो चुकी है। विदेशी पूंजी जिसका लाल कालीन बिछाकर स्वागत किया गया था वह अर्थव्यवस्था में अतिरिक्त क्षमता पैदा करने की बजाय वर्तमान क्षमता को ही खरीद रही है। बड़े उद्योग घराने जो सरकार की नीतियों से लाभ कमाते हैं और जिन्होंने 5,50,000 करोड़ रुपये की कर रियायतों के बड़े हिस्से को अपने अधिकार में कर लिया था, वे भी कोई रोजगार सृजित करने में असफल रहे हैं।

बेरोजगारी की इस चिंताजनक स्थिति से सामाजिक तनाव पैदा हो रहे हैं। गुजरात में पाटीदार तथा हरयाणा में जाट रोजगारों में आरक्षण के लिये आन्दोलन कर रहे हैं। खास तौर पर गुजरात में ऊना की घटना के पश्चात देश को दलितों का नया दृढ़-निश्चय देखने को मिला है। बढ़ती हुई संख्या में दलित छोटे-छोटे काम करने से इन्कार कर रहे हैं जो जाति-पूर्वाग्रह के चलते उन पर लाद दिये गये थे। ऐसे रोजगारों की मांग करने में जो उनको सम्मान प्रदान करते हैं, वे पूर्णरूप से न्यायोचित है तथा जमीन के लिये संघर्ष की भी योजना उन्होंने बना ली है। देश ऐसे अनेक आन्दोलन और देखेगा। ग्रामीण लोग विपत्ति से शहरों की ओर पलायन करने के लिये विवश हैं। कावेरी जल के मुद्दे पर बंगलोर में हाल में हुई हिंसा बेरोजगारों, अपदस्थों व प्रवासी श्रमिकों के गुस्से व निराशा का ही प्रदर्शन है।

एल0आई0सी0 में भी स्थिति कोई अलग नहीं है। अब तक दो दशकों से कोई भर्ती नहीं हुई है तथा बीमाधारकों की बढ़ती हुई आकांक्षाओं को पूरा करने के लिये आफिस में पर्याप्त

स्टाफ नहीं है। कानूनी मुद्दों का बहाना बनाकर सरकार तथा एल0आई0सी0 स्थाई रोजगार से वर्तमान रिक्तियों को भरने की बजाय अस्थाई रोजगार से काम चला रहे हैं। एल0आई0सी0 का यह रवैया हमें स्वीकार नहीं है तथा कर्मचारियों के आन्दोलन द्वारा इसका मुकाबला किया जाना चाहिये।

2 सितम्बर 2016 की हड़ताल ने सरकार को यह स्पष्ट चेतावनी दी है कि श्रमिक अब शोषणकारी काम की स्थिति को और अधिक बर्दाश्त नहीं करेंगे। हड़ताल की अभूतपूर्व सफलता जिसमें 18 करोड़ श्रमिकों ने भाग लिया था, इसकी मांग करती है कि नव-उदारवाद की नीतियों को पलटा जाये। हड़ताल की सफलता को सरकार की चालाकी तथा एक यूनियन द्वारा हड़ताल को तोड़ने के शर्मनाक कार्य की पृष्ठभूमि में देखा जाना चाहिये। पूरी दुनिया में एक आम सहमति का विकास हो

रहा है कि साम्राज्यवाद से संचालित भूमंडलीकरण ने मानवता को असफल कर दिया है। इससे ने केवल भयानक असमानता उत्पन्न हुई है वरन इसने परिवेश व पर्यावरण असंतुलनों को भी जन्म दिया है। इस प्रकार की आर्थिक व्यवस्था वहनीय नहीं है। दुर्भाग्य से मोदी सरकार नव-उदारवाद के प्रति अपने समर्पण को जारी रखे हुए है। उसने विदेशी पूंजी व बड़े औद्योगिक घरानों को लाभ पहुंचाने के लिये श्रम कानूनों को संशोधित करने का कानून जल्दी लाने का निर्णय किया है। श्रमिक इस नीति को चुनौती देंगे। इस सही समझ के साथ कि जब तक लाखों लोग रोजगार के बाहर रहेंगे तथा अन्य लाखों लोगों के रोजगार संकटपूर्ण स्थितियों में होंगे तब तक उनका रोजगार भी निरापद व सुरक्षित नहीं रह सकता, बीमा कर्मचारी भी इस लड़ाई में सम्मिलित होंगे। ●

## BARBARIC TERROR ATTACK

**T**he AIIEA condemns the barbaric terror attack on the Army camp at Uri in Jammu & Kashmir in which 17 soldiers were martyred. This attack was carried out by the fidayeens affiliated to Jaish-e-Mohamed, the dreaded terrorist group that is operating from Pakistan.

The attack is clearly aimed to take advantage of the alienation of the Kashmiri people and the unrest in the valley which continues to remain unabated for over 70 days now. India must

respond to this dastardly attack without getting swayed by popular sentiments and emotions. It must do everything possible to expose Pakistan in the international forums to force that State to stop aiding and abetting the terrorist groups and organisations.

The AIIEA is clear that terror cannot resolve the Kashmir issue. Kashmir issue needs a political solution involving all stakeholders. The Indian government must take speedy steps in this direction.



# Standing Committee of General Insurance Decides

to intensify campaign against disinvestment  
and for merger of PSGI Cos;  
Step up efforts to resolve pending issues &  
Strengthen the Organization

The Standing Committee (GI) of AIIEA met at Hyderabad on September 10 & 11, 2016 to take stock of the prevailing industrial situation and to decide upon the future course of action. The meeting, presided over by Com J.Gurumurthy, Vice President, AIIEA, was attended by Standing Committee members from all the Zonal Units and almost all the State/ Regional Units, who presented their views in the meeting. The members were enriched by valuable inputs and guidance provided by Com. Amanulla Khan, President, AIIEA, Com. K Venugopal, Vice President, AIIEA and Com. V Ramesh, General Secretary, AIIEA, who addressed the meeting.

The Secretary, Standing Committee, initiated the proceedings with his reporting on the performance of the PSGI Companies as well as our achievements on various issues and proposed some programmes of action to win our pending demands and to strengthen the PSGI Companies as well as our organization. The discussions by the members followed and after the apt interventions by the AIIEA leaders as well as Com J.Gurumurthy, the Secretary summed up and set a programme of action to be implemented by all the units in all earnest.

The Standing Committee congratulated the employees and officers of the PSGI Cos for the spectacular success of 2nd September, 2016 strike which was called in General Insurance by the AIIEA initially but later joined and supported by almost all Associations under the banner of Joint Forum. This will go a long way in our fight for the protection of PSGI Cos and clinching long pending demands. The Standing Committee decided to continue with the campaign amongst employees, policyholders and public at large against the ill effects of Government's decision to disinvest the PSGI Cos.

The members expressed their sincere appreciation for the AIIEA for its instrumental role in winning demands on various non-core issues such as introduction of Education Advance, increase in Festival Advance, HBL, Natural Calamity Advance etc. At the same time, they showed their anguish on dilatory tactics of Management and Government in finalizing a number of issues despite repeated assurances by them. One more option for pension under 1995 Scheme, restoration of graduation increments to all the Assistants, Increase in Earned leave, introduction of Paternity Leave, Child Care Leave, Meal coupons, meaningful improvements in promotion policy etc. are the issues which need to be further pursued and vigorously fought for. Hence, the meeting decided to mobilize employees for next phase of struggle to realize the above demands.

The Standing Committee came to the conclusion that whatever we have achieved till now is due to the composite struggle in LIC & PSGI cos — by the overwhelming strength, numerical as well as qualitative of the AIIEA in LIC and the steadfast commitment of members of AIIEA in PSGI Cos though we are not as strong numerically.

However, considering the enormity of the challenges faced by us coming in the form of disinvestment of PSGI Cos., it is now incumbent upon us to make all out endeavour to strengthen the organization numerically in order to accomplish our task of protecting and strengthening the nationalized GI Cos by halting privatization and compelling the Government to merge the four PSGI Cos into a single monolithic corporation. It is very pertinent to realise that a numerically stronger AIIEA in General Insurance would be in a better position to achieve the fair and justified demands of the employees.

Keeping the above situation in mind, the Standing Committee decided to launch an intensive campaign amongst employees. The following programmes are decided:

1. The leadership of every State/Regional unit should visit each and every office coming under their jurisdiction and meet all the employees to campaign on the achievements of AIIEA and also apprise them about our approach to and future action plan for accomplishing unfinished tasks. A memorandum on the pending issues would be submitted to GIPSA and Cos. Campaign materials would be supplied by the Standing Committee.
2. To campaign on the dangers of privatization of PSGI Cos vis-a-vis employees, policyholders/consumers

and national economy – to highlight the demand for consolidation of PSGI. Varied forms of campaign as decided already to continue – seminars, conventions, human chain, road shows, walkathon, signature on canvass. press meets, etc. To meet political parties, MPs and prominent citizens for support.

3. If any of the PSGI Cos applies for listing with Stock Exchange, a protest demonstration will be organized by all the units on the following day. In case any company comes out with offer of IPO, a one day strike will be organised on the following day.

All the units are advised to plan for execution of the abovementioned programmes with seriousness. ●

## 17th Conference of WFTU at Durban

The 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) will be held at Durban, South Africa from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

WFTU is the biggest global trade union federation which believes in class struggle. Trade unions from 78 countries are affiliated to WFTU. It is having a membership of over 95 million from across all continents. The AIIEA is affiliated to WFTU through Trade Union International of Bank and Insurance Unions.

The theme of the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of WFTU is Struggle – Internationalism – Unity. It calls upon the global working class to move forward for attainment of contemporary needs of the working class and the emancipation of workers against poverty and wars generated by the barbarity of capitalism.

This conference of WFTU will be attended by more than 70 trade unions formations, representing the four corners of the world,

namely Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. The 17<sup>th</sup> World Trade Union Congress comes at a time of persistent economic downturn of global capitalism that began in 2008 and is projected to now last more than a decade.

The Conference is jointly hosted by unions affiliated to COSATU (Congress of South African Trade Unions), namely the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU), the Police Prisons and Civil Rights Union (POPCRU) and the Chemical Energy Print Paper and Allied Workers Union (CEPPWAWU).

The conference will conclude with a mass workers rally at the Curries Fountain stadium on the 08 October 2016. As part of the closing ceremony, a workers memorial plaque will be unveiled at the Curries Fountain stadium.

Com Shreekant Mishra, Joint Secretary, AIIEA will represent our organisation in the 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of WFTU.



World Trade Union Congress 5-8 October 2016, Durban, South Africa

**STRUGGLE-INTERNATIONALISM-UNITY**

•For the attainment of the contemporary workers' needs •Against poverty and wars generated by capitalist barbarism



## 2nd September 2016 General Strike

## *Reflection of Workers' Anger*

The country wide general strike on 2nd September this year was even bigger and more widespread than that held on the same day last year, as initial reports from all over the country suggest. The country wide general strike this year too was held on the same 12 point charter of demands. The central trade unions claimed a participation of 15 crore workers in the strike last year. The impact of the strike this year was so huge that even before the trade unions made any claims, the electronic media reported that 18 crore workers participated in the strike.

This gives big rebuff to the claims made by the government that it was working for the benefit of the workers and for providing them social security benefits. It is also significant that the BMS, which withdrew from the strike in the last minute in 2015, did not join the strike call this year at all. Besides, the BJP led government used everything within its capacity to create confusion among the workers and sabotage the strike. The BMS became a willing ally of the government in these efforts, declaring that it was 'withdrawing' from a strike that it has

never called, but also claiming 'historic victory' for the workers. All these were nothing but manoeuvres by the BJP and the BMS, both members of the same parivar headed by the RSS to deceive the workers in their efforts to serve their corporate masters. The corporate media, particularly the electronic media, as usual, aired these false claims and added their might to the misinformation campaign.

But the working class of the country refused to be deceived. As the reports show, despite the call of the BMS leadership to organise 'victory rallies and meetings', BMS members were not willing to oppose the strike. In fact, in several places they joined the strike. Workers who were not organised into any unions, who joined the strike last year, as in Pune industrial area, joined the strike this time too. In several places the strike spread to newer areas encompassing newer

## AIIEA Congratulates insurance employees and working class

### 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2016 NATIONWIDE GENERAL STRIKE – A STUPENDOUS SUCCESS

All India Insurance Employees' Association congratulates the insurance employees and working class of the country for making the 2nd September, 2016 strike a spectacular success. This is the 17<sup>th</sup> Nationwide Strike since 1991. The 180 million workers participated in the strike against failing economy and raising inequality, rise in essential commodity prices, unemployment, and demanding social security to unorganized workers, minimum wage of Rs.18000/p.m. apart from rejecting the disinvestment of public sector and opening up of Indian Economy to the finance capital. The anger of the strike also reflected the dangers to democracy caused by the forces beyond the nation-state and rise of a radical right characterized by its nativism, authoritarianism. The other sections including students, agricultural workers and farmers also participated supporting the demands of the working class which encompass the demands of the people. The Modi government which celebrated recently its two years in power in a grand scale stands exposed by this strike on its failed policies in all fronts.

The Central Government tried everything to subvert the strike by propagating that the major demands were met when in fact they did not even meet the demand of the minimum wages when they offered Rs.350 per day as minimum wages (working out to Rs.9,100 per month calculated for 26 days). In spite of these attempts the strike across the country was total and in some states there was total bandh observed in support of the strike. In Kerala and Tripura the total political support to the strike was reflected in the bandh observed across the states. Steel, Coal, Transport and other sectors witnessed a near total strike across the country. In many states the

workers of Road Transport Sector including autorikshaws observed a total strike.

In the insurance sector, the strike action was near total with many divisional units in LIC reporting high performance of strike action. Majority of the offices of LIC and PSGI sector remained closed in east and north eastern parts. The insurance employees joined the strike with their demand to stop FDI in insurance sector and disinvestment of PSGI along with other demands like one more option for pension and recruitment of Class III and IV employees etc. in LIC.

AS per the information received, Visakhapatnam division (SCZ) recorded a strike percentage of 99.5% stood No. 1 in the country in strike performance. The divisions that recorded above 95% strike performance are Nellore, Kadapa, Rajahmundry (SCZ); Sambalpur, Bhubaneswar, Cuttack (ECZ); Thrissur, Coimbatore (SZ); Jalandhar, Jammu (NZ).

Similarly, the units which recorded 90% and above strike performance are: Gandhinagar(WZ), Bangalore II, Dharwad, Raichur, Hyderabad, Secunderabad, Machilipatnam (SCZ). Amritsar, Bikaner, Ajmer (NZ); Madurai, Ernakulam, Thanjavur, Kottayam(SZ); Allahabad, Kanpur(NCZ); Shahdol, Raipur(CZ).

We congratulate all the divisional units for recording a spectacular strike performance.

The massive strike action by workers on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 sends out a loud and clear warning to the Government that unless the policies of neoliberalism are reversed, the working class would not rest and would intensify their struggle.

We once again congratulate insurance employees and the workers across the nation for making the 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016 strike action a memorable one.

sections of workers. In many states, not only the states that are traditional strongholds of trade unions, but in many others, the strike turned into a bandh. This was mainly due to the massive participation of the road transport workers as a result of which life in these states came to a standstill. In many districts of Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab wore a bandh like look. Despite the attempts by the TMC government in West Bengal to suppress the strike by issuing warnings and threats to the workers, state transport buses in the state plied empty and a bandh like situation prevailed in almost all the districts. In Kerala and Tripura, as always, strike turned into a bandh.

The anger of the workers against the policies of the government was visible in many ways. Around 70000 anganwadi employees and ASHAs, most of them who were not members of any union joined the strike in Gujarat. Thousands of them participated in the demonstrations held at the district headquarters in many districts. All the workers in the minor ports of Bhavnagar in Gujarat, Gangavaram and Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh joined the strike. These workers are not members of any of the central trade unions that called the strike. Similarly in many industrial clusters across the country, thousands of workers, who are not members of any union, joined the strike.

