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To
All the Zonal /Divisional /State /Regional Units

AIEA Secretariat Meeting at Jodhpur Decides:
To Intensify Campaign and Struggle in defence of Public Sector Insurance Industry
To Step up Struggle for Realisation of Pending Demands of the Employees
To work for further Consolidation of the Organisation

The Secretariat of the AIEA met at Jodhpur on 28-29 July 2023. The primary agenda of the secretariat was to discuss the latest developments in the insurance industry and decide the future contour of campaign and struggle. Drawing a roadmap of struggle for realisation of the pending issues of the employees and organisational consolidation in the wake of the enormous success of the 26th General Conference of the AIEA at Kolkata were the two other important issues. The secretariat had a dispassionate analysis of the entire gamut of issues and finally came out with some concrete programmes of action.

Economy in turmoil: The secretariat noted that the world economy was yet to come out of the woods. Global supply chain disruptions caused by the Russia Ukraine war, high inflation, rising interest rates and declining bond prices had roiled the world economy. The failures of the Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), the Signature Bank, the First Republican Bank in the US and the crisis unfolding in Credit Suisse were only reflective of the crisis of world capitalism, felt the Secretariat. The two major economies of the world, US and China, have suffered huge decline in growth. The two major economies in the euro area, Germany and France, are also in serious trouble. According to the latest update of the IMF's world economic outlook, "many challenges still cloud the horizon". The secretariat was of the opinion that despite the tall claims of the ruling classes in India about India being the fastest growing major economy in the world, the Indian economy was still in the grip of recession. An investment rate of hardly 30%, tax-to-GDP ratio of barely 11%, a meagre labour force participation rate of 40% (as against over 70% of China and Vietnam), unemployment rate hovering around 6-7%, share of manufacturing in GDP declining from 16% (before "Make in India") to 13% today, passenger vehicle sales stagnating at around 3.4 million units during the last few years are all indicative of the crisis the economy is in.

Admirable performance-LIC: The secretariat noted with satisfaction that public sector insurance industry performed remarkably well in this otherwise gloomy economic scenario. The meeting appreciated that LIC mobilised a record first year premium income of Rs.2,31,893 crore with a growth of 16.75% in the last financial year. The secretariat felt that LIC's performance would have been better had it not faced the headwinds over its investments in the Adani group of companies, no BOC call of a section of the agency force and the budgetary proposal relating to taxing maturity proceeds where premium exceeds Rs.5 lakhs. The secretariat expressed its serious concern over the negative publicity being given to LIC because of the relatively unimpressive performance of its stock in the equity markets and noted that the apprehensions of the AIEA had come true insofar as confusing the performance of the LIC stock with its business performance was concerned. The Secretariat resolved that an educative campaign had to be taken up by involving various stake holders of the institution to arrest the decline in public perception about LIC.

PSGI Companies doing well against heavy odds: The secretariat noted that public sector general insurance companies also performed fairly well by generating premium income of Rs. 82,895 crore and registering a growth rate of 10.33% over the last year. The meeting was critical that the GIPSA management was unnecessarily vitiating the industrial atmosphere by resorting to the KPI and other restructuring initiatives at the instance of the government. The secretariat decried the moves of the government to privatise the PSGI companies rather than working towards merger of the PSGI companies as announced in the Budget proposals of the year 2018. The meeting lauded the efforts of the Standing Committee (GI) in bringing about

unity of the trade unions on major issues of the employees and industry and resolved to fight for the strengthening of PSGI companies under the united platform of the unions. The secretariat decided to step up the campaign and struggle on the demand of merger of PSGI companies.

Ruination, not Reforms: The secretariat of AIEA took strong exception to the reform measures being mooted by the IRDA in the name of ensuring 'Insurance for All' by the year 2047. The meeting noted that the ostensible attempts of the IRDA to ensure Accessibility, Affordability and Availability of insurance for all had some diabolical designs behind it. As reported in the media, the proposed amendments in the Insurance Bill 2023 to be tabled in Parliament include proposals like composite license, reduction in solvency norms, issuing captive license, change in investment regulations and allowing insurers to distribute other financial products. The proposed amendments also include a clause suggesting that the minimum paid-up capital required to start an insurance business can be different and specified by IRDAI considering the size and scale of operations, class or subclass of insurance business and the category or type of insurer. The secretariat observed that these measures are aimed at ruination of public sector insurance industry under the garb of reforms. Viewed with the initiatives like Bima Sugam which entails not only buying of policies and settlement of claims but agent and policy portability as well, the meeting felt that these so-called reform measures will push the insurance industry to pre-nationalisation days. The meeting resolved to study these developments in greater detail and come out with campaign materials for an awareness campaign.

