



BANK EMPLOYEES FEDERATION OF INDIA

NARESH PAUL CENTRE

53 RadhaBazar Lane, (1st Floor), Kolkata – 700 001

e-mail: pradipbefi@yahoo.co.in Website: www.befi.in

(Ph):033- 22254414/22365108 (M) 9433144271 Fax: 033-22365109/22420690

Circular No. 03/2019

02.02.2019

To All Affiliates/Office Bearers/CC/GC Members

Dear Comrades,

Call of 10th Conference
Oppose Merger – Stop Corporate Loot
Save Public Money - Strengthen PSBs

The 10th National Conference of our Federation was held amidst great enthusiasm in Com Santi Bal Nagar (Thiruvananthapuram) at Com. T.S. Murali Manch (Tagore Theatre) from 28th to 31st January, 2019

In the evening of the first day a grand colourful procession of thousands of Bank employees of Kerala state and all participating delegates and observers of the conference coming from all over the country marched past the main thoroughfares of Thiruvananthapuram city vibrantly with cheering of slogans and massive display of red flags of the BEFI. The procession looking like a vast sea of red waves was greeted by the working class of other sectors at several points en route expressing their solidarity. It culminated at E.K. Nayner Park in the heart of the city where a public meeting was held to mark the **Open Session**. The meeting jam packed with the audience was presided over by Com. Elamarm Kareem, M.P. & Chairman of the Reception Committee. To start with, Com. Pradip Biswas, General Secretary of BEFI, delivered his welcome address. Main speaker of the open session was Com. Pinarayi Vijayan, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala. With warm greetings to all Com. Vijayan expressed his heart-felt thanks and gratitude for the generous help and financial support received from cross sections of the people in the face of recent disaster of the state caused by unprecedented flood in the last 100 years. In his speech he touched upon the main challenges that the country is facing today under the rule of the present NDA Govt. at the centre with its aggressive persuasion of neo-liberal policy of reforms. He also referred to sharp rise in economic and social inequalities in the country with marginalization of the vast majority of the countrymen and accumulation of huge wealth in the hands of few. The very democratic and federal structure of the country, our national culture and heritage and autonomy of every institution of national importance are under attack unleashed by 'hindutva' forces with overt and covert patronage of the ruling government, he said. The meeting was also greeted by Com V Ramesh General Secretary, AIIEA, Com Hari Krishnan of AISGEF and Com M. Krishnan, General Secretary, Confederation of Central Govt. Employees.

Prior to commencement of the **Delegate Session** on 29th January, 2019 Red Flag of BEFI was hoisted by President Com. C.J. Nandakumar amidst shouting of slogans which was followed by floral tribute to the Martyrs' Column by all the leaders of our and other fraternal organisations including foreign delegates attending the conference. A group of local artiste presented a beautiful song in chorus before start of the session which was highly appreciated by the members of the audience in the hall.

Welcome address was delivered by Com. S.S. Anil, General Convener of the Reception Committee. Delegate Session of the Conference was formally inaugurated by Com. Tapan Sen, General Secretary of CITU. In his precise inaugural speech Com. Sen highly acclaimed the total unity of banking unions which, according to him, is a novel achievement. He appreciated the bank employees who actively took part in recent 2-day nationwide General Strike on January 8-9, 2019 and made it a grand success. He lauded the glorious role played by the bank employees in resisting the draconian FRDI

Bill. Com. Sen pointed out that some issues of the banking industry like merger and amalgamation, huge NPA created mainly by big corporate houses willfully and the corporate loot of public money by way of profuse write-offs and haircuts in the name of NPA recovery and/or resolution under IBC Code etc. must be taken to the people to expose the heinous game plan of the Govt. at the centre to weaken and privatize the public sector banks systematically in order to secure active public support in their movement against these onslaughts. He told that the trade union movement must be aware and cautious of the divisive policies and instruments of the ruling clique to divide the common people in the name of caste, creed and religion and to create different polarizations.