While there were a few areas like the port sector where the strike was not as good as the last time, and a few districts where the strike in the road transport sector was not as effective as last year, overall the strike was observed in many more industrial clusters and sectors and many newer sections of workers joined it.

It was not only the misinformation and misleading campaign of the government with its huge advertisements in the media aided and abetted by the BMS that the workers confronted. In several states they were subjected to victimisation, police repression and physical attacks. In Haryana 22 leaders of road transport workers' union were arrested and the striking workers were lathi charged; police went to the residential areas where contract workers lived and coerced them to join duties. Several coal workers in Jharkhand were suspended for joining the strike. The police conducted a flag march to intimidate

workers and also lathi charged workers standing peacefully near a theatre in Noida. In West Bengal CITU leader and former MP Suraj Pathak and many CITU leaders were arrested. TMC goons attacked the workers and their supporters, including women, participating in the rallies. Around 5000 workers were arrested in different parts of Assam.

The extent of the strike and the support it received could be gauged from the reports that were available till the evening of 2nd September though comprehensive reports from all the states and sectors are yet to come. In several states local state level unions joined the strike. In Telangana, the TRS affiliated union joined the strike; the TNTUC belonging to the ruling TDP in Andhra Pradesh supported the strike in Telangana. Even in Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh, though TNTUC opposed the strike, workers belonging to it joined the strike. In Odisha the chief minister himself expressed his support to the strike when the trade union leaders met him. The Left parties openly supported the strike. Even while the BMS was not part of the strike and BMS leadership directed its members to observe 'victory rallies', local units of the BMS were not in a position to oppose the strike; in several states BMS members joined the strike.

Overwhelming majority of bank and insurance employees all over the country joined the strike. State government employees in most of the states joined the strike. Particularly noteworthy is the participation of state government employees in the north eastern states including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya etc who participated in the strike for the first time. Participation of central government employees – of the income tax employees, postal employees in particular was massive. Defence employees in several defence production units joined the strike. BSNL employees all over the country joined the strike. The strike was near total in the coal sector. Overwhelming majority of contract workers in the public sector participated in the strike. Strike among medical and sales representatives was total in almost all the states.

Scheme workers including anganwadi employees, ASHAs, midday meal workers participated in the strike all over the country. Teaching and non teaching staff of National Child Labour Project joined the strike in Bihar,

Maharashtra etc. Traditional sector workers like the plantation workers, cashew, coir, and fisheries workers participated in the strike in their lakhs. Unorganised workers in beedi, construction, head load workers, auto and rickshaw drivers, street vendors, domestic workers in several states joined the strike and also participated in the demonstrations, rasta roko and rail roko. Municipal and conservancy workers, panchayat workers, village chowkidars etc also joined the strike.

In Andhra Pradesh, strike was total in Vizag steel and DCI; around 70% of workers of permanent workers in the Vizag Shipyard participated in the strike. The TTD in the holy town of Tirupati was totally paralysed. Autos all over the state went on strike. Almost all the industrial clusters including the Renigunta industrial area were closed down. In several major cities truck owners associations participated in the strike. This along with the strike of the head load workers throughout the state brought all commercial transactions in the state to a standstill.

In Assam strike took the form of complete bandh in almost all districts seriously affecting public and private transport. No oil refinery in the state functioned. ONGC remained paralysed. More than 15 lakhs tea garden workers joined the strike. All public and private educational institutions remained closed. Railway transport was disrupted due to the rail roko by the unorganised workers, peasants, agricultural workers etc.

In Bihar too the strike was turned into bandh in many districts. Road transport including bus and tempo services was off the road. Workers in several industrial clusters went on strike.

Workers in almost all the major industrial areas in NCR Delh joined the strike. Massive joint demonstrations were held in several centres. The central demonstration was addressed by the national trade union leaders.

In Gujarat, an estimated 4 lakhs workers in 22 districts joined the strike and organised demonstrations in many districts.

Strike was highly successful in Haryana including in the Gurgaon, Manesar industrial areas. Workers in the Manesar plant of Maruti Suzuki, Honda, Hero Honda and other industrial units joined the strike and held demonstrations.

Demonstrations were held in Jammu region in support of the strike while Kashmir region continues to be under curfew. Thousands of workers from different sectors participated in the demonstrations.

In Jharkhand strike was observed in industrial areas including in Jamshedpur that never participated in any strike till now. It was reported to be more massive than the strike in 2015.

An estimated 50 lakhs workers participated in the strike in Karnataka. Strike was total in the road transport sector and in all the major industries in Bengaluru and Mysore. 19 lakhs workers in the industrial clusters of Bengaluru joined the strike. Strike was total in both the units of Mico, L&T, Chenna metals, Toyota, ITC, Vikrant Tyres etc. In BEL in Bengaluru, the union affiliated to INTUC did not join the strike; despite this 80% of workers, 800 out of the total 1073 workers, more than the membership of the CITU affiliated union, joined the strike.

The strike in transport sector in several cities and towns in Madhya Pradesh was total. Hamalis of agricultural mandis also participated affecting commercial transactions.

Strike was total in many private industrial areas in Maharashtra including the Pune, Aurangabad, Nagpur, Nasik, Mumbai, Solapur etc. Major industries like Ceat Ltd, Thysun Crupp, Sansonite India, Crompton Gieves, beer manufacturing units, pharma industries, liquor and textile industries were closed. Strike was total among beedi and power loom workers in Solapur.

Strike created a bandh like situation in Odisha. It was total among iron ore, manganese and coal mines workers and near total among the contract workers. Road transport including autos was totally paralysed.

Strike evoked massive response in Punjab with workers. Road transport was paralysed and industrial clusters remaining closed. Unorganised workers participated in the demonstrations in thousands.

The garment industry in Tiruppur in Tamil Nadu witnessed total strike. Strike was also effective in the Coimbatore industrial area. It was total in Ashok Leyland, Ennore Foundries, Simpson Group of companies and all three factories of TI Group in Chennai. Workers in BHEL Trichy and Ranipet, ordinance factory in Nilgiris, defence production units in Avadi

and Aravangadu were totally in strike. In Aravangadu, BMS members also joined the strike. Contract workers in Manali industrial belt MFL, ATC Tyres in Tirunelveli and TCL Lancer, in L&T, in Tyre machinery making Honey Well company went on strike.

There was bandh like situation in the state due to the total participation of road transport workers in the strike in Telangana. There was total strike in most of the public sector undertakings in the state. Strike was also total in most of the industrial clusters in and around Hyderabad. On the whole the strike was reported to be even more successful than last year.

Strike was total in Udampur industrial area of Uttarakhand and partial in that in Haridwar. It was also total in public road transport in the state but partial in private road transport.

In West Bengal, bandh like situation prevailed in many districts despite the threats and intimidation of the TMC government and its goons. Government ran buses without passengers in the morning but was compelled to withdraw later. Jute mil

closed. Commercial activities were nominal. Educational institutions in several districts were closed. Most of the tea gardens remained closed.

This strike, the seventeenth joint country wide general strike after the advent of neoliberal policies in the country, was preceded by joint campaign that was better organised and taken up to the block and in some states lower level to reach the workers. In addition, CITU prepared campaign material to make the workers aware of the issues and their relationship to the government policies. Booklets exposing government claims were also published which were translated into local languages. During the strike the lower level committees were regularly updated with information exposing government claims. This has helped in preventing the workers from succumbing to the confusion sought to be created by the government and the BMS.

This country wide general strike will definitely be a mile stone in the working class struggles of the country.

## Striking for Their Right

(Courtesy: Economic & Political Weekly  
10 September 2016- Editorial)

**G**eneral strikes are important political interventions allowing for workers' voices to be heard.

The general strike of 2 September, called by all major trade unions barring the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) that is associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, was dismissed by mainstream media as a "failure" for its inability to cause widespread disruption. Little, if anything, was reported about the demands of the workers or of the sly attempts by the central government to undermine the strike. A few days before the strike, for instance, Union Labour and Employment Minister Bandaru Dattatreya's office sent out bulk text messages to people registered with the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation announcing a 43% hike in the minimum wages of unskilled non-agricultural workers to 350 a day and promoting it as a "pro-worker



initiative." Not surprisingly, the BMS spoke of this as a "historic victory for workers." The so-called "victory" was nothing more than a charade. For the promised "hike" in minimum wages will not be even Rs.10,000 per month, a demand trade unions last made three and a half years ago in the general strike of February 2013. Furthermore, Dattatreya's meaningless statement that the government "agreed to address" seven of the eight "labour-related" demands of the strike only reiterates this government's eagerness to posture as

“pro-worker” while instituting policies that undercut the rights of workers.

The coverage of the general strike in the media in the days leading up to 2 September was sparse, with no mention of the purpose of the strike, or what participating unions were demanding. This has unfortunately been a common feature of labour news coverage in recent decades, with an emphasis either on violence as in the coverage of the February 2013 strike and industry-specific strikes such as Maruti–Suzuki workers’ strikes in Manesar, or the consistent emphasis on whether “normalcy” of life was affected. The loss of work hours and the resultant “loss” to the economy is the other way labour struggles feature in news coverage. These “losses” are simply estimates by industry associations calculated without considering inventories built up through increased production in anticipation of such work stoppages. Such narratives blame the working class for stalling the “engine of growth,” while detracting from their substantive demands.

The trade unions’ charter of demands covers a wide range of issues that affect the working class, a result of their commitment to joint action in the late 2000s. The general strikes since then have voiced demands beyond fair compensation and the right to associate, to those that resonate with demands for social security for all workers, and universalising and expanding the public distribution system. The demands emphasise “strict enforcement” of existing labour laws, no disparity in pay for contractual and regular workers, and a complete stoppage of contract employment in perennial work. They also oppose disinvestment in public sector undertakings and the hike in foreign direct investment limits in defence, insurance and the railways. Besides these national-level demands, industry-specific unions have also articulated their own demands in the strike; for instance, garment workers in Chennai demanded that the new minimum wage notification for the sector be implemented immediately, and the mechanics’ associations protested the Motor

**The coverage of the general strike in the media in the days leading up to 2 Sept. was sparse, with no mention of the purpose of the strike, or what participating unions were demanding. This has unfortunately been a common feature of labour news coverage in recent decades**

Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2016 that seeks to make retrofitting of motor vehicles punishable with imprisonment and fines.

Over the past four decades, and more so over the last two, the character of employment in India has changed in favour of employment without security. The state has aided this process, leveraging low labour standards to attract investments in the private sector. It has facilitated the dilution of labour regulation and monitoring systems, and has itself begun hiring non-permanent staff. The trade unions, historically rooted in the organised sectors,

have struggled to come to terms with the reduced hiring of regular workers, and have had to respond to the overwhelming needs of contractual and informal sector workers. While the state actively chose to weaken protections for labour, technological change revolutionised the ways in which production was conceived and organised. With increasing automation, it is possible for key processes to function independent of workers. More than ever before, systems can function even if workers are on strike. Technology has enabled not only dispersed, isolated spaces of work but has increased fragmentation of the workforce and work cultures, necessitating newer modes of worker organisation. This is reflected also in the disjointed workers’ struggles, limited by location, sector, and even terms of employment. Some, like the ones at Maruti–Suzuki in Manesar got wide support. The spontaneous protests by garment workers in Bengaluru in April this year against the provident fund interest rate reduction found solidarity from among the middle classes and the media. Many other workers’ protests remain largely localised and unnoticed.

At a time when collective action is being actively discouraged, general strikes continue to be significant political interventions. They represent an opportunity to mobilise workers and to reiterate long-standing demands. It is up to the workers’ collective to actively engage with the newer challenges to unionisation by building wider solidarities.



# Labour's love's lost

T.T. Ram Mohan

The proposed labour reforms seek to weaken worker protection at a time when the Indian economy is not creating enough jobs and the right kind of jobs.

On September 2, 10 trade unions in India organised what was said to be one of the largest labour strikes in history. An estimated 120 million workers took part. The unions were protesting against the government's unwillingness to grant a 12-point charter of demands they had put forward. A year ago, unions had signalled their discontent by having a similar nation-wide strike.

This year, one of the principal demands of the unions was an increase in the daily minimum wage for unskilled workers from Rs.246 to Rs.692. They rejected an increase in the wage to Rs.350 offered by the government. Some of their other major concerns were: proposed changes in labour laws; growing casualisation of labour; privatisation; and greater opening up to foreign direct investment (FDI).

### Future tense, present imperfect

Labour is restive today. It is apprehensive about what the future bodes for itself. But it's not as if labour militancy has gone up in recent years. On the contrary, man-days lost due to industrial disputes (lockouts and strikes) came down from 23.7 million in 2001 to 13 million in 2012 before rising to 19 million in 2013. These figures are considerably lower than those in the 1970s and 1980s.

However, there is little doubt that organised labour in India, as in the rest of the world, sees itself as a loser in the changes unleashed by liberalisation and globalisation. It fears that if the government goes ahead with some of its proposed "reforms", its losses will begin to mount.

Indian businesspeople as well as many economists have long clamoured for greater "flexibility" in labour laws, a euphemism for freedom to hire and fire. The Industrial

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says the author,  
a Professor at IIM, Ahmedabad  
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Courtesy: The Hindu 12/9/2016

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Relations Code Bill, 2016, which is said to favour such flexibility, is due to be tabled in Parliament in the near future. It is bound to evoke a strong reaction from unions as well as Opposition parties.

Several economists say that rigid labour laws are the reason India has not generated enough jobs in the formal sector — only about 10 per cent of jobs are in the organised sector and the remaining 90 per cent in the unorganised sector. As large firms do not have the confidence that they can shed workers in adverse conditions, they do not wish to enter labour-intensive, low-skilled sectors. This is the reason India has not been able to replicate the Chinese success in labour-intensive manufacturing.

This argument may have well been overtaken by events in the global economy. Many other low-cost economies have already positioned themselves in these sectors. Automation in the West means that the window of opportunity in these sectors is fast closing. The idea that reforming labour laws will trigger a huge expansion in low-skilled manufacturing is thus highly suspect in today's changed situation.

### The experience so far

Moreover, the academic literature on the subject is not unambiguously in favour of

easing labour laws as a means for hiring more labour. Dismissal laws in France are more stringent than in India, but that did not come in the way of France's prospering for over a century. China itself has made its labour laws more stringent so that they are comparable to those in India (except in special economic zones).

Indeed, some of the literature suggests that giving workers greater protection helps increase productivity by giving workers more incentives to invest in firm-specific skills. Along with collective bargaining, worker protection leads to more egalitarian outcomes in society. There is also evidence that the bias against workers in Indian industry may have more to do with tax incentives for capital than with restrictive labour laws.

A second issue that agitates unions is the growing trend towards casualisation of labour. This was one of the reasons for labour unrest at Maruti's plant at Manesar in Haryana last year.

Companies find it expedient to employ labour on contract. They can then leave the job of managing regulations and inspectors to the contract labour firms. They can also stay small and escape various labour regulations. Most importantly, contract labour tends to be cheaper in general; at Maruti's Manesar plant, contract workers earned less than half the wages of permanent workers.

Contract labour is a serious assault on workers' rights. The Supreme Court has made strong observations on companies' resort to contract labour in order to avoid statutory obligations. *The Economic Survey* (2015-16) believes that contract labour is merely a corporate response to "regulatory cholesterol". However, reducing worker protection in the organised sector may not be the answer — many firms would still prefer the contract option simply because it's cheaper. Rather, we must extend worker protection and benefits to contract labour as well.

Privatisation and FDI are other areas of concern for organised labour. It is not that we have seen major initiatives to sell off PSUs. But there are clear attempts to further shrink the role of the public sector. Public sector

banks (PSB), for instance, have been starved of capital and many banks are today without chairmen and managing directors. Moves have also been initiated to merge PSBs. Unions see these moves as impacting jobs in the formal sector adversely.

In principle, FDI should mean more investment and more job creation. However, in a situation where domestic firms have weakened by inadequate growth, FDI is seen as displacing jobs in domestic firms.