Manipur-emblematic of the larger malaise in society: The secretariat of the AIEA was deeply disturbed over the fast erosion of democratic and societal values in Indian society. The meeting was of the opinion that the foundational values of our constitutional republic- justice, equality and fraternity- were under severe attack. Diversity, which is the essence of the idea of India, has come under increasing attack precisely from those who are supposed to uphold the rule of law. The meeting felt that promotion of a personality cult around the persona of the Prime Minister is the surest way to supplanting of democracy by an authoritarian rule. The meeting was of the considered opinion that strife torn Manipur was emblematic of the degeneration that has crept into Indian society following blind adherence to majoritarian politics. While Manipur offers a classic example of governance ineptitude which is the hallmark of the government at the centre, it also demolishes to pieces the carefully cultivated myth of a double-engine sarkar. The meeting deplored the fact that even after the loss of over hundred lives and displacement of over 60,000 innocent people including women and children, the government was maintaining a stoic silence. The meeting noted with dismay that the Prime Minister of the country has maintained a conspicuous and unexplained silence for almost three months on the raging violence in the state. The meeting made a fervent appeal to the people of the state to restore peace and amity.

Organisation: The secretariat of the AIEA felt that extreme polarisation in the society has a propensity to weaken the class struggle of the working class. The meeting concluded that there was an urgent need to sharpen the ideological understanding of the members to maintain our class unity intact. The secretariat made a detailed review of the programmes undertaken by our units across the country and came to the conclusion that almost all units in the country had sincerely taken up the task assigned by the 26th Conference of AIEA. It was quite reassuring to note that almost all zonal units had organised trade union workshops for the activists with a particular emphasis on grooming young cadres. The secretariat called upon the units to organise seminars/ conventions on issues identified by the 26th Conference of AIEA by mobilising the broadest spectrum of the people.

Settlement of Pending Issues cannot brook any Delay: The secretariat felt that settlement of the pending issues like enhancement of family pension to a uniform rate of 30 per cent, enhancement of management's contribution to DCPS beneficiaries (now part of NPS) from the existing 10 per cent to 14 per cent, commencement of wage negotiations, recruitment in class III and IV cadres, improvement in leaves especially giving fair treatment to intervening holidays by doing away with prefix suffix etc. cannot brook any delay. The meeting therefore decided to escalate the campaign programme and go for struggle on pressing issues of the employees. The meeting also appreciated the need for joint struggle on these issues and decided to carry forward the joint movement in the days to come.

Decisions: The secretariat of the AIIEA took the following decisions keeping the challenges, as described above, in mind:

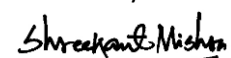
1. Launch Hour Demonstrations across the country on 01.08.2023 demanding immediate notification of LIC and GIPSA Board recommendation on payment of family pension at a uniform rate of 30%, enhancement of management's contribution to NPS beneficiaries from the present 10 to 14% without prejudice to our demand of scrapping of the NPS and its replacement with the OPS and immediate commencement of negotiations for wage revision. The meeting expressed happiness that the Federation of LIC Class I Officers' Associations and the AILICEF in LIC have also decided to go for synchronised action programme on the same day. The meeting requested our general insurance leadership to explore the possibility of going for demonstrations with other constituents of the Joint Front.
2. To prepare for a two-hour walk out strike in the third week of August; efforts will be made to go for the strike action under the banner of the Joint Front in LIC. The Secretariat asked the Standing Committee (GI) to decide on programs of action in PSGI companies on the said issues in consultation with JFTU constituents.
3. A committee was formed with Coms. H.I. Bhatt, Rajeev Nigam, T. Senthil Kumar and Trinath Dora; Joint Secretaries of AIIEA, to study the developments in the insurance industry especially with regard to the regulatory changes and help the organisation in preparing campaign materials and projecting our issues before the authorities. The committee has been requested to submit its report latest by 31st of August 2023. In the meanwhile, units are requested to work for improvement in our claims settlement and launch a campaign that the intrinsic worth of the LIC is much more than the value reflected in the share prices in the stock market. The secretariat decided to step up the campaign and struggle on the demand of merger of PSGI companies.
4. A committee was formed with Coms. M. Girija, Dharmaraj Mohapatra, P. Satish and G. Anand to examine the feasibility and practicability of the AIIEA's intervention through social media platforms to make our responses faster and expand our reach. This committee has also been requested to submit its report to the AIIEA by 31st of August 2023.
5. The secretariat reiterated the call of the 26th Conference of the AIIEA to hold seminars/ convention at all important centres on the issues of Role of Public Sector in national development, the syncretic/pluralistic culture of India, Impact of the destructive economic policies on the lives of the working people especially with reference to price rise and Growing Unemployment in the economy.
6. The Secretariat reiterated the call to activate the Insurance Worker Readers' Forum across the country to raise awareness on the important issues of the times and develop cadres for the future.

NZIEA Jodhpur Divisional Committee organized the Secretariat meeting very well. Right from receiving the secretariat members to giving them a warm send-off after the meeting, everything was planned and executed perfectly well. The meeting of the Secretariat was followed by an employees' meeting which was attended by a large number of employees, pensioners, officers, agents, development officers, representatives of fraternal organisations and members of the Press. AIIEA profusely thanks Jodhpur Divisional Committee of NZIEA for the excellent arrangements and remarkable show of unity and camaraderie.

We request our units to implement the decisions of the Secretariat meeting in letter and spirit.

With Greetings,

Comradely Yours



General Secretary