

**ALL INDIA INSURANCE EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION**  
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To  
All the Zonal /Divisional /State /Regional Units

Dear Comrades,

**26<sup>th</sup> General Conference of AIIEA at Kolkata – A Conference of Confidence and Reassurance  
Reiterates Commitment to Strengthen LIC and PSGLI Companies in the Public Sector  
Resolves to Safeguard the Unity of India by Protecting Diversity  
Calls to Consolidate the Organisation by forging broadest possible Unity**

The 26<sup>th</sup> General Conference of AIIEA was held from 08-11 January 2023 in the 'City of Joy'- Kolkata. Jointly organised by the **Eastern Zone Insurance Employees' Association (EZIEA)** and **Eastern Zone General Insurance Employees' Association (EZGIEA)**, the Conference was a stupendous success in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Grit, determination, courage, conviction and commitment were all in abundant display during the course of the Conference. Kolkata hosted the Silver Jubilee Conference of AIIEA way back in 1978; this Conference took place after a gap of over four decades. There was naturally an unmistakable air of excitement and enthusiasm. It was a happy coincidence that while the Silver Jubilee Conference of AIIEA was inaugurated by the first Chief Minister of the Left Front Government Com. Jyoti Basu, the 26<sup>th</sup> Conference was held at the Jyoti Basu Centre – an upcoming site for social studies and research named after him. The coincidence does not end there. While the Silver Jubilee Conference supposed to have been held in 1976 was deferred by two years to 1978 because of the infamous internal emergency, the dark clouds hovering over India's political landscape today are no less ominous than the internal emergency.

The Conference Hall, "**Saibal Chowdhury Manch**", named after the former Joint Secretary of AIIEA **Com. Saibal Chowdhury**, was a gentle reminder to the difficulty of the times we live in. Sudden cancellation of permission for the hall originally booked for the Conference by the authorities barely fifteen days before the Conference was a rude jolt to the organisers no doubt. But the setback could not dent their spirit. With active help of the **Jyoti Basu Research Centre**, a makeshift hall was put up by working 24X7 with all civic amenities in place. The makeshift hall and assorted enclosures draped in red looked so majestic and imposing that it was a treat to the eyes of the beholder. The aesthetics apart, the entire structure spoke eloquently about the resilience and tenacity of the organisation in so far as meeting challenges are concerned. The way the beautiful venue was crafted out of almost nothing perhaps foretold the success of the 26<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the AIIEA.

**Grand Welcome to the Jathas:**

A Jatha was jointly organised by Guwahati, Bongaigaon, Jalpaiguri and KSDO divisional units of AIIEA. **Com. Sambhu Datta**, former General Secretary of Guwahati divisional unit of AIIEA, flagged off the Jatha on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 at Guwahati. 24 Comrades of Guwahati Divisional Unit, including four women Comrades, started the Jatha with a bus decorated with festoons and banners. On reaching Bongaigaon, the Bongaigaon Comrades took charge of the Jatha and went ahead up to Alipurduar, under Jalpaiguri Division. Comrades of Jalpaiguri Division took charge of the Jatha from Alipurduar to Berhampore under KSDO. KSDO Comrades finally took charge of the Jatha and it culminated at Royal Gardens, Kolkata just before the Working Committee Meeting of the AIIEA. Led by **Com. Shreekanth Mishra**, General Secretary AIIEA, the Jatha was accorded a warm welcome on 7<sup>th</sup> January evening to the accompaniment of drums, cymbals and various tribal dance forms by a troupe from Kolkata. The Jatha covered a distance of around 1500 kilometres and conducted several meetings en route,

distributing pamphlets on the contribution of LIC to the national development effort. The Jatha got a warm reception from people of all walks of life on the way.

### **Rally and the Inaugural Session- Grand Display of Unity and Commitment:**

An impressive rally of around 3500 employees, with the participation of around 500 women employees, preceded the Inaugural Session of the Conference on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023. 26 women Comrades, all dressed in red, led the rally from the front. The rally started from Akankshya More in New Town, Kolkata and culminated at the Conference Venue- Jyoti Basu Centre covering a distance of around two kilometres. Full throated and passionate slogans on issues related to insurance employees and the people at large rent the air so much that it appeared for a while as if the New Town skyline was echoing the sentiments and aspirations of insurance employees.

Immediately after converging at the Conference venue, the Conference got off to a start with the hoisting of the AIIEA flag by **Com. V. Ramesh**, President AIIEA. The flag hoisting was followed by placing of floral tributes at the Martyrs' column.