### **It's the jobs**

The proposed labour reforms seek to weaken worker protection at a time when the Indian economy is not creating enough jobs and the right kind of jobs. The rate of growth of employment slumped from 2.8 per cent in 2000-05 to 0.5 per cent in 2011-12. In the same period, the labour force grew at 2.9 per cent and 0.4 per cent, respectively. In the organised sector, the share of informal employment rose from 48 per cent in 2004-05 to 54.6 per cent in 2011-12.

Job creation in the private sector is depressed by the low rate of investment. Investment itself is constrained by numerous factors: high levels of debt, high interest rates, a deceleration in corporate loans growth in PSBs, etc. In these conditions, a focus on weakening dismissal laws in the organised sector as the key to job creation is misplaced.

The International Monetary Fund's *World Economic Outlook* (April 2016) lends support to this view. It cites studies that have shown that weakening dismissal conditions under adverse economic conditions tends to reduce employment. The IMF argues that if such changes to labour laws are to be carried out, there must be offsetting fiscal expansion that helps raise demand for labour. India is in no position to meet this condition as we are still in the process of fiscal consolidation.

There is a time for undertaking certain structural reforms and there is a time for not doing so. Focussing on changes to labour laws at the present time, far from fostering job creation, is likely to be counterproductive and can only result in greater labour unrest.



# Indian Economy in the trap of Foreign Capital

- Pranab Chattopadhyay

Nine important sectors of the national economy have been opened for foreign capital (FDI) by the central BJP led NDA government. On 20<sup>th</sup> June in a meeting of the central cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister this decision was taken. The sectors which have been opened for unfettered entry of foreign capital include defense, DTH, cable, mobile, TV, medical infrastructure, food processing, animal husbandry, livestock development, fishery, honeybee rearing, new and existing airports, internal civil aviation, single brand retailing etc. Among these in defense and medical infrastructure 74% investment is direct through automatic route and for the rest 26% permission of the government will be required. In other sectors 100% can be invested directly through automatic route and no permission from the government need be taken. As a result of this decision of the central cabinet Apple Industries will be able to open its own shop to sell i-phone in India. Moreover they will have no restrictions in producing i-phone in India.

Informing these decisions with regard to foreign capital investment the Prime Minister claimed "India is now the most open economy in the world". The central government is claiming that through this not only new foreign capital and state-of-the-art technology will come but this will also help in employment generation and infrastructure development. The industrial establishment of the country has welcomed this decision of the government. In the opinion of the Director General of CII, "This will enhance the rate of economic growth and create new employment."

For the last two and half decades foreign capital investment has been allowed in several important sectors and it has been increased to 100% step by step.

And in this way in PM's words "India is now the most open economy in the world".

And the reasons cited in favour of foreign capitals are the same old ones: Employment generation

New technology&

Increased production!

But what is the real picture?

## I

This decision of the central government is not an isolated incident. In the last two years of Narendra Modi government entry of foreign capital into railway, defense and insurance etc. has been facilitated further. In fact the neoliberal experiment in the national economy which started in 1991 with PV Narsimha Rao led congress government has in the last two and half decades seen entry of foreign capital in various sectors being ensured. In Aug 1991 up to 51% foreign capital was allowed in 47 priority sectors along with software. At the same time Foreign Investment Promotion Board was constituted under the Prime Minister's Office. Its real intention was to clear fast the applications of FDI. In 1994 October, 51% of foreign capital through automatic route was cleared for medical sector.

From 1998 to 2004, NDA government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee's BJP was in office. This government cleared 49% FDI in satellite based mobile phone sector. In the highway and port construction in 1999 January, upper limit of FDI was increased from 74% to 100%. In October, 2000, 26% foreign capital was allowed into Insurance business. In May 2001, 100% FDI in pharmaceuticals, airports, hotels and tourism, 26% in defense, in certain parts of telecom sector 74% and in banking sector 49% FDI was allowed. In January 2004, in

marketing, extraction and manufacture of petroleum products, and in laying natural gas pipeline 100% FDI was allowed. In Mar 2004, 74% FDI limit was declared for private banks. In 2005 March, 100% FDI was allowed for urbanization.

In May 2004, the UPA government led by Congress was installed. In Nov 2005, 20% FDI in wireless communication and 74% FDI in telecom sector was allowed. 51% FDI entry was declared in Feb 2006 for single brand retail trade. In Mar 2008, 100% FDI was allowed in airports. In Jan 2009, 100% FDI was allowed in some areas of printing. 100% FDI in single brand retail trade was approved in 2012. In multi brand retail trade 51% FDI was allowed in September 2012.

After coming to power in 2014, Narendra Modi government allowed FDI upto 49% in defense and 100% in some parts of railway infrastructure. In March-April of 2015, 49% FDI was allowed into insurance and pension funds.

## II

For the last two and half decades, against the national interests, foreign capital investment has been allowed in several important sectors and it has been increased to 100% step by step. And in this way in Prime Minister Modi's words "India is now the most open economy in the world". As has been done this time, earlier also employment generation, new technology and increased production were cited as the reasons in favour of foreign capital. But what is the real picture?

In central government economic survey (2012-13), it is seen that from 2004-05 to 2011-12 the total capital investment in private and public sectors in India was 141 lakhs 37 thousands 175 rupees. Also during the same period the foreign capital investment was to the tune of 25,321 crore dollars (EPW 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2012). If we take one dollar worth Rs.50/- during the period then this becomes Rs.12,66,050/- crores. This means, of the total invested capital the share of foreign capital was less than 10%. In economic survey (2013-14) we find total capital investment in 2012-13 was Rs.35,09,208 crores. During this time foreign capital investment was 3,640 crores dollars or Rs.2,18,000 crores. This means of the invested capital, foreign capital was less than 7%.

In the latest instance, 100% FDI has been decided for defense sector. Previously it was 49%. The defense minister has informed the parliament that, from August 2014 to February 2016 foreign investment in defense was to the tune of Rs.1 crore 12 lakhs. The food processing sector has been opened fully to the foreign capital. The concerned minister has informed that there is a possibility of foreign capital being invested in this sector in a big way. But from 2012 to 2015, in three years, the foreign capital invested in this sector was slightly more than Rs.528 crores. The foregoing facts and figures show, just by removing the ceiling for foreign capital to enter freely into important sectors, it is not guaranteed that the FDI will come.

About latest technology the picture is very disappointing. Various surveys have proved that advanced capitalist countries and transnational corporations under their control never supply state-of-the-art technology to the developing countries. There are many instances of this. For example Maruti did never supply the same level of technology to its Indian wing which it was using in its Japanese establishment. The memory of the Union Carbide gas leak disaster in Bhopal on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2004 still continues to haunt us. In several survey reports it is seen that the modern level of technology which was necessary for safety (which was being used in their US establishment) was not used in Bhopal. Therefore to say that with foreign



Cartoon courtesy:Manjul, DNA

capital necessary technology also automatically will come sounds hollow.

Thirdly, the propaganda that foreign capital will generate new employment opportunities is also not true. Foreign capital is never interested in labour intensive projects. They want to extract more work employing less people. There are many instances of this. Therefore whatever is being told in favour of foreign capital being allowed a free reign is far removed from reality.

### III

What is our experience about the foreign capital being invested in some measure in various sectors in India. For example in the industrial policy declared in 1991 electricity sector was opened for foreign capital. Taking this opportunity AES and Enron of US entered the field of building power plants. Enron constructed the Dabhol power plant in Maharashtra. An agreement was entered into with Enron by Maharashtra Electricity Board on Enron's terms. As a consequence of this unequal agreement Maharashtra Electricity Board went into loss. Similar was the experience with AES. Along with industrial institutions in the financial sector also foreign capital investment has brought about many negative reactions. Within one year of starting of liberalization one of the biggest scams, the Rs. 10,000 crore security scam took place. A Joint Parliamentary Committee was constituted to investigate into this scam. Apart from this there was an investigation from Reserve Bank of India also. In the reports of both the investigating committees it was reported that in this scam in 70% of all the illegal transactions four foreign banks were involved. No nationalized bank or Indian private bank was involved in these illegal transactions.

At the international level also experience with foreign capital is very bitter. In 1951, in Iran, removing the Shah a national front government was formed under the leadership of Mossadegh. This government nationalized the foreign oil companies. The US imperialism was angry at this. Keeping the United States companies in the front, in an engineered upsurge the Mossadegh government was brought down and Shah was brought back. During the middle of the last century similarly, in Guatemala Gonzalves government was uprooted and a military government was

installed. US multi-national company United Fruits was behind this. A lot of land in the hands of this company was taken over by Gonzalves government as a result of land reforms programme taken up by it. In Chile also the experience was almost the same. Here the socialist leader Salvador Allende's government elected by the people was pulled down and military regime clamped. US company AT&T was behind this regime change. Therefore the experience of the people of the world with the institutions of foreign capital is very bad.

### IV

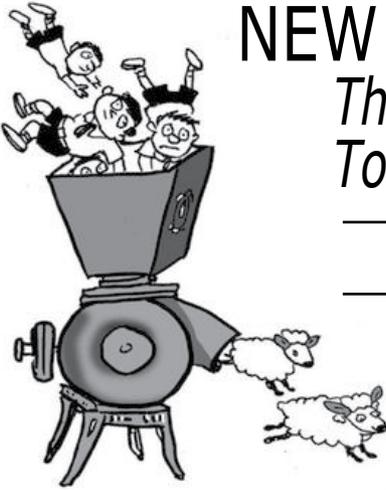
The entry of foreign capital into defense, telecommunications, retail trade and railway etc will be very dangerous. Foreign capital being allowed into defense manufacture is related to the security of the country. Presently there are 40 ordnance factories where equipment needed by Indian arm services is manufactured. Alongside the ordnance factories, there are 9 public sector defense units in the country which are supplying war materials successfully to army, navy and air force. Apart from this, research institutions like DRDO, DFRL, DRDL are constantly going on doing research work about how much safe the products manufactured by ordnance factories are and whether they can be further improved upon. These institutions have played a crucial role on the question of building up sovereignty of the Indian defense establishment. Allowing 100% FDI in this sector will curtail sovereignty.

In India five crore people are connected with retail trade. The food processing industry also is labour intensive. The livelihood of a large number of people is connected with this. With the entry of foreign capital, not to speak of new employment, a large number of already employed will lose the employment because of the government's decision. The central government has taken this decision to appease the United States and multinational corporations. We will have to build up a broadbased, countrywide, united movement to beat back this anti-national decision of the government.

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(Translated from Bengali by  
Com V.V.R.Sastry)

Cartoon courtesy: Surendran, The Hindu



# NEW EDUCATION POLICY 2016

## *The Dogma of Neo-liberalism To Continue in Higher Education*

T V N S Ravindranath

On July 27, the HRD minister held a closed door six-hour meeting with the RSS and its affiliates including ABVP to discuss how NEP 2016 could “instill nationalism, pride and ancient Indian values in modern education”. Conformism and a slavish mentality bred by indoctrination in a particular ideology is sought to be cultivated through the curriculum.

The education policy is the backbone that defines the character and future potential of a nation. India is one of the youngest nations in the world with more than 54% of its total population below 25 years of age. An effective education system with proper balance between the basic parameters of accessibility, equality and quality is essential for utilization of this young human resource towards the task of nation building.

Today, India has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world. 86 % of the youth aged 15 years and above are literate and only 69.3 % of those below the age of 15 are literate. At lower ages the literacy rate is lower. Youth literacy rates for male and female population is 90% and 81.8% respectively. India is also known for higher level of gender gap (8.2 percentage points) in youth literacy rate. It is against this background that the need to strengthen the higher education system in the country, assumes great importance. This can be achieved only by building a balance between quality, quantity and equity.

The TSR Subramanyam Committee, appointed by the NDA government, to prepare a New Education Policy for India, submitted the report to the government after two years, in May 2016, suggesting measures that the country must take to improve the sector that caters to over 300 million students in the country. In June, the draft policy on education was placed on the website of UGC under the name “Some Inputs for Draft National Education Policy 2016” that explains the

framework of the future education system of India.

The draft identifies low gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education as one of the major challenges, which we are facing in India. The enrolment ratio in higher education was 23.6% in 2014-15 and it sets a target to increase GER to 25.2% in 2017-18 and further to 30% in 2020-21. The draft says, “Reform higher education system in order to ensure equitable access to tertiary education, including technical and professional education, narrow group inequalities in access to higher education.”

But, the draft suggests, “Instead of setting up new institutions, which require huge investments, priority of the government will be to expand the capacity of existing institutions.” There cannot be any expansion of reach of education without opening new institutions of higher education. The draft policy clearly indicates that there will be no new institutions in future; meaning if GER of 30% has to be achieved; it will be done through private education institutions only. It will further privatize Indian Higher Education system, which is already massively privatized with accounting to 62% of the total enrolment. The government clearly is not worried about the question of equity in the higher education. Presently in India, there is a gross disparity in GER in higher education with respect to region, social groups and gender. For example, in 2011-12, GER in higher education ranged between 8.4% in Jharkhand

and 54% in Chandigarh, which speaks about the regional disparities in GER. Similarly, the variations among the social groups too are considerable. If we analyze overall GER of 23.6% for participation of gender and social groups we will find that it is 24.5% for boys, 22.7% for girls; 18.5% for SC's and 13.3% for ST's in 2014-15. The reservation policy for SC/ST's is not really being implemented at higher levels of education. This is one of the major challenges in higher education of India, but the draft policy on higher education fails to address it. Presently the educational hubs that are coming around the metro cities and state capitals are further widening the gap. Most of these institutes are under private sector, which demands huge amounts of fees from students. Only those students from well off families come to these hubs. To address the educational needs of the socially marginalized sections and to overcome social disparity existing in GER of the society, we need new education institutions in the public sector as there are no provisions of reservations in private institutions. Due to high fees structure, private institutions are hardly of any use for socially backward sections. Present draft does not have any special proposal to overcome these questions of equity in higher education. This education policy will reinforce caste distinctions and ensure that the majority of India's children from oppressed and marginalized sections will be condemned to child labor.

Commercialization of education provides autonomy to capital by opening up a market for investment as knowledge is now a key component in economic development but its impact on the academic community is decidedly anti-democratic and has grave consequences for the very conception of education as a public good. Neo-liberalism has altered the focus of the syllabus from values of critical-thinking to "skills" such as "team-work," "communication" and "leadership." Unfortunately, influenced by policy makers and the media, even students, parents and society at large have begun to accept education as a "private good" so that both "providers" and "consumers" adopt a market perspective by viewing education as a means to recoup investments made either in providing or in acquiring it. The entire terminology of the NEP 2016 is devised

within the framework of skill acquisition. "Competencies" and "outcomes" are units to be monitored, measured, graded and readied for the market. The purpose of education is the grooming of 'human resource' to create a work force that will enter the market place as and when supply and demand movements are favorable.

For furtherance of neo-liberal agenda in the field of education, there is an emphasis on promoting foreign universities in India. The draft policy reflects this and quotes "If required, steps will be taken to put in place an enabling legislation. Rules/regulations will be framed so that it is possible for a foreign university to offer its own degree to the Indian students studying in India." The draft policy proposes that the top 200 foreign universities be allowed to open campuses in India.

For foreign universities to work in India there is a need to reform over-all higher education system. One of these requirements is to have a uniform system of higher education in India. Draft identifies this need: "Steps will be taken to gradually move from years-based recognition of qualifications to credit-based recognition." Government has already implemented CBCS (Choice Based Credit System) and RUSA (Rashtriya Uchchar Siksha Abhiyan), which is working in this direction. It is evident that these so called 'academic reforms' (CBCS, Semesterization, RUSA) are not a need of Indian students but of foreign education players to have common play-ground for them.

It is proposed in this document "The government will take steps for reaching the long pending goal of raising the investment in the education sector to at least 6% of the GDP as a priority." But, in the next point, it emphasizes to encourage investment by private providers through philanthropy and corporate sector responsibility. It proposes various steps for incentivizing private sector investment in education, such as tax benefits and inclusion of education within the definition of infrastructure. Private funding and FDI is proposed as an important strategy for mobilizing financial resources for R & D and other quality enhancement activities in educational institutions.