Com. C H Venkatachalam, General Secretary, AIBEA, Com. Murali Soundar Rajan, Joint Secretary, AIBOC, Com. A Raghavan, Joint Secretary, NCBE, Com. S. Nagarajan, General Secretary, AIBOA, Com. K.K.Nair General Secretary, INBOC and Chairman UFBU greeted the Conference. All in one voice expressed vow to strengthen the unity of UFBU and continue the struggle in defense of PSBs and for achieving a just and reasonable wage settlement. Com. Subhash Sawant, General Secretary, INBEF in a written message expressed success of the Conference. The Conference was also greeted by the foreign delegates coming from Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

We received greetings form World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and also from several other fraternal organizations from abroad. The inaugural part of the session ended with warm felicitation of the former Office Bearers of BEFI on the dais by General Secretary Com. Pradip Biswas.

After the lunch break Draft Report of the General Secretary was placed by Com. Pradip Biswas. While placing the report Com. Biswas touched upon all the burning issues of the Banking industry right from sharp decline in manpower particularly in clerical and subordinate cadres with consequent increase in workload to the latest status of 11th Bipartite negotiations, merger & amalgamation and corporate loot of public money perpetrated by way of NPA resolution under IBC Code etc. He also clarified the BEFI's stand to oppose New Pension Scheme all through since it is a scheme of defined contribution but undefined pension benefit to the employees. He raised the demand for reversal of NPS and old defined pension scheme for all and also stressed on sustained movement by UFBU for the same. He opined that the situation warrants relentless movements with better cohesion and close unity of all sections of the bank employees as also of the entire toiling masses of the county. To strengthen the organization both numerically and qualitatively he insisted on organizing the outsourced contractual and casual workers in the industry to bring them within the fold of mainstream union activities. Com. Debasish Basu Chaudhury, Treasurer, placed year-wise Audited Statement of Accounts for the last four years from 2015 to 2018 before the house. Around 600 Delegates and Observers representing different Banks and State Units attended the conference and out of them 64 comrades participated in deliberations on the General Secretary's Draft Report and Statement of Account for more than 10 hours. The speakers referred to several issues pertaining to manpower constraint, frequent violations of service conditions, marketing of Insurance products, financial deprivations by way of non-payment of allowances, problems in settlement of medical insurance claims, comparatively less hike in salary revision through Bipartite than that by Central Pay Commission, NPS, ESPS etc., as also matters relating to struggles and movements in the industry under the banner of UFBU. General Secretary Com. Pradip Biswas while replying to all the queries meticulously with facts and figures also pinpointed the underlying weaknesses and stressed on widening and strengthening organization by removing all the deficiencies in a planned manner. He also suggested for more independent movements against the offensives faced by the employees in general on regular basis by ensuring participation of members in substantial number. Pradip Biswas emphasized that the situation in the banking industry should not be looked upon in isolation from the policies pursued by the government and the politics behind such

policies. **Direction of our struggle has to be for a change of political regime,** Comrade Biswas thrust upon. After the General Secretary's reply both the Draft Report and Statement of Accounts were passed by the house unanimously with a thunderous applause.

In course of the session altogether 16 Resolutions were passed by the house unanimously. One of the Resolutions relates to Amendment of the Constitution. Other Resolutions adopted in the conference are as under:-

1. Against Communalism;
2. Against Dalit and Adivasi Oppression;
3. Against Merger and Privatisation of Public Sector Banks;
4. On Demand of Expediting 11th Bipartite Settlement;
5. On Demand of Adequate Recruitment of Award Staff in all Banks including Rural and Coperative Banks;
6. On Demand of Proper Pay Fixation and Other Service Conditions of Ex-Servicemen re-employed in Banks;
7. Against Atrocities on Women;
8. Against Loot of Public Money through Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (2016);
9. On Demand of Contractual, Casual and Temporary Employees engaged in Banks;
10. On Co-operative Banks;
11. Against NPA;
12. On Demand for Repeal of NPS and Ensuring Defined Pension for all Bank Employees;
13. On Demand of Implementation of Pension Parity in RRBs;
14. Against Attacks on Employees and Officers of Catholic Syrian Bank by the Management;
15. In solidarity with the struggle of Tamilnadu State Govt. Teachers against NPS.