The Inaugural Session of the Conference commenced with **Com. V. Ramesh**, President AIIEA on the Chair. The Chairman of the Reception Committee, **Prof. Dr. Ratan Khasnabis**, an eminent economist and intellectual of the country, delivered the welcome address on behalf of the Reception Committee.

**Dr. Thomas Isaac**, former Finance Minister of the state of Kerala, inaugurated the Conference. In his inaugural address, he congratulated AIIEA for the uncompromising struggle of over three decades against the government move to privatise LIC and PSGI companies and assured that the people would fight shoulder to shoulder with insurance employees to achieve the shared goal of defeating the threat of privatisation. Dr. Isaac gave a graphic account of how democratic decentralisation has been playing a significant role in improving the lives of people in Kerala. He explained that the synergy generated by integrating state government plans and programmes with the local governments, co-operatives, women neighbourhood groups and civil society organisations worked wonders during the pandemic. He was categorical that it is due to these synergies that Kerala stands out as the most prosperous state in India in terms of basic human development indices like infant mortality rate, literacy rate and gender justice. He informed the house about the efforts of the People's Commission on Public Sector and Public Services to fight the government move to divest shares from LIC. He concluded with a detailed exposition of how a massive campaign across the state of Kerala has been launched to protect LIC in the form of "Kerala for LIC" .

Others who spoke on the occasion included **Com. Debasish Basu Choudhury**, General Secretary BEFI, **Com. Vivek Singh**, Secretary General NFIWFI, **Com. Rajesh Kumar**, General Secretary AILICEF, **Com. Jayanta Guha**, Joint Secretary, Federation of LIC CI-I Officers' Association, **Com. Sumit Bhattacharjee** from 12<sup>th</sup> July Committee and **Com. Arshad Ali** from West Bengal state CITU. A galaxy of leaders from both the organised and unorganised sectors were present in the inaugural session.

**Com. Shreekant Mishra**, General Secretary AIIEA, proposed the customary vote of thanks.

### **The Delegates' Session:**

The delegates session commenced in the post lunch session of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023. **Com. Shreekant Mishra**, General Secretary, placed the Report for and on behalf of the Working Committee of AIIEA. The informative and exhaustive report covered a wide range of issues. The International section of the report dealt at length the Covid pandemic and its aftermath, global economic crisis, rising

inequality, poverty and food price inflation, rising livelihood concerns, the Ukraine war, developments in advanced capitalist countries, the upsurge of the far-right in Europe, resurgence of the left in Latin America, developments in West Asia, issues of the socialist countries, deleterious impact of capitalist development on climate and nature and the growing protests of the working class the world over. The National scene of the report touched upon the criminal mishandling of the pandemic by the government, crisis of the economy, acute unemployment problem, rising inflation, growing inequality, savage attack on the public sector, agrarian crisis, hunger and malnutrition, infringement upon personal liberty and democratic rights of the citizens, undermining of federalism, deplorable status of women in India, growing attacks on reason and rationality, growing threat of communalism and the need for broader united struggle. The Industry section of the Report dealt at length the conspiracy to privatise public sector insurance industry leading up to the IPO of LIC and GIBNA Amendment Act 2021, post IPO challenges in LIC, attempts of the IRDA to weaken LIC and PSGI companies, wage revision issue, developments related to employee benefits, issues related to merger/closure of offices in PSGI companies, KPI and business restructuring etc. The report also dealt at length on the pending issues, challenges before the organisation and the tasks ahead.

This was followed by the placement of the Audited Statement of Accounts. **Com. B.S. Ravi**, Treasurer AIIEA, placed the audited statements of accounts of AIIEA, Standing Committee (General Insurance) and Insurance Worker for the years ending 31.12.2020 and 31.12.2021.

**Com. T.V.N.S. Ravindranath**, General Secretary SCZIEF, initiated the discussion on the Report. A total of 68 comrades including 10 women comrades participated in the discussion on the Report. The senior leaders of AIIEA **Com. Amanulla Khan** and **Com. K. Venu Gopal** also intervened in the debate and made rich contributions to the debate. The Conference had the privilege of listening to the founder leader of AIIEA **Com. Chandra Sekhar Bose**, who expressed his satisfaction over the tremendous progress made by the organisation in the face of difficult challenges. **Com. M. Kunhikrishnan**, General Secretary AIIPA, addressed the Delegates Session and came down heavily on the management government combine for the inordinate delay in notification of the promised improvements in family pension. He suggested that the AIIPA and AIIEA should plan some joint movement to ensure that the promised benefits come to the pensioners early.