This draft on new education policy clearly indicates the intention of the government to facilitate private houses in the name of

mobilization of funds and resources, their old strategy. Along with this, mentioning private funding and FDI as an important tool for R&D is a serious threat to already fund starved research in higher education. We need more and more fellowships to encourage research for which more allocation is required from the central budget but the government seems to be in a mood to further reduce budget on higher education and leave higher education at the mercy of private houses.

All over the world, disciplines and areas of research that are fundamental to innovative systems of knowledge depend significantly on State funding and philanthropic support. Replacing this with profit oriented enterprise means that these disciplines suffer deterioration and the critical and transformational purpose of education institutions declines.

Draft policy proposes various administrative changes regarding governance and regulation of higher education. It proposes to set up an "Education Commission" comprising of academic experts, every five years, to assist MHRD. There is a proposal for the creation of an Indian Education Service (IES), which will be an all India service with HRD as the cadre controlling authority. Draft policy also recommends the establishment of education tribunals at the center and in the states, headed by a retired high court judge. Along with these proposals, it also recommends a mechanism for administering the National Higher Education Fellowship Programme and a Central Educational Statistics Agency.

But, the long term aim is to completely replace the UGC with various new agencies with different functioning. The role for UGC will be limited to disbursement of scholarships and fellowships. This means very silently government is planning to destroy UGC, which is an important institution to keep watch on education institutions. UGC is always seen as a hurdle in the path of private institutions.

Ensuring quality in higher education is one of the major challenges in India. The Draft policy is silent on thousands of the ad hoc/ contact/ guest lecturers teaching in higher education institutions. If we want to really improve the quality of education in India, we need good teachers in large numbers (India is one of the countries having worst student-teacher ratio), all the sanctioned posts in education institutions should be filled immediately

following proper procedure and maintaining transparency. One cannot imagine ensuring the quality of education with temporary (ad hoc, guest, contact etc.) faculty. Draft policy indicates about these issues but is silent on the remedies. The only remedy it suggests for ensuring quality in higher education is the mandatory accreditation of education institutions by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and National Board of Accreditation (NAB). It looks like, for quality improvement, national and global ranking is the only solution. To improve the quality, more emphasis has to be laid on competent faculty, infrastructure, research facility etc. it is also important to check the widespread corrupt practices when it comes to accreditation and assessment of private sector. Draft policy fails to address these issues. In fact, there is no proposed mechanism to monitor and check the private institutions.

On July 27, 2016 HRD minister Sri Prakash Javadekar held a closed door six-hour meeting with the RSS and its affiliates including ABVP to discuss how NEP 2016 could "instill nationalism, pride and ancient Indian values in modern education". Conformism and a slavish mentality bred by indoctrination in a particular ideology is sought to be cultivated through the curriculum. There is a clear attempt to communalise education with vedic world view or vedic education. The attempt is to convert the study of history into study of Hindu mythology and study of the rich Indian philosophy into the study of Hindu theology. It may be remembered here that no education system in the world has ever survived the infusion of ideology. There will be no space for critical reasoning and rigorous examination to arrive at truths or search for alternate avenues of knowledge. This is exactly the conception of knowledge promoted by votaries of the instrumentalist view of commercialized education. The degree holder has to be packaged in a way that conforms to the requirement of the market.

The communalization of education, like the commercialization and commoditization of education generates an anti-democratic socio-political environment in which neo-liberal capitalism flourishes. Strong fascistic tendencies surface in governments that aggressively advocate neo-liberal economic policies.

# UNSUSTAINABLE GROWTH UNDER LIBERALISATION

K.DAVID



Growth during the 2000s was riding on a credit bubble. This kind of growth that liberalisation actually delivered is proving unsustainable. So the belief that growth would remain high for years to come, delivering benefits even to those at the bottom of the income pyramid and those steeped in poverty and deprivation, has revealed itself to be a myth.

Since the “reforms” entailed the opening of the economy to freer cross-border flows of goods and capital, including of finance which is highly mobile and whose sudden outflow can precipitate a financial crisis, the state under a “reform regime” necessarily has to ensure that the “confidence” of the international financiers in the economy remains intact. State policy therefore must always be to their liking.

The “reform regime” creates a state that becomes exclusively concerned with the interests of globalised capital, and the domestic corporate-financial oligarchy aligned with it.

## **Withdrawal of State Support**

A fallout of this is the withdrawal of support by the state from traditional petty production, and hence the unleashing of a crisis in this sector, including in peasant agriculture. Allowing even nationalised banks to renege on providing agricultural credit, so that the peasantry is forced to rely increasingly on a new class of private moneylenders charging exorbitantly high interest rates; the winding up of public extension services; the removal of the insulation from world market price fluctuations that had been provided earlier to the agrarian economy through tariffs and quantitative restrictions; the cuts in public investment in agriculture and irrigation; the running down of agricultural research and development in public institutions; the permission to agribusiness to enter the countryside for a direct, unmediated and unregulated relationship with the peasantry; and the retreat of the government from providing essential services like quality education and health care are some of the

obvious ways in which state support has been withdrawn from this sector.

This has adversely affected the income flow of the peasantry, impaired the profitability of peasant agriculture, reduced its rate of growth, and brought acute distress to the countryside. What is true of peasants is also true of traditional petty producers in general: fishermen, artisans, craftsmen, weavers and others. The income squeeze on the peasants has been accompanied by a taking over of their land for “infrastructure” and “industrial” projects, often at throwaway prices and against their wishes.

## **A Weakened Workforce**

Joblessness does not announce itself as such. The employment rationing it entails takes diverse forms: casual employment, intermittent employment, part-time employment, and disguised unemployment (camouflaged often as “petty entrepreneurship”). These give a misleading picture of the unemployment scenario. But if we take what the National Sample Survey calls “usual status employment”, then between 2004-05 and 2009-10, a period of high GDP growth, such employment grew at 0.8 per cent per annum. This was below the natural rate of growth of the workforce itself, even if we ignore the job-seeking displaced peasants.

This has led to a proliferation of precarious and insecure employment, a burgeoning lumpenproletariat, an immense weakening of the bargaining position even of the unionised workers, and hence to a compression of the per capita real income of the “working people” as a whole, consisting of agricultural labourers, traditional petty producers, and non-white-

collar workers.

A simple statistic confirms this. The percentage of the rural population with food intake below 2,200 calories per person per day (the benchmark for defining rural poverty) was 58.5 in 1993-94; it increased to 68 in 2011-12. Likewise the percentage of the urban population below 2,100 calories per person per day (the benchmark for defining urban poverty) was 57 in 1993-94; it increased to 65 in 2011-12.

What the "reforms" have brought therefore is a process of "primitive accumulation of capital" without the creation of adequate employment opportunities to absorb those who are displaced by it. This has caused a worsening of the conditions of the "working people" as a whole.

### **The Use of Foreign Reserves**

Now, let us turn to the yardsticks most used by the advocates of liberalisation to proclaim its success. The first is economic growth. India, it is argued, has not merely managed to escape from the low-growth trap it was caught in until the 1980s but has managed to sustain and improve on that growth rate. The numbers do seem to support that argument. From annual rates of 4.8 per cent from 1950-51 to 1964-65, 3.4 per cent from 1964-65 to 1974-75 and 4.2 per cent from 1974-75 to 1984-85, the rate of growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) rose to 5.9 per cent from 1984-85 to 1994-95, 7.1 per cent from 1994-95 to 2004-05 and 8.3 per cent from 2004-05 to 2013-14.

The use of foreign reserves as an indicator of success is even more knotty. In the 25 years since 1991, India has recorded a current account deficit on its balance of payments in all but three years. In other words, as a country,

it has been spending more foreign exchange on imports of goods and services than it has earned through the export of goods and services. So, there was no foreign exchange surplus that was being earned. Yet, if India has accumulated a large volume of foreign reserves, it is only because foreign investors and lenders have pumped into the country much more foreign exchange than was needed to finance annual current account deficits.

In fact, the relative share of manufacturing in India's GDP falls far short of what it is in similarly placed countries. In 2010, industry's contribution to GDP stood at 47 per cent in China, 47 per cent in Indonesia, 39 per cent in South Korea, 44 per cent in Malaysia, and 45 per cent in Thailand. In India that contribution was only 27 per cent.

### **Growth under Liberalisation Unsustainable**

Until the 1990s, debt-financed public expenditure played an important role in sustaining growth in India. Even the 1980s were years when large fiscal and revenue deficits on the government's budget shored up demand and drove growth. That came to an end as the government, in return for support from the IMF in 1991, agreed to launch on a trajectory of fiscal consolidation, by limiting the fiscal deficit or the extent of debt-financed spending. This would have proved a major constraint on growth.

In sum, growth during the 2000s was riding on a credit bubble, which had to give. That process seems to have begun. The exposure of the banking system to stressed assets (including both non-performing assets and restructured assets) increased, from 5.9 per cent of gross advances at end-March 2011 to 11.5 per cent by end-March 2016. The engine driving growth has begun to sputter.



The growth bubble had to give in. That process seems to have begun. The exposure of the banking system to stressed assets (including both non-performing assets and restructured assets) increased, from 5.9 per cent of gross advances at end-March 2011 to 11.5 per cent by end-March 2016. The engine driving growth has begun to sputter.

Thus, even the kind of growth that liberalisation actually delivered is proving unsustainable. So the belief that growth would remain high for years to come, delivering benefits even to those at the bottom of the income pyramid and those steeped in poverty and deprivation, has revealed itself to be a myth. Even setting aside issues like the agrarian crisis, the persisting and appalling poverty and deprivation in the country, and increasing loss of economic sovereignty in the face of a literal invasion by foreign capital, neoliberal reform has not delivered.

The natural outcome of liberalisation without government intervention is concentration of industry in one place. This is because in an environment without artificial controls industry will prefer locations that already have an established business presence, apparently because local resources are adequate to sustain the business. Some important resources that matter to industry are consistent power supply, water supply, infrastructure such as roads, availability of finance, and a good local labour pool.

The increasingly uneven growth since the start of liberalisation has had serious consequences such as the creation of extreme concentrations of people in large urban agglomerations; unprecedented pressure on land, making it impossible for most people to afford housing in these cities and urban agglomerations; tremendous growth of slums; shortage of water and electricity; long commute times for people; pollution of the air we breathe; and many other problems.

India's GDP was Rs.6,13,528 crore (at 2004-05 prices) in 1991-92, and in 2013-14 it was Rs.104,72,807 crore—an increase of 2,400 per cent.

### **Country Needs**

#### **Some Planning Mechanism**

Leaders of India's freedom movement had been inspired by the remarkable success of economic growth and social development in the USSR, made possible by socialist planning. The Indian National Congress (INC) constituted a National Planning Committee chaired by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1938. Some idea of the importance of this exercise can be gauged from the fact that between 1938 and the Avadi session of the INC in 1955 the committee met more than 70 times and Nehru

was present at all the meetings but one. The idea of planning for economic development was very much a part of the legacy of our freedom struggle.

The Planning Commission was set up by the Government of India through a resolution dated March 15, 1950.

"...the appointment of a Planning Commission to devote continuous attention to the whole field of development, so far as the Central Government was concerned with it".

The resolution specifically recalled the rights enshrined in the Constitution of India and the Directive Principles of State Policy. It is important to emphasise here that Central planning and Five Year Plans in the Indian context were quite different in their meaning and impact from what was practised in the Soviet Union.

Over the decades, as the compulsions of a capitalist path, led by big business, dictated more and more centralisation of political and economic governance by the Union government, the Planning Commission became, among other things, an instrument to punish recalcitrant State governments and reward the pliant ones. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government seized upon these inequities to get rid of the Planning Commission itself, using the slogan of "cooperative federalism". On August 13, 2014, the Planning Commission was abolished. A Cabinet resolution was passed on January 1, 2015, to replace it with NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India).

A reading of the functions of NITI Aayog, as listed on its website, shows how completely the idea of planning has been abandoned by the NDA regime.

Nevertheless, a country needs some planning mechanism, if only to cope with the challenges posed by the pursuit of neoliberal policies and changes in international economic conditions and relations.

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-Sources: Articles by PRABHAT PATNAIK in *The Hindu*, C.P. CHANDRASEKHAR, SESHADRI KUMAR and VENKATESH ATHREYA in *The Frontline*.

# प्रधानमंत्री की भावरा यात्रा

एन.के.पचौरी



9 अगस्त को प्रधानमंत्रीजी भावरा में थे। भावरा चन्द्रशेखर आजाद का जन्म स्थान है। आजाद एक गांव में पैदा हुए थे जिसका नाम भावरा है। यह गांव आजादी से पूर्व अलीराजपुर रियासत में था। रियासतों के विलय के पश्चात वह मध्य भारत का अंग बना। फिर मध्य भारत व मध्य प्रदेश के विलय के पश्चात वह मध्य प्रदेश में आ गया। इस समय वह मध्य प्रदेश के झाबुआ जिले में है। प्रधानमंत्री के वहाँ जाने का उद्देश्य चन्द्रशेखर आजाद और अन्य क्रान्तिकारियों की कुर्बानियों को याद करना था। लेकिन अपने 30 मिनट के भाषण में प्रधानमंत्रीजी ने आजाद को बहुत ही कम शब्दों में याद किया। हाँ, प्रधानमंत्री और उनकी पार्टी जिस प्रतीकात्मकता में विश्वास रखते हैं, उसका पूर्णतः पालन करते हुए उन्होंने भावरा में चन्द्रशेखर आजाद की विचारधारा के बारे में एक शब्द भी नहीं कहा। क्रान्तिकारियों के बलिदानों की याद करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि उनके जैसे लोग जो आजादी के बाद पैदा हुए हैं वे देश के लिये मर तो नहीं सकते लेकिन जी तो सकते ही हैं। कश्मीर में सुरक्षा बलों द्वारा बुरहान बानी की मृत्यु के पश्चात घाटी में पैदा हुए असंतोष और 70 से भी अधिक नागरिकों के मारे जाने पर भावरा में ही प्रधानमंत्री ने अपनी चुप्पी तोड़ी। लेकिन यहाँ भी वे यह कहते रहे कि जिन हाथों में कलम और लैपटाप होना चाहिये उनमें पत्थर पकड़ा दिये गये हैं। कश्मीर की समस्या को हल करने के लिये भी प्रधानमंत्री कश्मीरी युवाओं को ही दोषी मान रहे थे, तथा इसके लिये पाकिस्तान और अलगाववादी हुरियत नेताओं को जिम्मेदार बता रहे थे। बुरहान बानी की मृत्यु के लगभग एक माह पश्चात प्रधानमंत्री इस विषय पर कुछ बोल रहे थे लेकिन जो बोल रहे थे वह भारतीय जनता पार्टी के कार्यक्रम के अनुरूप ही था अर्थात् इस मुद्दे को पाकिस्तान के साथ संबंधों व हिन्दू-मुस्लिम विवाद के रूप में ही देखा जाना चाहिये।

प्रधानमंत्रीजी 9 अगस्त को भावरा में थे। जहाँ तक मुझे याद पड़ता है, यह दिन न तो चन्द्रशेखर आजाद का जन्म दिन ही था और न उनका बलिदान दिवस। उनके साथ में क्रान्तिकारी दल के सदस्य रहे शिव वर्मा ने अपनी पुस्तक *संस्मृतियाँ* में लिखा है कि आजाद का जन्म 23 जुलाई 1906 सावन सुदी दूज दिन सोमवार के दिन हुआ था। उस पुस्तक में उन्होंने यह भी लिखा है कि 1931 की 28 फरवरी की शाम को मद्रास प्रान्त की राज महेन्द्री जेल में बन्द होने से पहले जेल के एक अधिकारी ने बतलाया कि कल इलाहाबाद के अल्फ्रेड पार्क में पुलिस से लड़ते हुए चन्द्रशेखर आजाद की मृत्यु हो गई। इसका अर्थ यह हुआ कि अग्रेंजी कलेण्डर के अनुसार चन्द्रशेखर आजाद का जन्म दिन 23 जुलाई व बलिदान दिवस 27 फरवरी को पड़ता

