



## ALL INDIA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

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### Know our Leaders:

### 102<sup>nd</sup> Birthday of late Com C D Patel:

Former CC Member AIBEA  
Former Vice President of Maha Gujarat Bank Emp. Association  
Former Vice President, All India PNB Employees Federation

**Com. Chandubhai Dayabhai Patel - C.D. Patel** was born on **22.2.1920**. He had studied upto Matriculation only. In 1948, he joined the Bharat Bank Ltd. as a Cashier at Ahmedabad.

( During the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of AIBEA in 1996, interviews of various veteran leaders were taken by Com P S Sundaresan, former Vice President of AIBEA. The following interview was given by Com C D Patel)

#### **Com. C D Patel in his interview in 1996 said:**

"I joined the Bank in January, 1948. Four days after working there in that year, on 30<sup>th</sup> January, the father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi was killed. I was shocked to note that no one bothered about it, there was no condolence meeting, no Bundh, no strike, no closure of the bank branch also. I was upset and **despite**

**the fact that I had put only 4 days of service, I approached everyone, organized them and brought them out of the bank's premises for a condolence meeting.** Thereafter I began establishing contacts with all of them.

"In 1951 when Punjab National Bank took over the Bharat Bank Ltd., the PNB management wanted me to resign and then absorb me. **I contacted Com. H.L. Parvana at Delhi who advised me not to resign. Accordingly, I refused to resign and the bank terminated me with 6 months' salary as compensation. However, my case was taken up along with all others and 6 months later, I was reinstated with continuous service.**

In 1954, I began organizing the employees. There was no union in Punjab National Bank, Ahmedabad. We formed a union separately. At the same time, there was general bank employees union for all bank employees affiliated to Mazdoor Mahajan of Textile Labour Organisation. For PNB Union, Com. P.R. Jhala of Central Bank was the General Secretary. Shri Natwarlal Shah became the President. I was elected Vice President.

When Shri Khandubhai Desai became the Central Labour Minister, he challenged that he

will not allow any militant trade union in banking industry. Despite this, Punjab National Bank Union and one or two unions went on strike on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 1954, but from all other banks, employees came out in large numbers, demonstrated outside for more than an hour and also contributed donations to AIBEA.

**After the strike, I was transferred along with three other comrades. But all union members observed a pen-down strike for 3 hours.** The bank cancelled the transfer orders. This development gave us a great boost and enthusiasm.

Slowly in Hindustan Commercial Bank, Bank of Baroda and Allahabad Bank, unions were formed and I became the President. Thereafter, I formed unions in Indian Bank and Oriental Bank of Commerce. With these unions, Ahmedabad Bank Employees Union emerged. From 1956 to 1962, I was a senior office bearer of the union.

In 1962, I became the Central Committee Member of AIBEA. I was also the Vice President of All India Punjab National Bank Employees Federation. In this position, I continued till the Bangalore Conference of the Federation. I continued to be the CC Member of the AIBEA till the Jaipur Conference.

In the great historic strike for 90 days in Punjab National Bank we all took a leading part. During 1978-79, there were numerous strike actions organized before the various banks as part of our Third Bipartite Struggle.

The Mercantile Chamber of Commerce and the public organized processions and demonstrations against our strike. Goonda elements broke the doors of the Dena Bank and looted. Police firing was there. Three persons were killed. There were public protests before Central Bank and some other banks, **but our strike was total and disciplined.**

Earlier in 1962 itself, I began organizing the employees in the co-operative sector. Today,

we have over 6000 members in this sector.

Till the Jaipur Conference of AIBEA, I had the privilege to attend all its conferences.

**Com. Prabhat Kar and Com. H.L. Parvana had visited Ahmedabad a number of times. Their life and work have always inspired me and other bank employees.**

Around the year 1973, I went to the U.S.S.R. as part of a delegation.

Today I continue to serve my movement as Vice President of Maha Gujarat Bank Employees Association and Vice President of the State Co-operative Bank Employees Organisation. In the State Apex Co-operative Banks, we have secured a very good settlement. We fought for many years against the anti-labour policies of the managements in three big co-operative banks. These banks dragged us from one area to another on the issue of our challenging the authority of the Registrar in our service conditions. That great Lawyer, Shri N.K. Palkhiwala appeared on behalf of the banks. Our leader, Shri Natwarlal Shah

argued our case. **In 1959, we won in this case. It was a great legal victory.**

Today, I am also holding responsibility as President in Allahabad and Indian Bank Employees' Unions, Ahmedabad.

I recall some of the earlier incidents like the agitation launched by the Andhra Bank Officers for several days, when we held Dharnas and sympathetic strike actions.

Once in Bank of Baroda, the management hired Goondas to tear away our posters. A very big fight ensued. Police cases were filed against us. Some of us were arrested.

Com. I.B. Shah was suspended. We boycotted Bank of Baroda clearing work for 100 days. Com. Natwarlal Shah met the Chief Minister, Shri Chimanbhai Patel. A tripartite meeting was arranged. For over 100 days, Ahmedabad witnessed unprecedented actions.

At All India level, Shri Raghunath Reddy, Central Minister interfered. **Com. Prabhat Kar and Com. H.L.**

**Parvana played a very great role.**

In the end, all suspensions were removed, the management came down and the issues were amicably settled. This exercise lasting over 3 months created a great impact upon our movement.

**Let me tell you a personal story. During the earlier period of my activities, the Punjab National Bank management used to send me to a number of centres in Gujarat on deputation work as a punishment. I always utilized all these occasions to build up local unions and local co-ordination committees in the respective centres.**

**The punishment meted out to me by the bank was a blessing in disguise for me to carry on my activities.**

I am very happy that our great AIBEA is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of our movement. I am happy that I too had a humble opportunity to make a small contribution in the development of AIBEA. I convey my greetings to all comrades under the banner of AIBEA.