**Com. Shreekant Mishra**, General Secretary AIIEA, summed up the discussions after a marathon debate of almost eleven hours. He thanked the comrades of EZIEA and EZGIEA for conducting the Conference in a grand manner braving all odds that came their way. He expressed happiness over the absolute unanimity on the basic formulation of the report and made a fervent appeal that this unanimity should be applied to strengthening the organisation at all levels. The Report of the Working Committee and the Audited Statements of Accounts were unanimously adopted.

#### **Adoption of Resolutions:**

The Conference unanimously adopted 24 Resolutions. The Resolutions were against imperialist globalisation, against capitalist development and environmental degradation, demanding reversal of neo-liberal policies, against the policy of disinvestment of PSUs, against FDI in crucial sectors of the economy, against labour law amendments, against government policy on pension, against growing attacks on women and children, in support of communal harmony, against criminalizing democratic dissent, against retrograde social agenda of the government, against the growing attacks on dalits and adivasis, against the onslaught on education, demanding a strong public health policy, demanding measures to strengthen insurance industry, against IRDAI proposals to weaken public

sector insurance industry, demanding functional autonomy to LIC and PSGI Companies, demanding wage revision in public sector insurance industry, against arbitrary implementation of key performance indicators and Ernst & Young Report, demanding merger of PSGI Companies, on issues pertaining to the women employees, on the demand of Recruitment, demanding Recognition to AIIEA and demanding Collective Bargaining Right to AIIEA.

#### **Address by Com. Tapan Sen:**

Com. Tapan Sen, General Secretary CITU, addressed the Delegates Session of the Conference on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Com. Tapan Sen said that the CITU and AIIEA are inseparable and complementary to each other. He congratulated AIIEA for displaying exemplary maturity in its consistent approach of resistance to the neo-liberal sabotaging of Indian economy. He expressed satisfaction over the endeavour of AIIEA in raising the consciousness of members and constantly exposing the crisis of capitalism which is inherent and systematic. He spoke at length about the dangers to the democratic and pluralistic ethos of the country today. Pointing out that neoliberalism being essentially antithetical to democracy, a broad based struggle of the working class was the need of the hour apart from the sectoral struggles that have been developing all over. He appealed to the members of AIIEA to sharpen the class struggle by making the beneficiaries of our servicing partners of our future struggles.

#### **Felicitation of the Living Legend Com. Chandra Shekhar Bose:**

The 26<sup>th</sup> General Conference of AIIEA had the privilege of organizing a Felicitation programme in honour of the living legend of AIIEA, the centenarian **Com. Chandra Shekhar Bose** who had turned 101 only a couple of days ago. The only surviving founding leader of the movement, Com. Bose is an epitome of struggle, sacrifice, commitment and dedication. He has groomed generations of leaders for the AIIEA and courted enormous sacrifice for the welfare of the employees. The entire house was surcharged with emotion when recounting the enormous contribution of Com. Bose, **Com. Amanulla Khan** invoked legendary poet **Bashir Badr** and said “**Ye Phool Mujhe Koi Viraasat mein Mile Hain, Tumne Mera Kanton Bhara Bistar Nahin Dekha**” ( I have inherited these flowers, You have not seen my Bed of Thorns). In their brief addresses, **Com. Tapan Sen, Com. V. Ramesh, Com. K. Venu Gopal and Com. Shreekant Mishra** spoke about the trials and tribulations through which Com. Bose had steered the organisation for a long period of time and expressed confidence that he will continue to guide the movement for many more years to come. Apart from the leadership of AIIEA, **Com. Satanjib Das** (President AIIPA), **Com. M. Kunhikrishnan**, General Secretary (AIIPA), all the zonal organisations and Standing Committee (General Insurance) felicitated Com. Bose. Com. Bose was accompanied by his son and daughter-in-law. He thanked the cadres of AIIEA from across the country for the love and affection showered on him and exuded confidence that the AIIEA will continue to grow the way it has been growing all these years.

#### **Decisions of the Conference:**

The Conference unanimously decided on the policy of the organisation for the next three years and in the immediate present, it decided on the following programmes of action:

1. **Two Hour Walk Out Strike** during the Budget Session of Parliament on the demand of immediate notification of Payment of Family Pension at a uniform rate of 30 per cent and increasing Management’s contribution to the DCPS (NPS) from the existing 10 per cent to 14 per cent. The AIIEA would request the constituents of the Joint Front to make it a common

struggle and the date of the strike action will be finalized in consultation with them. Units all over the country should hold lunch hour demonstrations on the day the AIIPA organises Dharna in Jantar Mantar, New Delhi demanding immediate notification of improvements in family pension.