है। लेकिन यहाँ फिर शायद प्रतीकात्मकता का सहारा लेकर हिन्दी कलेण्डर के अनुसार प्रधानमंत्री ने अपनी भावरा यात्रा सुनिश्चित की होगी। परन्तु असली सवाल तो उनकी विचारधारा का है जिसे प्रधानमंत्री ने न केवल याद ही नहीं किया वरन वह उस देशभक्ति के बिल्कुल विपरीत है जिसका गुणगान करते हुए प्रधानमंत्री और उनकी पार्टी थकती नहीं है। आजाद के मन में तो पूरी मानव जाति के लिये अपार श्रद्धा व आदर का भाव था। वे उन लोगों में से थे जिन्हें मांस देखकर मासूम बकरे की शक्ल याद आने लगती है। आजाद को हर साथी अपनी आंख की पुतली से भी अधिक प्यारा था।

आजाद सन 1922 में क्रान्तिकारी पार्टी में शामिल हुए थे। इससे पूर्व सन् 1921 में असहयोग आन्दोलन के समय पिकेटिंग के अपराध में जब उन पर मुकदमा चला था और इस बाल सत्याग्रही से मजिस्ट्रेट ने जब यह पूछा था कि उसका नाम क्या है तो उन्होंने उत्तर दिया था आजाद। पिता तथा घर का नाम पूछने पर उन्होंने *स्वाधीनता व जेलखाना* उत्तर दिया था। इससे चिढ़कर उन्हें 15 बँतों की सजा दी गई तो हर बँत पर उन्होंने महात्मा गांधी की जय बोली। तभी से उनको शायद आजाद के नाम से जाना जाने लगा। 9 अगस्त 1925 के दिन काकोरी कांड हुआ था जिसमें सरकारी खजाने को लूटा गया था। जिन सात व्यक्तियों को जंजीर खींचकर गाड़ी रोकने का काम सौंपा गया था उनमें रामप्रसाद बिस्मिल के साथ चन्द्रशेखर आजाद भी थे। अशफाकुल्ला खान, सचीन्द्रनाथ बख्शी व राजेन्द्र लाहिडी उसी रेलगाड़ी के सेकेंड क्लास डिब्बे में सवार हुए थे। इस घटना को सफलतापूर्वक अंजाम दिया गया था जिसके कारण रामप्रसाद बिस्मिल व अशफाकुल्ला खान को फांसी दी गई थी। चन्द्रशेखर आजाद उस क्रान्तिकारी दल के सदस्य थे जिसने बाद में अपना नाम *हिन्दुस्तान समाजवादी प्रजातन्त्र संघ* रख लिया था। उस दल का कहना था कि *अग्रेंजी दासता के विरुद्ध संघर्ष तो हमारे युद्ध का पहला मोर्चा है। अन्तिम लड़ाई तो हमें शोषण के विरुद्ध ही लड़नी पड़ेगी।* धर्म के बारे में इस दल के विचार थे कि *पृथ्वी और इस धरती पर भारत की यह पवित्र भूमि मेरा स्वर्ग है, उस पर विचरण करने वाला हर व्यक्ति, हर इन्सान मेरा पिता है, भगवान है और भगवान को भगवान से लड़ाकर मेरे स्वर्ग को नरक बनाने वाली शक्तियों को समाप्त कर इन्सान को वर्गहीन समाज की ओर, आगे बढ़ाने*

On August 9, PM visited Bhavra in Madhya Pradesh, the birthplace of Chandrashekar Azad, ostensibly to pay tribute to the great patriot, of course, without invoking his revolutionary thinking, as it is diametrically opposite of what the current ruling party at the Centre espouses. Obviously, it was another instance of event management to appropriate the legacy of national liberation movement.

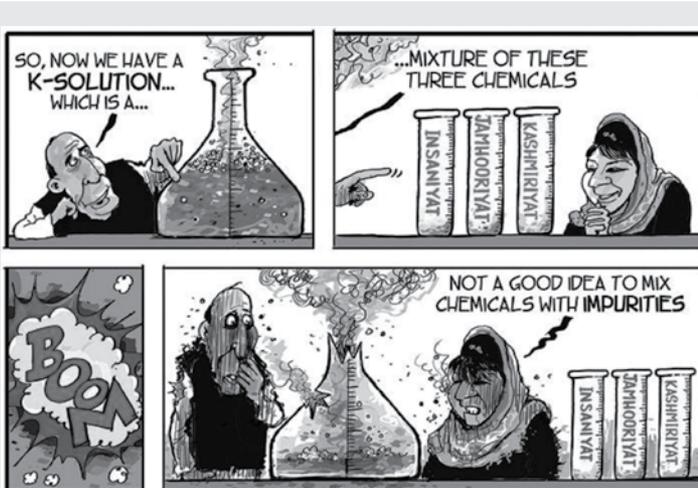
वाला हर प्रयास, हर कदम मेरा धर्म है। ये उस संघ के विचार थे चन्द्रशेखर आजाद जिसके सदस्य थे। ईश्वर के अस्तित्व के बारे में आजाद किसी मत पर नहीं पहुँच पाये थे। ईश्वर की सत्ता से इन्कार करने वाले भगत सिंह का विरोध उन्होंने कभी नहीं किया। अपनी ओर से न तो उन्होंने कभी ईश्वर की वकालत की और न ही उसके पीछे पड़े। क्या प्रधानमंत्री का भी धर्म और ईश्वर के बारे में यही मत है खास तौर पर उस धर्म के बारे में जिसको वे नहीं मानते? चन्द्रशेखर आजाद और प्रधानमंत्री की पार्टी का सांप्रदायिकता, धर्म व क्रान्ति के बारे में रूख एकदम विपरीत है और शायद इसलिये उन्होंने भावरा के अपने भाषण में चन्द्रशेखर आजाद के बलिदानों का तो जिक्र किया, उनकी विचारधारा का नहीं।

चन्द्रशेखर आजाद का जन्म अवश्य भावरा में हुआ था परन्तु उनका कार्य क्षेत्र तो उत्तर प्रदेश था। फिर प्रधानमंत्री 9 अगस्त को भावरा क्यों गये ? शायद इसलिये कि 9 अगस्त का दिन काकोरी कांड की वर्षगांठ था। समाचार-पत्रों की रिपोर्ट है कि प्रधानमंत्री स्वतन्त्रता की वर्षगांठ का पखवाड़े भर का उत्सव मनाने के अवसर पर वहां गये थे। अगस्त का महीना महत्वपूर्ण घटनाओं से भरा पड़ा है। काकोरी कांड के इस महीने में 1942 में एक ओर जहाँ भारत छोड़ो आन्दोलन शुरू हुआ था वहीं 1945 में जापान के नागासाकी व हिरोशिमा शहरों पर पहली

बार अमरीकी परमाणु बमों से हमला किया गया था। प्रधानमंत्री व उनकी पार्टी के इन विषयों पर विचारों से जनता अवगत है। शायद इन सवालों पर अप्रिय स्थिति से बचने एवं अपने प्रकार के राष्ट्रप्रेम का उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करने के लिये ही प्रधानमंत्री ने भावरा की यात्रा की होगी। वैसे प्रधानमंत्री कहीं भी जा सकते हैं और उन्हें देश-विदेश की यात्रा करने का शौक भी है।

लेकिन प्रधानमंत्री ने पूरे एक माह पश्चात कश्मीर पर अपनी चुप्पी तोड़ने के लिये भावरा का ही सहारा लिया। उन्होंने कहा कि कश्मीर में हो रही हिंसा को बंद करने के लिये सरकार बाजपेयी के सूत्र इन्सानियत, जम्मूरियत व कश्मीरियत का इस्तेमाल करेगी तथा सरकार उसी रास्ते पर चलेगी। उन्होंने कहा था कि मैं कश्मीर के भाईयों व बहिनो को चन्द्रशेखर आजाद के इस पवित्र भूमि से बताना चाहता हूँ कि कश्मीर के पास भी वही ताकत है जो हमारे स्वतन्त्रता सेनानियों ने देश के दूसरे हिस्सों को दी थी। कश्मीर के पास भी वही आजादी है जो प्रत्येक भारतीय महसूस करता है।

हम सब इस बात से परिचित हैं कि कुछ ऐतिहासिक कारणों से कश्मीर की अलग स्थिति है। यही कारण है कि भारत के संविधान में कश्मीर के लिये धारा 370 जोड़ी गई थी तथा कश्मीर के लिये अलग संविधान व वजीरे-आजम का प्रावधान किया गया था। परन्तु कश्मीर का यह संविधान व वजीरे-आजम भारत के संविधान व प्रधानमंत्री से ऊपर नहीं थे। और अब धारा 370 को भी तहस नहस कर दिया गया है। भारतीय जनसंघ के संस्थापक श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी ने एक विधान, एक निशान व एक संविधान के नारे के साथ कश्मीर की इस स्थिति का विरोध किया था। भारतीय जनता पार्टी धारा 370 को हटाने की मांग करती रही है और वह उसके चुनाव घोषणापत्र में भी सम्मिलित था। ऐसे में कश्मीर को देश के दूसरे हिस्सों की तरह ही मानना तथा वहां हिंसा के लिये पाकिस्तान को जिम्मेदार ठहरा देना भारतीय जनता पार्टी के हितों के सर्वथा अनुकूल हैं। यही कारण है कि संसद में हुई लम्बी बहस के उपरान्त सरकार द्वारा काफी देर करने के पश्चात 04 सितम्बर को ही सर्वदलीय प्रतिनिधिमंडल कश्मीर में भेजा गया है और वह वहां हो रही हिंसा को पैलेट गनों व सुरक्षा बलों की सहायता से दबाने का प्रयास कर रही है और उसे कानून व व्यवस्था का मुद्दा बना रही है। सरकार यह तो कह रही है कि कश्मीर में मरने वाले लोग अपने ही हैं और उससे देश को नुकसान हो रहा है परन्तु वह ऊल-जलूल बयान भी दे रही है और कश्मीर समस्या को हल करने में जानबूझकर विलम्ब कर रही है। राजनीतिक कारणों से शायद वह यह संदेश देना चाहती है कि कश्मीर राज्य का भारत में विलय करने का प्रथम प्रधानमंत्री नेहरू का तरीका गलत था। सामाजिक व आर्थिक परिवर्तन, क्रान्ति, आजादी, देशप्रेम व कश्मीर के बारे में प्रधानमंत्री व उनकी पार्टी के विचार प्रतिगामी हैं और वे राष्ट्रीय स्वयंसेवक संघ के दृष्टिकोण से प्रभावित हैं।



Cartoon courtesy: Sandeep Adhwarryu, Times of India

## 4<sup>th</sup> Zonal Level Women Employees' Convention of EZIEA

The 4<sup>th</sup> Zonal Level Women Employees' Convention was held on 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 at Mahanayak Mancha, Unnayan Bhawan in Salt Lake, Kolkata. Before commencement of the Convention, the flag of the association was hoisted by Com. Jayanta Mukherjee, General Secretary, EZIEA amidst reverberating slogans. Thereafter, the martyrs' column was garlanded by Com. Chandrasekhar Bose, veteran leader of AIIEA and other zonal leaders.

The opening songs were brilliantly presented by the cultural troupe of Kolkata Suburban Division Insurance Employees' Association. The Presidium was formed of Com. Arpita Roy, Com. Maitreyee Mishra and Com. Khana Chakraborty Barua representing KDLIEA, GDIEA and KSDIEA respectively. The condolence resolution moved by the Presidium was adopted with the observance of one minute silence. Com. Chandrasekhar Bose and Prof. Nandini Mukherjee were felicitated on the dais.

Com. Khana Chakraborty Barua delivered the welcome address on behalf of the host Division, KSDIEA.

Prof. Nandini Mukherjee, in her illuminating speech, highlighted that the doctrine of neo-liberalism has only aggravated the crisis resulting in rampant job losses, sky rocketing price hike, massive corruption, unbearable poverty, dreadful inequality, etc. The widening gap between 'shining' and 'suffering' India is a reflection of this crisis. The Modi Government is being guided by the masterminds of 'Corporate India' and 'RSS nationalism'. She mentioned that female foeticide, women trafficking; violence against women, indecent portrayal of women, honour killings, etc. are increasing leaps and bounds in India by the tacit support of fundamentalists. She also repented that the proportion of women in the services sector is decreasing through the years. She appealed to all present to participate in united movement for the smooth passage of Women Reservation Bill and brighten the surrounding. Being a professor, she expressed serious concern about the state of anarchy prevailing in the education sector of West Bengal.

Com. Chandrasekhar Bose, the legend of insurance employees' movement in India, greeted the Convention and appealed to all female comrades

to come forward and provide leadership to the organization. He proudly reminded the audience that our women members throughout the country are leading our Association in different tiers of the organization.

A brief note was placed by Com. Geeta Pegu in the presence of 202 delegates and observers of the Convention. Sixteen delegates analyzed the note placed in the Convention encompassing the international to local issues and the stand of our Association in regard to these complexities. The delegates categorically stated the inherent strength and weaknesses of the Association.

Com. Jayanta Mukherjee emphatically asserted that according to the call of AIIEA we should actively participate in the struggle against neo-liberalism and defend the nationalized insurance industry. He reminded that the Joint Front, conceptualized by AIIEA, achieved a splendid wage revision by adopting a perfect blend of struggle and strategy. Laying emphasis on protecting and strengthening public sector insurance industry, he requested all present to make the 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2016 strike against neo-liberalism, a massive success.

Summing up the entire discussions, Com. Geeta Pegu appreciated the women comrades for their spontaneous participation in the organizational activities and reiterated to adopt all possible initiatives to make the imminent strike a historic one.

Twenty three resolutions, relating to insurance employees in particular and the working class in general, were unanimously adopted in the Convention.

The new Eastern Zone Women Employees' Coordination Committee with Com. Arpita Roy and Com. Maitreyee Mishra as Joint Convenors was unanimously formed in the Convention.

Com. Maitreyee Mishra, on behalf of the Presidium, vindicated that as women has to play different roles in the society, women comrades should have political consciousness. She stressed that AIIEA's motto is to involve the women comrades in the trade union movement; they should actively participate in the organizational activities.

# 7<sup>TH</sup> WORKING WOMEN CONVENTION OF NCZIEF



The 7th convention of Women Coordination Committee of North Central Zonal Insurance Employees Federation was held on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 at Haldwani in a magnificent way. The Chief Guest of the convention was Com. Indrani Majumdar, General Secretary of Indian Association of Women Studies, New Delhi and Com. Ashok Tiwari, Joint Secretary of AIIEA was the Special Guest. Com. Sanjeev Sharma and Com. Rajiv Nigam, President and General Secretary of NCZIEF respectively also attended the convention.

The convention began amid enthusiastic slogans and floral tributes were paid to the Martyrs' column by leadership and women delegates.

The inaugural session started with a melodious song by Com. Ranjana Pokhriyal and also with a revolutionary welcome song sung by the women comrades of Kanpur and Faizabad division.

Honourable Chief Guest Com. Indrani Majumdar inaugurated the convention. Through power point presentation she highlighted the employment status of women in the liberalization led growth of India. She said that the question of employment is very much crucial for a woman because it gives freedom and security to the lives of the women of our society. But due to globalization and liberalization female work participation rate and share of women in total employment are sharply declining today. She apprehended that 21<sup>st</sup> century would end in a grim situation of women's employment and a further marginalization of women in economy. She suggested that trade unions and women associations of our country should fight for this issue more seriously.

Addressing the open session, Com Ashok Tiwari, Joint Secretary of AIIEA said that the enlightenment of the society is possible through struggles of women. Their endur-

ance and proper understanding can show the society the right path. He called upon the women of organized sectors to constitute a powerful force and take the responsibility to lead the struggle of unorganized women of the country.

Criticizing the economic and anti people policies of NDA-II Govt., Com Rajiv Nigam, General Secretary of NCZIEF explained the significance of 2nd Sept strike. He narrated in detail the challenges confronting the public

sector insurance industry and gave a call to women employees to intensify struggles so as to protect and strengthen the public sectors LIC & GIC.