As scheduled, a part of Delegates' session was marked as **Women Session** to discuss women's issues on the third day of the conference. The session commenced with Com. Ashis Sen memorial lecture delivered by the renowned leader of democratic movement Com. Brinda Karat. Com. Karat while paying a rich tribute to Com. Ashis Sen and Com. Naresh Paul recollected their pioneering role in organizing the Bank employees' struggles and movements braving all odds in early days and also formation of an organization like BEFI with a class orientation in early eighties of the last century. She spoke eloquently on the neo-liberal offensives on the working class especially on women. She aggressively condemned sexual assaults and different kinds of atrocities being perpetrated on women irrespective of ages in the name of social tradition, culture and religious practices in the country. Even elected representatives of the people like MLAs and MPs are involved in brutal sexual violence and even murder. But, the offenders often go unpunished, she lamented. She referred to a recent international survey report which states that India ranks four among the most dangerous places for women to live in. In a scathing attack to the fascist hindutva forces now ruling the country she observed that they don't have any regard for women's rights and equalities guaranteed in the Constitution. In an oblique reference to the Supreme Court verdicts on Sabarimala issue and Triple Talaque, she said that the fundamentalists of all the regions are reactionary in their attitude to women rights and privileges. She exhorted the women comrades to gather strong in T.U. struggles and movements to fight hard against right reactionary forces and neo-liberal offensives with a broad-based unity of the working class.

Com. Nupur Roy, Convenor of BEFI Women Sub-Committee, placed a discussion paper pertaining to women issues on which 23 lady delegates took part in deliberation and discussed elaborately on problems specially faced by women workers in Bank owing to manpower shortage and overstaying, posting in far-off places from residence for years together, absence of ladies' toilet in work place, absence of crèche etc. With sincere acknowledgement of the problem convener Com. Nupur Roy assured to take up the issues with BEFI leadership to make a break through. The session ended with the address of General Secretary Com. Pradip Biswas.

Conference unanimously elected the following Office Bearers for the next term.

President : Comrade C J Nandakumar

Vice Presidents : Comrade Pradip Biswas Comrade Joydeb Dasgupta
Comrade Dinesh Ch. Kakati Comrade J P Dixit
Comrade K Srinivasa Babu Comrade P Venkataramaiah
Comrade Rupa Khalkho

General Secretary: Comrade Debasish Basu Chaudhury

Secretaries : Comrade K Krishnan Comrade Vijay V Aroskar

Joint Secretaries : Comrade Chiranjit Ghosh Comrade Prakash Ch. Ray
Comrade G N Pareek Comrade C P Krishnan
Comrade C Rajeevan Comrade S S Anil
Comrade R Ajaya Kumar

Treasurer : Comrade Animesh Sur

The conference came to an end with vote of thanks delivered by Com. Pradip Biswas on behalf of the Steering Committee and a brief address by the new General Secretary Com. Debasish Basu Chaudhury.

Comrades, 10th National Conference of BEFI concluded with a very encouraging and enthusiastic note. After having a threadbare analysis and appreciation of the given situation, the conference solemnly pledges for sustained struggle against the neo-liberal policy regime in close unity with the working class movements of the county and forging a broad alliance of the common people around. We must rise to the occasion, stand united and strengthen the organization befittingly to carry forward the hard struggle till we reach to our cherished goal of a better tomorrow.

We will be failing in our responsibility if we do not mention the yeomen service rendered by the Reception Committee with its entire team and untiring dedication of all volunteers under the Chairmanship of Comrade Elamaram Kareem M.P. for which the success of the Conference could reach such a glorious height. We salute them all.

With warm greetings,

Yours comradely,



Debasish Basu Chaudhury
General Secretary