2. Celebration of “**Life Insurance Nationalisation Day**” on 19<sup>th</sup> January and “**General Insurance Nationalisation Day**” on 13<sup>th</sup> May to commemorate the nationalisation of life and general insurance businesses and more particularly to reiterate our commitment to strengthen LIC in the public sector and strengthen PSGI companies by demanding **Merger of the PSGI Companies**. Units are requested to devise programmes like human chain, meetings, seminars, conventions, pamphlet distribution, press conference etc. according to their convenience.
3. Immediate Campaign on the demand of **Recruitment in Class III & IV cadres** in LIC and PSGI companies. Our struggle on this demand should be aligned with the growing struggles of the youth and students on the issue of rising **unemployment, fixed tenure employment and casualization and contractorisation of jobs**. Naturally, we should take the lead in organizing Seminars and Conventions on this issue.
4. Separate Seminars and Conventions are to be organised all over the country on the issues of Privatisation/ Disinvestment of PSUs, the Syncretic/Pluralistic Culture of India and Price Rise and consequent immiseration of the people.
5. To Consolidate the Organisational Unity by sharpening the Ideological Understanding of the members. Units all over the country, both in Life and General Sector, should organise **trade union classes** to impart ideological training to the cadres. The Conference gave a call to identify young cadres and prepare them for future leadership roles. In this context, special emphasis was given to promoting “**Insurance Worker Readers’ Forum**” for creating awareness on important issues of the time.
6. To join the larger struggles of the Indian people to defend the Constitution, fight the growing threat of communalism and fight against the curtailment of fundamental rights and civil liberties.

#### **Office Bearers:**

The Conference unanimously elected **Com. V. Ramesh, Com. Shreekant Mishra, Com. B. S. Ravi and Com. K. S. Rajasekhar** as the President, General Secretary, Treasurer and Asst. Treasurer respectively. The Conference also unanimously elected a Working Committee consisting of 140 members excluding the office bearers.

#### **Expression of Gratitude:**

The Conference recorded its gratitude to **Comrades A.K. Bhatnagar, K.V.V.S.N. Raju, A.G. Dhokpande and Jayanta Mukherjee**, who demitted the offices, for their immense contribution to the development and growth of the organisation.

#### **Insurance Worker:**

The Conference appreciated the huge contribution of Insurance Worker in providing intellectual inputs to our movement and also in sharpening the ideological understanding of our cadres. The

Conference unanimously decided on the continuation of **Com. Amanulla Khan** and **Com. N.K. Vedaraj** as Editor and Publisher respectively. It was also decided that **Com. R. Padmanabha** will continue to be the Manager of Insurance Worker and the Journal will continue to be published from Bangalore.

**Colourful Cultural Programme:**

The audience was entertained to a rich and colourful cultural programme by “**Calcutta Choir**” of **Kalyan Sen Barat and troupe**. The syncretic and pluralistic culture of India was powerfully portrayed through various songs and dances. The delegates and observers watched the captivating performances of the troupe in absolute silence. The philosophy of the AIIEA and that of the working class at large was captured beautifully in that immortal song “We Shall Overcome...”

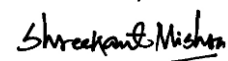
**A Conference of Confidence and Reassurance:**

The 26<sup>th</sup> General Conference of AIIEA was doubtless a Conference of Confidence and Reassurance. This was the first Conference after the disinvestment of shares from the LIC. This was also the first Conference after the decks were cleared for privatisation of PSGI companies by way of the GIBNA Amendment Act 2021. The Conference took place in the background of a hostile political situation as well. However, the way the Conference was organised by the Kolkata based Comrades of EZIEA and EZGIEA braving all odds, it gave a new confidence and inspiration that insurance employees under the banner of AIIEA are capable of meeting all challenges howsoever grim the situation may be. The cohesion, understanding, empathy and unity displayed by the delegates and observers from across the country were a profound expression of the exemplar unity amidst diversity that has been the hallmark of the AIIEA.

Long Live 26<sup>th</sup> General Conference of AIIEA. Long Live AIIEA.

With Revolutionary Greetings,

Comradely Yours



General Secretary