Com Sanjiv Sharma, President of NCZIEF said in the concluding speech that the seed that had been sown in 2004 for organizing women as an active wing of NCZIEF, has today flourished into a canopy of wide range of activities branching out into many realms of the goal. He congratulated the women comrades for making 2nd Sept strike successful and reported the house about the high participation of women of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh in the nationwide strike of 2nd Sept.

Com. Gita Shant placed a critical evaluation of impact of privatization on women and emphasized the need of struggle against privatization. She criticized the derogatory remarks of different religious fundamentalists on women. Shri P.S. Negi, SDM of Haldwani Division also greeted the convention.

In the delegate session, 18 women participated in the discussion on report presented by Com Gita Shant. The report was unanimously adopted thereafter. The convention unanimously elected Com. Gita Shant as Convenor and Com. Madhu Tiwari, Com Rupa Chakraborty and Com Rani Bala Shah as



Co-Convenors of WWCC of NCZIEF for the ensuing term.

The house adopted 14 resolutions demanding the passing of women reservation bill, strong legal measure against female foeticide and domestic and sexual violence against women, one more pension option, strengthen the public sector insurance industry, maintain the communal harmony in the country etc.

Total 86 women comrades of 12 divisions along with the male comrades including President and Secretary of some divisions attended the convention. Earlier Com. D.K. Pandey, Secretary of BKSHD welcomed the gathering and Com. Manoj Gupta, President of BKSHD proposed vote of thanks.

The host division BKSHD arranged the convention magnificently and made the conference successful.

## 45th Conference of Dharwad Division

**T**he 45th Annual General Conference of Insurance Employees' Union, Dharwad Division was held on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016 at Dharwad. The Conference started with the hoisting of AIIEA flag by Com. A.H. Archak President of IEU, Dharwad amidst raising of slogans by comrades.

Com. Uday Gadagkar, General Secretary extended hearty welcome to the leaders of the Zonal federation, past leaders of IEU, Dharwad, fraternal delegates and all delegates and observers to the conference.

The delegate session commenced with the placing of the Report of the Executive Committee by Com. Uday Gadagkar, General Secretary. The Audited Statement of Accounts were also placed in the house.

Com. P.A. Joseph, General Secretary, IEU, Belgaum and Com. S.R. Bidarkundi, General Secretary, HDRGIEA greeted the conference.

Com. Clement Xavier Das, General Secretary, SCZIEF, greeted the comrades of IEU Dharwad. He informed the house that LIC is the biggest financial institution. LIC is a creation of AIIEA struggles. Struggles launched by AIIEA between 1951 to 1956 forced the then government to nationalise the insurance business in India. History of AIIEA motivates younger comrades to plunge into struggles. In celebrating 60 years of LIC – AIIEA celebrates 60 years of struggles. No success is possible without struggles. AIIEA means success. Door to door campaign launched by AIIEA highlighting the performance of LIC has helped the Corporation in image building and generating new business.

Com. Clement also informed that the present BJP government at the Centre is anti public sector. The NPA of 8 lakhs of the Public Sector Banks is mainly from rich corporates. Nearly 20-22 crores workers are expected to participate in in 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 strike and also urged upon the comrades to take active part in the strike and make the same a grand success.

Com. Md. Mehaboob, Vice President, SCZIEF, also greeted the comrades on the eve of 45<sup>th</sup> Annual General Council. He informed that since 1991 AIIEA is opposing privatisation of insurance sector. Diamond Jubilee year celebrations must be held in all centres. LIC is determined to implement TMP- But AIIEA is stoutly opposing it and is determined to protect the interest of the employees. Recruitment is the only solution to staff shortfalls in branch centres. He also dealt in detail about Biometric, MBA recognition etc.

Com. J. Suresh, Jt. Secretary, SCZIEF while addressing the house greeted the participants on the occasion of 45th Annual General Council of IEU, Dharwad. He also informed that LIC will not be benefited by implementing the TMP. Since last two wage revisions this issue is being discussed and AIIEA will definitely protect the interest of the employees. He also clarified some issued raises by the comrades during the discussion on the report.

13 comrades from Branch Units participated in the discussion on the report. Com. Uday Gadagkar replying to the debate appealed to the comrades to strengthen the union at all levels. The report of the Executive Committee and Statement of Accounts have been unanimously adopted by the house.

Com. R.H. Ayi, Vice-President, Dharwad District CITU, informed the house about political situation prevailing in the country and struggles launched by CITU and left parties and urged upon comrades to take active part jointly with democratic and progressive associations at all centres to make the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 strike a grand success.

The house unanimously elected Com. A.H. Archak, Com. U.M. Gadagkar and Com. V.K. Kagineelli as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively for the coming year.

The conference successfully concluded with a vote of thanks by Com. A.H. Archak, President, IEU.

# 9<sup>th</sup> Conference Bhubaneswar DLIEA

The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual General Conference of BDLIEA was held at Balugaon hosted on 10-11 Sept'2016 . Kudos to the valiant comrade of Balugaon Base Unit for their all around endeavour to the true spirit of AIIEA leaving no stone unturned in arranging the conference amidst boundless enthusiasm. The critical analysis of the past and present situation including a marathon discussion on wage revision laid a roadmap for the organization in charting out the tasks ahead of the insurance employees.

## THE INAUGURAL SESSION:

At the outset, the Red flag of BDLIEA was unfurled by Com. Chandra Mohan Haibru, President of our Association. Then, floral tributes were offered to the martyr's column. The conference began with welcome address by Prof. Bijoy Kumar Nanda, noted academician and Chairperson of the Reception Committee. Com. Shreekanta Mishra, General Secretary, ECZIEA, while inaugurating the conference, discussed in details about the multi dimensional challenges confronted by Indian working class after taken over of rule by the BJP led NDA govt and political opportunism of BJP in respect of FDI hike in Insurance Industry from 26% to 49%. He clarified that this govt. is working for the corporate and not for masses. Com. S.B.Pattanaik, General Secretary BDLIEA presented the annual report on behalf of the working committee and Com. A.K.Mohanty, Treasurer also placed the audited accounts for the corresponding period. Initiating discussion on the report Com. B.B.Nayak, Organising Secretary presented a vivisection of the burning issues of our nation after an ultra right, reactionary political outfit like the BJP assumed office securing only 31% of total votes polled in the 16<sup>th</sup> General election.

## RALLY & OPEN SESSION:

In the afternoon a colorful rally largely participated by women comrades, passing through the roads of Balugaon, in a very humid weather reflected the confidence employees reposed in AIIEA. The rally was followed by open session which was organized in the premises of Hotel Digantika, Balugaon. A large number of gathering including a galaxy of leaders on the dais surpassed every meetings of BDLIEA. The speakers were eloquent against the grievous attack on the democratic right, on existence of public sector industries, on amendment of labour laws and communal polarisation, etc. and critical of government taking a pro-imperialist stand reposing their commitment towards LPG policies which was



followed by the previous UPA government. Among the leaders who spoke were Com. Shreekanta Mishra, General Secretary ECZIEA, Prof. Bijoy Kumar Nanda, Chairperson, Reception Committee, Sri S.Hansda, Sr.D.M., Bhubaneswar Division, Com.R.N.Mallick, Joint Convenor, OSKEM, Com. Dushmant Das, Jt.Convenor, OSKEM, Com. A.P.Meher, Gen.Secy, BDIEA and Com.Abhay Kumar Das, Org.Secy. CDIEA, Cuttack. The session called for preparing for impending struggles particularly against the anti-people pro-capitalist and communal policies of the present NDA government. Com. S.R.Sahu, Vice-President, BDLIEA, offered vote of thanks.

## DELEGATE SESSION:

On 11<sup>th</sup> morning the delegate session resumed thought provoking deliberation of leaders from all 11 base units expressed their organizational maturity in carrying forward the task assigned by AIIEA. Com. Shreekanta Mishra, Gen.Secy, ECZIEA, while addressing the delegate session explained in detailed about the development in the industry, wage revision and gave a call to carry forward the campaign and struggle to protect the industry and to consolidate the organisation by giving 4% levy on the arrears of the wage revision. Com. T.,Dora, Gen.Secy, SDLIEA, while addressing the delegate session, explained very lucidly about the beauty of wage revision. The conference adopted 16 resolutions. Com.S.B.Pattanaik, General Secretary summed up the debate. The conference also decided to remit Rs.50,000/- to the All India Conference of CITU to be held at Puri in the month of Nov'2016. The conference took a firm decision to protect the public sector LIC and four General Insurance Companies from the attacks of government and the imperialistic forces. The conference unanimously elected Com. C.M.Haibru, Com. S.B.Pattnaik and Com. A.K.Mohanty as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

## 22<sup>nd</sup> CONFERENCE OF IEU BELAGAVI

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual General conference of Insurance Employees' Union, Belagavi division, held on 14-15, August 2016, at Jamkhandi, was a grand success, both in terms of participation and content.

A rally was organised to herald the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Conference of Insurance Employees' Union, Belagavi division. As scheduled the members of the union from 15 base units assembled at Desai circle for the rally; most of them wore red attire, the colour of universal empathy which the AIIEA represents. Women comrades, wearing crimson red sarees and dresses, were in the forefront, followed by men comrades with their base unit banners. The rally was led by the leadership of SCZIEF and divisional union.

The rally converged in front of the venue where the flag of AIIEA was unfurled by Com G.V.Kulkarni, President amidst thunderous slogans. Thereafter the leadership, followed by the members, paid floral tributes to the martyrs column and to the departed founding-fathers of the organisation.

**INAUGURAL SESSION :** Basava Bhavan, the venue of the conference, decorated with banners and bunting of the union, wore a festive and inviting look. The inaugural conference formally commenced with Com. A.Y.Janmatti, Secretary, Base unit, Jamkhandi, inviting the leadership to the dais, and Com.G.V.Kulkarni extending the welcome address followed by the all-women choir team of IEU, Belagavi rendering the revolutionary song of unity.

Com. K. Venugopal Rao, President, SCZIEF, while inaugurating the conference complimented the members for the wonderful conduct of the conference and diligently implementing all the calls of the higher tiers of the organisation. His hour-long exhaustive address covered issues affecting the working class in general and LIC employees in particular. The fall-out of the global financial crisis of 2008, the impact of Brexit on other countries, the care and the due diligence the AIIEA leadership took in clinching a wonderful wage revision were the main subjects of his discourse. While exhorting the members to be vigilant and be wary of the government's machination to marginalise public sector insurance, he advised the members to make the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016, All India strike a total and compressive success.

Com. J. Suresh, Joint secretary, SCZIEF, spoke extensively on the present political situation, the divisive politics of communalism and casteism, the



prevailing industrial scenario and also the issue of CGIT. Com. Uday Gadagkar, General Secretary, Insurance Employees' Union, Dharwad, while greeting the conference, urged the members to always associate with the activities of the union. Sri V. P.Gaitonde, Branch Manager, Jamkhandi branch narrated his association with the organisation. The inaugural session concluded with vote of thanks by Com. P.A.Joseph, General Secretary, IEU- Belagavi, followed by a revolutionary song rendered by choir team of Belagavi.

**DELEGATE SESSION :** The delegate session commenced with the presentation of the report of the executive committee by Com. P.A.Joseph, followed by the statement of accounts for the year ending 31.12.2015 by Com. K.N.Aparna, Treasurer, IEU- Belagavi. 19 comrades from various base units spoke on the report giving their inputs on various issues including the problems in their respective branch offices. Intervening in a delegate session, Com. Mehboob, Com. J.Suresh and Com. K.Venugopal Rao made their submissions clarifying many of the doubts raised by the members.

Delegate session concluded with Com.P.A.Joseph, replying to the issues raised by the members. Thereafter Com.D.S.Kulkarni, Vice-president, IEU-Belagavi moved the resolutions for the approval of the house which were unanimously approved. Resolutions included issues on early recruitment in LIC, curtailing price rise, workers participation in management, collective bargaining right, recognition to AIIEA, opposing Transfer & Mobility Policy, solution to water dispute of Kalasa Banduri, additional guest house at Belagavi, absorption of CGIT employees as directed by the Supreme court and opposing disinvestment of public sector General Insurance Companies.

Com. G.V.Kulkarni, Com. P.A.Joseph and Com. K.N.Aparna, were elected as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The conference concluded on a note of optimism with the resolve to strengthen the divisional union, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

# 10th Conference of Kharagpur Division IEA

The 10<sup>th</sup> conference of KDIEA, Eastern Zone was held on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016 at Com. Gorachand Bose Nagar, Com. Purna Chandra Chakraborty Mancha, Kharagpur. Com. Asim Kumar Misra, President of KDIEA hoisted the flag of KDIEA amidst THUNDEROUS SLOGANS in presence of leadership of EZIEA, President of CITU, Paschim Medinipur Dist. Committee, Jt Convenor of 12<sup>th</sup> July committee, Leadership of the Agent Organisations and delegates and observers of the conference. More than 130 delegates and observers from all 11 bases participated in the conference.

The inaugural session began with the speech of Com. Ramkrishna Dutta, vice president of EZIEA. In his inaugural address Com Dutta dealt with all important developments in the international and national arena. He placed before the house the efforts of the AIIEA securing a very good wage revision in the most difficult political situation. He also expressed the anti-worker and anti people policies of the Modi government and the importance of 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 2016 nation wide Industrial strike in India. He explained in details the socio political situation prevailing in the country and how the Modi govt. is making all out attempts to impose its communal agenda on the people and dividing the unity of people threatening the secular fabric of our country. He appealed to the insurance employees to make a success of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 strike taking lead in carrying out massive campaign amongst the people.

Com. Kali Nayek, President, CITU and a veteran trade union leader in his address, congratulated the insurance employees led by AIIEA to defend LIC as well as other public sectors. He requested our leaders to work more for the unorganised people who are more victims of the neo-liberal policy.

Com. Gangadhar Barman, Jt Convenor of the 12<sup>th</sup> July Committee express his anxiety about the danger of the central govt. and state govt. led by Modi and Didi and the very danger to democracy.

Com. Chandan Ghoshal, Secretary, Vidyasagar Bank Staff Union, discussed the present scenario of Banking sector

and how the Govt. is trying to weaken the industry.

The representatives of the Agents' Organisation (LICAOI & LIAFI) also expressed their anxiety about the rapid termination of agent and imposing the terms and condition in their profession. They also said that it is difficult to organise the agent and need cooperation of AIIEA. Com. Gopal Das, General Secretary of Howrah Division Insurance Employees' Association, also greeted the conference.

Com. Debasish Chatterjee, General Secretary of KDIEA placed the annual report before the conference. About 14 delegates including 1 women comrade participated in the discussion over the report. Discussion was mainly on present national, state and industrial scenario. Most of the speakers called all present to make the 2<sup>nd</sup> September strike a massive one. The General Secretary in his replying speech congratulated all the bases for their cooperation to implement the activities in this adverse situation. He also narrate the political situation of West Bengal specially in Paschim Medinipur is very undemocratic and it was very difficult to carry out the trade union activities. But still it is our great achievement to proceed towards 10<sup>th</sup> successful years since 2007.

The conference unanimously elected Com Asim Kr Misra, Com. Tarun Kanti Biswas and Com. Debadatta Mahapatra as Divisional President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively for the ensuing term.



## ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF SATARA DIVISION

The annual conference was held at Satara on 28th August 2016. It was presided by Com. Sanjay Chavan. The venue was named as Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Bhavan. The conference was attended by more than 80 members including good number of women comrades. Tributes were paid to Com. Peter Seegar by Singing "Hum honge kamyab". The proceedings of open session were conducted by joint Secretary Com. Milind Waghmare.

Com. C.R.Tiwari, Joint Secretary Wziea while inaugurating the conference appealed to the house for making 2nd Sept 2016 Strike and WZIEA 21st conference successful. Com. Narendra Phadke, G.S. Kolhapur Div. Union and Com. Nandkumar Jagade, G.S. Pune II, Div. Union, greeted the conference.

Com. Vasant Nalawade, President WZIEA, was Chief guest. He dealt with social, political, organizational issues & explained the rationale of Nationwide strike.

Com. S.Y.Bhujbal, General Secretary, placed the report in the house. The report and social activities undertaken by union were appreciated by the delegates. While summing up the discussions he proposed to take out jatha from Satara to Nasik from



16th Sept 2016. Com. D.E.Sapkal treasurer placed the annual accounts in the house. The report and statement of accounts were accepted unanimously.

The conference decided to arrange Jattha Campaign from 16 to 19 Sept. 2016 on the eve of 21st WZIEA Conference.

Com. Sanjay Chavan, Com. S.Y.Bhujbal and Com. D.E.Sapkal were elected as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of LICPA Coimbatore

The 10<sup>th</sup> biennial conference of LIC Pensioners Association, Coimbatore, was held on 28/08/2016. About 250 members (including 20 family pensioners) attended the General Body meeting. Comrade E.M. Joseph, former Vice-President, South Zone Insurance Employees Federation, Chennai and Comrade K. Natarajan, Vice-President, All India Insurance Pensioners Association, apprised the members of important events in Insurance Industry, especially those which are likely to affect the pensioners. Comrade E.M. Joseph inaugurated the conference and explained about the challenges faced by the LIC pensioners and explained how the purchasing power and the saving capacity of people is slowly dwindling over the years, thanks to the so-called anti-people financial reforms of the governments in power, eroding the money value and pushing the people to the brink of bankruptcy. He said that at this rate a stage might come when people would be left in the lurch unless they mobilize a powerful movement against the anti-people attitude of the Government.

Comrade K. Natarajan elaborately spoke on the many aspects of the petition which has been filed

against the Union Government, Chairman, LIC of India, Mumbai and Zonal Manager, LIC of India, North Zonal office, New Delhi and how the Union Government is attempting to scuttle the hard won benefits now enjoyed by LIC pensioners and exhorted the members to remain united and take part in all the activities of the Association, so that we can be hopeful of winning over the demands which we have placed before the judicial forum.

Two of our senior most comrades were honoured by us in their residences. One of them, Comrade A. Mukunda Varier, is now aged 90+ and another comrade, K.R. Ganapathi, is also now aged 90+. Our Secretary and other members went to their residences, honoured them with shawls and had a lively discussion with them. A flex banner, containing the photographs taken on the occasion of honouring these two comrades, was exhibited in the conference hall and the viewers felt very happy about such a gesture from the union.

37 members, who are aged 75 or more, were specially honoured with shawls by comrades K. Natarajan and E.M. Joseph, which was appreciated by all.

## 4th Women's Convention of Thrissur Division



Thrissur Division had its fourth Women's Convention on Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2016 on the premises of Divisional Office, Thrissur.

Com.Ajitha Jayarajan, Worshipful Mayor of Thrissur Corporation inaugurated the Convention. She appealed to the womenfolk to do whatever possible to lift the women who are left behind socially and economically. The empowerment of women through the participation in the activities of the civic bodies has boosted their morale as they have got the

recognition both socially and politically.

The key-note address was rendered by Com.T K Anandi, working committee member of Kerala Sastra Sahitya parishad. Due to the unrelenting struggles waged by women imbining the spirit engendered by the communist movement in Kerala, women can now stand on their own. Neoliberalism has objectified the women. The invasion of informal labour practice into the industries where organized sector had thrived now see more and more workers are being pushed to the margin of the society and the women bore the brunt of it, she pointed out.

Com.K.R Vini, Convenor of the women's sub committee presented the report and in the ensuing discussions 12 comrades participated. Com.M Rajeev, Vice President SZIEF greeted the Convention.

The meeting was presided over by Com. C Anitha, Jt. Secretary, LICEU, Thrissur Division. Com. Rekha R Prabhu, Jt. Secretary, LICEU Thrissur Division welcome the gathering and Com.Baby Antony of Branch Unit 1, Thrissur proposed Vote of thanks.

## PFI INAUGURATED AT RAJAPALAM

The People for India Forum was inaugurated at Rajapalayam on 18<sup>th</sup> of August 2016. This programme was marked by the presence of over 150 comrades from various trade unions across the city. This Special Meeting was presided over by Com. R. Veyilumuthu, ICEU, Rajapalayam. Com. G. Saraswathi welcomed the gathering. The leaders Mr. M. Rakkappan, Branch Manager, LIC of India, Mr. S. Raju, Vice President, NFIFWI and Mr. M. R. Venkatnarayanaraja, Preseident, LICAIOI delivered address in the grand inauguration function. Mr. N.P. Rameshkannan, General Secretary delivered Introductory Address. He highlighted that quarter century of globalisation policies in the country has created disaster to the people and that the growth of the nation has not reflected in the livelihood of the vast majority of the people. The bandage industry of Rajapalayam area is quite popular across the world and that it is in acute crisis today. We need to fight for the recovery and effective functioning of bandage industry This forum would function in the days ahead to protect the interest of the nation as well as the welfare of the people Mr. VM. Thirupathichelvan,

Correspondent of VM. Primary School has been elected as the Chairman of People For India Forum, Rajapalayam. While he was delivering his Special Address, he remarked that this Forum would undertake numerous social welfare activites in that region and resolved to plan for the same He pointed that we need to fight unitedly to restore humanism being lost in the process of implementation of neo-liberal policies A resolution was passed to bring life to the bandage industry, to encourgae higher yield of mangoes, to ensure world peace, people's unity and protection of the nation. This successful programme came to an end with vote of thanks proposed by Com. R. Salim Batcha (ICEU, Rajapalayam) .



## SEMINAR AT KARIMNAGAR

### On 25 Years of Economic Liberalisation in India

A seminar on "25 Years of Economic Reforms in India- Impact on the working class" was organized by ICEU, Karimnagar Division on 23.08.2016 at Town hall, Karimnagar under the banner of United Employees Forum. The seminar was conducted as a prelude to 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 nationwide strike. Prof. Kodandaram, Chairman, T-JAC attended the seminar as the main speaker, while Com. K.Venugopal Rao, President, SCZIEF presided over the seminar. Welcoming the gathering of around 400, Com. A.Rammohan Rao, General Secretary, ICEU, Karimnagar division has explained the background in which the seminar is being held. The strike preparatory activities of the employed class in the town were also briefed by him. Speaking in the seminar, Com. K.Venugopal Rao criticized the anti national, anti working class attitude of the NDA government in the disguise of Swadeshi rule. The aggressive pursuance of FDI policies in Defence, Insurance and other key sectors is complete reversal of his stand prior to General elections.

Prof. Kodandaram speaking in the seminar narrated the social and economic transformation witnessed in the independent India. Though change is essential for development of any society, reforms in the name of development are creating huge inequalities for the past 25 years. A growth model where poor, marginalized sectors and the working class are deprived of their basic rights cannot be



sustained for long. He felt that the new economic liberalization policies introduced in 1990s were at the behest of international capitalists. In the due course of time, the elected governments have started to withdraw themselves from the welfare state. In spite of several examples of devastated economies of various countries, our governments are trying to pursue the same policies. While complimenting the working class of the town for their spirited involvement in the forthcoming strike and struggles, he reiterated that Telangana movement was successful because of sustained struggles. On behalf of Telangana Joint Action Committee Prof. Kodandaram expressed solidarity to the general strike. Com. Raja Rao, Vice President, CITU, Telangana has detailed the 12 charter of demands which have force the working class of the country to go for the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 strike. Com. V.Rajender, President, ICEU, Karimnagar division has appealed to all middle class , working class organizations of the town to involve their cadres actively to make the strike action a thumping success. Around 400 members from medical representatives union, electricity workers, BSNL, RTC and other trade unions participated in the seminar. Members of ICEU, DO unit, Branch-I, Branch- II, Karimnagar and surrounding branches attended the seminar.

## ONE EMPLOYEE – ONE POLICY MOVEMENT IN TIRUNELVELI

To celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday of LIC of India meaningfully, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Divisional Conference of Tirunelveli Division took a decision to give atleast one policy by the members of ICEU, Tirunelveli Division. As per this call of ICEU , Tirunelveli Division all comrades took one policy on 01.09.2016. This impressive decision made some others also to take policy on that day. Finally 470 policies were enrolled on that day in Tirunelveli Division which has 433 ICEU members. The Class-I, and II also joined with us to make the event very success. In all Branch centres and Divisional office our members submitted the proposal papers to the concerned officials in the Insurance week inaugural function. This policy move-

ment was well appreciated by all the fraternal trade unions and the officials and also it give a great hope to the marketing forces to achieve their goal.



# Diamond Jubilee Year of LIC observed in Delhi



The Diamond Jubilee Year of our beloved institution, Life Insurance Corporation of India, was celebrated with full enthusiasm in Delhi Division-1 during Insurance Week. On 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016 a lecture on "Role of AIIEA in formation and protection of LIC" was organized at Jeevan Prakash Building with an aim to refresh historic battles launched and won by AIIEA in defence of LIC. The Chief Guest and main speaker of the occasion was Com. A K Bhatnagar, General Secretary NZIEA.

After lighting the lamp, Com. Bhatnagar dealt with the subject very beautifully. He referred to the movements of AIIEA for nationalization of insurance industry; for standardization of wages; to defeat the move to split LIC into 5 corporations; against opening up of insurance industry, IRA/IRDA Bills and since 1991 against the moves of the contemporary governments to weaken LIC etc. He said "history

of LIC is inseparable from the history of AIIEA" and "protection of LIC is the ideological commitment of AIIEA". He said LIC has fulfilled its every commitment towards the nation and people of this country since its inception. Narrating the financial strength of LIC, he congratulated the dedicated workforce, the field force and more importantly our valued policyholders for their faith in the Corporation. He exhorted the comrades to be in readiness to fight the onslaught of the capitalist forces.

The Guests of honour, Com. M L Setiya, President AIIPA & Com. ID Goel, General Secretary LICPA Delhi; Com. Rameshwar Dayal, Chief Treasurer NZIEA; Com. V P Arora, President, Com. Rajesh Kumar, Vice President of NZIEA Delhi-I; Com. Rajinder Singh Rawat & Com. Bimla Devi, Executive Members of JP & NZO Branch Committee respectively also lighted the lamp on the occasion. The Secretariat Members of NZIEA stationed at Delhi and Members of Secretariat of Pensioners' Association also graced the occasion.

The policyholders present at the occasion were also honoured by General Secretary NZIEA for reposing their faith in LIC. The meeting was conducted by Com. Naveen Chand, Divisional Secretary & presided over by Com. V P Arora, President of the organization. The photographs of the event are attached.

## Blood Donation Camp organized by IEA Jamshedpur Division

A Blood Donation Camp was organized by IEA Jamshedpur Division on 24.08.2016 at Jeevan Prakash Bhawan, Bistupur, Jamshedpur in the memory of Com. Saroj Choudhuri. Sr. Div. Manager of LIC of India, Jamshedpur Division Sri Ratnakar Patanaik has inaugurated the camp. In his address he said that AIIEA is always working for the betterment of the society throughout the country and appreciated IEAJD for organizing the blood donation camp. He also throw light on the need of blood donation. Com. Ganesh Lal, President IEAJD paid homage to com. Saroj Choudhuri and in his address he said that com. Choudhuri had always worked for the upliftment of the society. Com. Amit Maity, Gen

Secretary, said that the IEAJD is organizing the Blood donation camp every year as a duty to serve the society. He also mentioned that IEAJD is organizing the camp for the last 24 years. He appealed all the people to come forward and generously participate in the blood donation programme. IEAJD has also felicitated Sri Subir Kundu, Sri K.V.Rao and Sri Saugat Pal who has donated blood for more than 100 times.



A large number of Employees, Dev. Officers, Officers and agents of LIC, along with employees of General Insurance Sector and Banks and their relatives and friends have enthusiastically participated in the programme. 182 units of Blood were collected at this camp.

# INSURANCE NEWS IN BRIEF

- \* **I**ndian reinsurer, General Insurance Corporation of India, figures at 12<sup>th</sup> position in Top 25 Global Non-Life Reinsurers.
- \* **I**CICI Prudential Life Insurance Company will be the first insurance company to get listed in the market and will be the 5th largest IPO in the domestic market. ICICI Bank, which owns 68 per cent stake in the company, will sell 12.65 per cent stake (over 181 million shares) in the IPO to raise Rs.6057 crore. The embedded value of the company stood at Rs. 13,939 crore as on March 31, 2016, and net profit was Rs.1,653 crore.
- \* **T**he value of LIC's total equity investments as of March 2016 was Rs 5,95,389 crore. Due to its shares in top five automobile companies - Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Hero MotoCorp and Bajaj Auto alone, LIC has become richer by Rs.10000/- crores during the first five months of this fiscal year.
- \* **A**s the deadline, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016, for issuing electronic policies is fast approaching, insurance companies and repositories are gearing up. Electronic policies will be issued to those who pay Rs.10,000 or more as premium annually. These electronic policies, issued and digitally signed by an insurer, are the document evidence of a contract. Policyholders will also get a hard copy. Many life insurers have tied-up with repositories, while LIC and other big insurers have launched their own repositories.
- \* **E**ven while receiving a dividend of Rs. Rs 2,501.76 crore for the year 2015-16 from LIC, the Union Finance Minister makes a double-edged statement - "If you were a company listed on the stock exchanges, you would perhaps be the most-valuable company in the markets of the country and one of the most formidable ones in the world". On the one hand he praises LIC and on the other he hints at the huge amount that the government will get if the shares of LIC are placed on shelves of the market.
- \* **A**t a time when the net profit of the life insurance industry showed a negative figure on year to year basis as at 31-03-2016 LIC recorded a 38% growth in the net profit. The total of net profit of all life insurance companies reduced to Rs.7460 crores as at the end of March 2016 from Rs.7590 crore. This drag-down of net profit was due to the loss suffered by most of the private insurance companies, which came down from Rs 5,787 crore in the previous year to Rs 4,892 crore in 2015-16. LIC's net profit for the same period rose by 38%, from Rs.1824 crore to Rs.2518 crore, with the total valuation surplus being Rs.50360 crore.
- \* **T**he cumulative new business during April-August of life insurance industry in India rose by 29.6 per cent to Rs 59,468.75 crore. LIC's business till August 2016 increased to Rs 44,045.69 crore of 6596399 policies and the private life insurers clocked a cumulative new business premium of Rs 15,423 crore for 1960316 policies. Market share of LIC based on new business premium touches 74 per cent while that on the basis of number of policies reached 77 per cent.
- \* **N**o to low returns. Private insurance companies await a revision in rate of premium of Pradhan Mantri Jan Suraksha schemes. Seeing a large number of claims, the private insurance companies are on a wait for a revision in the premium.
- \* **T**he reinsurance industry, else where in the world, needs to innovate and become more efficient. It is facing more risk, but premiums are declining. Some of its products have become hop-worn and less relevant. Competitive pressures are immense. The reinsurance industry's expense ratio has risen 4.1 percentage points since 2011. Rates for traditional reinsurance have fallen for four straight years and may continue to slide in 2017. Reinsurers are trying to convince customers to choose coverage designed for the specific risks they face instead of more standardized plans because of oversupply. Weak profitability is likely to leave more reinsurers worldwide vulnerable to takeovers, reinvigorating mergers and acquisition activity. Reinsurers, forced to cut prices are hunting for preys. And most easily found are the brokers. Brokers are being asked to cut down their profit margins.
- \* **A** report titled "Advancing into the Golden Years – Cost of Healthcare for Asia Pacific's Elderly," compiled by Asia Pacific Risk Center, which aims to analyze key risks facing industries and governments in Asia states that the Asia Pacific region is aging at a faster rate than any other region in the world. Key stakeholders, including governments, insurers and individuals, are not fully prepared from a financing, infrastructure, and workforce perspective for the escalating costs of caring for more than 200 million additional elderly citizens in the region.

**A.M.KHAN, DHARWAD**

## ECONOMIC TID BITS

- \* The European Union has imposed a fine of Euro 13 billion (US\$ 14.5 billion) on US Tech giant Apple for evading taxes, and if the interest is taken in to account the amount due to Irish Government would be 19 billion pounds. As of 2016, Ireland is the head quarters for over half of the World's top 25 banks and half of the top 20 Insurance Companies. It is estimated that the Euro 13 billion tax due from Apple is distributed to Irish citizen (man, woman and child) everyone would get Euro 2500. It would also cover the cost of Ireland's annual health care budget of 4.5 million people, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the social welfare budget or 20 new hospitals.
- \* BHP Billiton, the world's largest mining company has reported a loss of US\$ 6.4 billion for the year 2015-16, second largest for an Australian listed firm. Iron ore prices crashed from \$190 a tonne in early 2011 to below \$40 earlier this year. The rate is currently \$60 now which Citi bank says is not sustainable. Likewise, Crude oil dropped more than 75% from US \$125 to US \$30 a barrel over a period of five years since 2011 and now at \$50, which is also expected to come down due to excess supply.
- \* According to a report titled "Britain in the Red" commissioned by Trade Union Congress(TUC) and major public sector union, UNISON, in 2015 almost half of the UK population had some form of unsecured debt. At the end of 2015, 3.2 million households or 7.6 million people were over indebted, increase by 28% since 2012. This means one in eight UK households are over indebted. Also 1.6 million households are in "extreme debt", and 1.2 million low-income households are estimated in extreme debt, spending almost 40% of their income for debt repayment. The student loan debt has grown from 15 billion pounds in 2004 to 86 billion pounds at the end of 2015.
- \* According to a report of Federal Employment Ministry, in Germany 60% of workers regularly work longer than required by their labour contracts. Almost every fourth employee works more than 45 hours per week and every sixth employee works more than 48 hours, and 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of these workers are not paid any overtime. According to the report, last year 997 million paid and 816 million unpaid overtime hours coming to a total of 1.8 billion hours of work by workers. According to another report by Labour Ministry, around 6% of 65 years old or almost a million people have mini-jobs which is 22% more than 2010. The number of those aged over 75 who have mini jobs has risen 57% since 2010.
- \* The unemployment of USA is at 4.9%. In the month of August 14000 jobs are lost in USA in manufacturing sector, and 4000 jobs in mining and 6000 in construction sector. The wage growth since 2008 crisis remain suppressed in USA. Hourly wages for private sector workers in USA have risen by three cents in August and by 2.4% during the last one year. The labour participation rate fell from 62.8% June to 62.7% in August, which is lowest since last 70's. According to a report by Centre for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) the labour force participation rate amongst men aged between 25 and 60 has plummeted from 98% in 1958 to a mere 88% today.
- \* According to a report, in USA between 2005-2013 the income bracket with the largest increase for Black households occurred in the number of households earning over US\$ 2,00,000 with an increase of 138% compared to an increase of 74% for the total population. In 1960, in USA there were 25 black millionaires registering a growth of 1400 times. According to the Pew Research Study, 35% of black households have negative or no net worth and another 15% have less than \$6000 in total household worth. Nearly 7 million of the 14 million black households have little or nothing. A black family in the top 1% is worth staggering 200 times of an average black family in USA.
- \* According to a report, in USA in 2015 12.7% of households were not having enough food to eat. Among these 40 million people struggling for food, 6.8 million people were in the age group of 10 to 17, including 2.9 million who have very low food security.

**J.SURESH, MYSORE**

# WORKING CLASS STRUGGLES

## **Hong Kong domestic workers demonstrate**

Hundreds of domestic helpers, joined by 500 foreign maids, marched in central Hong Kong on 4<sup>th</sup> Sept. calling for wage and meal allowance increases and safer working conditions. The protest followed the death of several maids who fell from tower blocks when they were forced to clean outside windows. Domestic workers want the government to ban employers from asking maids to clean outside windows and for their minimum monthly wage to be raised from \$HK4,119 to \$5,000 (\$US644) and meal allowances lifted to \$HK1,600 from \$995 a month.

## **Pakistan Abbottabad doctors at the government strike over pay**

Doctors -run Ayub Teaching Hospital in Abbottabad walked out on an indefinite strike on September 1 to demand overdue wages. The hospital's outpatient department was closed and only emergency services provided. Rallies and a sit-in protest were carried out within hospital premises during the strike.

The striking doctors said that their 10 percent salary increase and health practice allowance had not been paid since July and that 240 medical house officers had not been paid for two months. They also demanded accommodation facilities and proper security.

## **Melbourne and Brisbane workers protest against brewery sackings and wage cuts**

Thousands of workers marched in the central business districts (CBDs) in Melbourne, Victoria and Brisbane, Queensland on 8<sup>th</sup> September to denounce Carlton United Breweries' termination of 55 maintenance workers in a dispute over a wage cut. Traffic came to a standstill during the marches.

## **South Australian Catholic school teachers strike**

Thousands of teachers at Catholic schools in South Australia stopped work for the afternoon on 8<sup>th</sup> September in a dispute over a proposed work agreement. The action, by members of the Independent Education Union, followed an industrial campaign that began with wearing of t-shirts and short stoppages at primary and high schools. The teachers have accepted a new pay offer of a 2.5 percent annual increase over the next three years but want a cut in student contact time of 1.5 hours each week to bring them into line with public sector teachers.

## **Brazilian bank employees strike for better salaries, benefits, working conditions**

Public and private bank workers walked off the job on

September 7 in 21 of Brazil's 27 states. The striking workers rejected the bank management federation Fenaban's offer of 6.5 percent, less than half of the 14.78 percent demanded by the 512,000-member National Financial Branch Workers Confederation (Contraf), and a one-time payment of 3,000 reais (US\$916). Contraf accuses Fenaban of not factoring in inflation for the last twelve months, which reached 9.75 percent.

## **Negotiations fail to resolve Yuba City, California teachers' strike**

A weekend bargaining session seeking to end a strike by 700 teachers in Yuba City, California, broke off early on September 11 without an agreement. Teachers, who voted by a 95 percent margin to strike, are demanding a 13 percent pay increase and claim that the 9.6 percent pay increase offered by the school district is "highly misleading," saying it amounts to only four percent over three years.

## **French nationwide strike against labour reforms**

Unions carried out a nationwide strike on 15<sup>th</sup> September over the labour reforms imposed by the French Socialist Party government. They are calling for the law to be withdrawn. The strike was joined by port workers, leading to the disruption of fuel supplies. Air traffic control staff supported the strike with a 24-hour action leading to flights being disrupted.

## **UK insurance staff fight outsourcing**

Staff working for the British multinational insurance and financial services company Prudential at its headquarters in Reading, southern England are holding a 24-hour strike on 16<sup>th</sup> September, with plans to hold a further 24-hour strike on September 23. The members of the Unite trade union began an indefinite work-to-rule on August 31 to protest plans by the company to outsource back office jobs dealing with annuities to Mumbai, India.

## **Strike by bus drivers in UK capital**

Thousands of bus drivers, engineers and controllers at their depots employed by Tower Transit in London held a 24-hour strike on 12<sup>th</sup> September. It was the third such strike in a dispute over changes to work rosters. Tower Transit is responsible for services on 25 of the 700 routes in London, which includes the route from Ilford to Oxford Street, said to be London's busiest. The employees are members of the Unite union.

**S.SRIDHARA, MYSORE**

## For our Field Force

### LIC earns 10K Cr

LIC has earned Rs.10,000 Cr. in the first five months of the current financial year from the stocks of top 5 automobile companies alone. Automobiles stocks seen good growth during this period and LIC's investments in Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Hero MotoCorp and Bajaj Auto has zoomed 32% from Rs.31,866 Cr. to Rs 41,951 crore since April 1.

### Mis-selling by Banks

Mis-selling by banks gets more attention. An online survey conducted by economicstimes.com in November 2015 showed that three out of five customers were mis-sold investment products by banks.

RBI deputy governor S S Mundhra accepted recently that mis-selling has been rampant on insurance products. According to him, "Often higher sales targets, coupled with front-ended high commissions, are the main motives for such mis-selling. **There is no real oversight on unethical selling of third party products**". RBI plans to enhance its vigil on customer service this year with a specific focus on mis-selling of insurance products. "We now will examine how banks are faring, and whether further regulations are needed to strengthen consumer protection. In particular, we will focus this year on the issue of mis-selling, especially of insurance products." RBI governor Raghuram Rajan said in a forward in the latest annual report for FY'16.

IRDAI is also cracking the whip on mis-selling of insurance by banks. It proposes to ban insurance companies from giving incentives and junkets to bank staff for selling insurance policies. The regulator will come out with a differential commission structure for agency and banks. It is planning to allow 35% commission and 7% incentives for agency and for banks, it would allow 35% commission but no incentives. The commission will be spread over the term depending on the nature and tenor of products. Banks will be held responsible for any mis-selling and even slapped with penalties.

### Investment norms

IRDAI has said that insurance companies can invest in equity shares of any listed company where at least 10% dividend has been paid for at least two consecutive years instead of the earlier 4% in the last eight out of the nine years under the approved investment category. IRDAI wants insurance compa-

nies to stay away from investing in companies which have not paid dividend and are financially weak. Out of the BSE 200 companies, 30 companies have paid less than 10% dividend in the last two years.

### Rs.2500 Cr. profit

Since April, LIC has bought equities worth at least Rs.7,000 crore. So far, the corporation has sold equities worth Rs.5,000 crore on a gross basis. LIC has also booked a profit of Rs.2,500 crore so far this financial year. LIC, which invested around Rs.60,000 crore in equities last year (among the highest in the past decade), typically increases its equity investments every year. But, industry experts say that, this year LIC will invest around the same amount in equities as it did last year, and increase its investments in debt instruments.

### Impact of GST

GST will significantly impact the insurance industry due to the emergence of dual stakeholders in every taxable supply of service: the government of the state where the supply is made and the central government, according to a report by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and EY. Insurance, being a service industry, currently deals with one single tax (service tax) with one administering authority (the central government). From dealing with a central service tax for pan-India operations, after the implementation insurers will potentially start dealing with 38 taxes: about 35 state and union territories GSTs (SGSTs), one central GST (CGST) and the inter-state supplies GST (IGST), said the report, Insurer of the future.

### Need for insurance grows

The Army Group Insurance Fund (AGIF) increased insurance cover by 20% for serving army personnel without any increase in the subscription being paid by them. The insurance cover in case of officers, including Military Nursing Service officers, Army Postal Corps (APS) and re-employed officers, was increased from Rs 60 lakh to Rs 75 lakh. The insurance cover for Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) and Other Ranks (ORs), including those JCOs who have been given honorary commission and those belonging to the Defence Service Corps and APS has been increased from Rs 30 lakh to Rs 37.5 lakh.

ARIVUKKADAL, THANJAVUR

## Com. Kandari is No More



Com. R.S.Kandari, Ex-General Secretary, Bima Karmchari Sangh Haldwani Division, expired on 13.08.2016 at the age of 49 Years. He breathed his last at 05.50 p.m. in Sri Ram Murti Smarak Medical College, Bareilly. He was suffering from Cirrosis of Liver for some time. A sudden cardiac arrest proved to be fatal and he could not recover from that. A wave of shock gripped the whole division. He left his wife with a daughter and a son. Com. Kandari led the Division for over a decade in the capacity of General Secretary and President.

On 21.08.2016 a condolence meeting was organised in which representatives of all fraternal trade unions of Haldwani City besides the employees and officers of LIC participated and rich tributes were paid to his memory.

## DONATIONS

- Cuttack Division Insurance Employees' Association,  
On the occasion of Diamond Jubilee Conference of CDIEA  
Rs.10,000/-
- LIC Employees' Union, (AIIEA),  
Trivandrum Division Rs.10,000/-
- Com. T.NAINA DEVI, Thanjavur Divisional Office Rs. 1,000/-

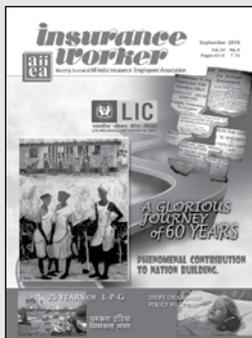
Insurance Worker thanks them for their fine gesture. Bihar Jharkand State General Insurance Employees' Association (BJSGIEA) has donated a sum of Rs.5000/- to the AIIEA as a token of love and affection. AIIEA and Insurance Worker thank BJSGIEA for this fine gesture.

## CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Month	Base 2001	Base 1960
January	269	6140.17
February	267	6094.52
March	268	6117.34
April	271	6185.81
May	275	6277.12
June	277	6322.77
July	280	6391.25

Base 1960=Base 2001x22.8259

## RESPONSE



Apropos the editorial 'Kashmir Policy' The ongoing mindless violence and mayhem in Kashmir valley illustrates how decades long corruption and maladministration ruined the peace and tranquility of the State. It seems the both the state and central government have no clue to put an end to

violent upheaval that refuse to abide Deaths and destruction have attained menacing proportions. The article " a glorious journey" is most exhaustive and taxing our brain capacity. It is a treasure of facts and figures.

**K.Narayana Rao,**  
Bangalore

It is interesting to observe that the success story of LIC OF INDIA and our more than a quarter century of our struggle to protect it from the imperialism driven globalisation is wholly integral to the overall fight against economic liberalisation.

The two editorials on Kashmir and Rio olympics are very forceful in exposing the inadequacies of

the policies of the Govt of India. The foot note below the back cover advertisement is a proof of AIIEA's commitment to LIC.

**V.Sugumaran** ,Vellore

The article by Com Amanulla Khan about LIC, a glorious journey of 60 years is very pleasing and informative. The birth of LIC 60 years ago was realisation of the dream of national liberation movement. The diamond Jubilee of LIC is an occasion to rejoice and dedicate ourselves to the cause of this great institution built by the sweat and toil of all classes of LIC employees and its agency force.

**D.Manavalan,** Cuddalore

AIIEA  
congratulates all  
the Divisional  
units for recording  
a spectacular  
strike  
performance.



▼ HYDERABAD



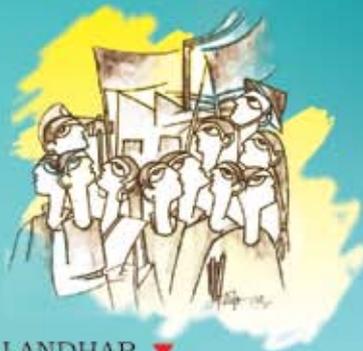
SHIMLA ▲



BANGALORE ▲



▼ GANDHINAGAR



JALLANDHAR ▼



**PEOPLE'S MONEY  
FOR  
PEOPLE'S WELFARE**



**LIC**

**भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम**  
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

**Investments in Social & Infrastructure as at 31.03.2016**

Central Government Securities	Rs	721000	crore
State Government & Other Govt. Guaranteed securities	Rs	521632	crore
Housing	Rs.	70302	crore
Power	Rs.	120558	crore
Irrigation/ Water Supply & Sewerage	Rs.	2319	crore
Road, Port & Bridges, Railways	Rs.	13244	crore
Others (Incl. Telecom.)	Rs.	36846	crore
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENT IN GOVT. &amp; SOCIAL SECTOR</b>	<b>Rs.</b>	<b>1485901</b>	<b>crore</b>

**INVESTMENTS IN 12TH FIVE YEAR PLAN 2012-17 Rs.1086720 Cr**

**BIGGEST  
FINANCIAL  
INSTITUTION**

Total Income	Rs.	424186.68	cr.
Total Premium Income	Rs.	266225.38	cr.
Payment to Policyholders	Rs.	143445.17	cr.
Total Life Fund	Rs.	2057625.38	cr.
Total Assets	Rs.	2210378.65	cr.

**BEST IN  
THE GLOBE**

**CLAIM SETTLEMENT PERFORMANCE 2015-16**

Total Number of Claims settled	215.71 lakh
Total amount of Claims paid (including Micro Insurance and P&GS)	1,01,041.65 Crores
Maturity claims settled	99.75%
Death Claims settled	99.55%

**THIS IS NOT A PAID ADVERTISEMENT OF LIC BUT A COMMITMENT OF AIIEA**