

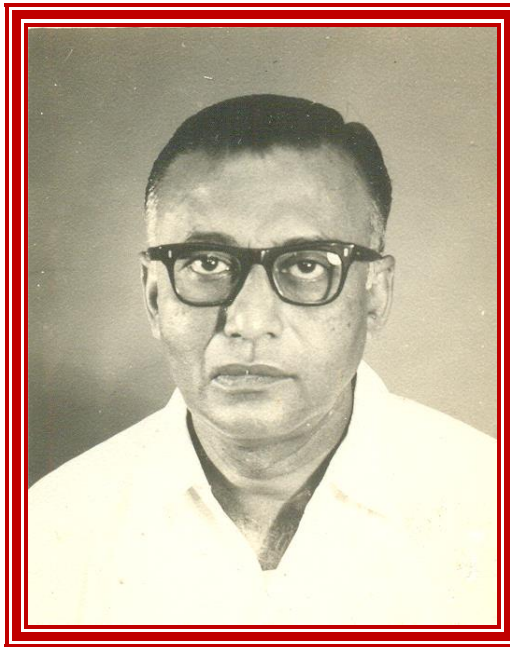


ALL INDIA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

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Know our great leaders:

107th BIRTHDAY OF COM. K.K. MUNDAL



(15-2-1915 - 6-1-1991)
Former Vice President, AIBEA

**He was an Office Bearer of AIBEA for 33 years
from 1956 to 1989.**

Kalyan Kumar Mundal, popularly known as **Mundulda**, was born on 15th February 1915 in a small town known by the name of Phuljhari, in what was then East Bengal of India, now Bangladesh.

Com. Mundal schooled at St. Xavier's School in Calcutta from where he passed the University Cambridge School Certificate examination, and went on to study in the same college. But Com Mundal was always caught up in sports and other extra-curricular activities and so did not concentrate or excel in studies. He was the college swimming champion.

A paralytic stroke during his college days left one side of his facial muscles affected impairing his natural smile, (He was only able to smile with a lift of one side of his face) yet it was such graceful smile that his admirers and followers used to yearn for.

He initially took a job with J. Walter Thomson, an advertising agency now known as Hindustan Thomson. He moved up in the industry quickly and left home town for Bombay, to join Lintas, an in-house ad agency of Lever Bros. He worked there as Assistant to Accounts Executive from 1.9.1942 till 31.5.1947 on a handsome salary of Rs 378 per month in those days. Since the British management was unhappy with his keen interest in the Independence struggles, he resigned from the job.

After resigning from his executive position, he joined the Congress Socialist Party and thereon dedicated his life to working for the upliftment of Indians. He was appointed General Manager, Azad Publishers, on 19.10.1947, without any salary, and began editing their writings, perhaps due to his proficiency in English.

His intense involvement won favour with the Socialist Party, and he was asked to contest the Bombay Municipal Elections in Feb 1952, as their candidate from Byculla (W) Ward No. 20. In the Election he was supported by M/s Ashoka Metha, M.Harris, Adam Anil, Naruddin Ansari, and many other freedom fighters, as well as Shri. Kharat, President, Bombay Branch of Scheduled Caste Federation.

However, he lost the elections. But he evinced keen interest in advising and counseling workers. He thus entered the arena of Trade Unions.

As a representative of Socialist Party he Visited China in the 50's, to witness the progress of the workers movement. On his return he expressed himself freely and wrote forthright articles about China. Later he joined the Communist Party of India (CPI).

In his role as an active Trade Unionist, he was associated with several Trade Unions. To list a few, he was the General Secretary of All India Brooke Bond Employees Federation, (while Com. C. I. Dudhia of INTUC was his President), he was also associated with Hindustan Brown Boveri Union, and many pharmaceutical unions.

As an active Trade Unionist, he eventually came to the AIBEA movement and he played an important role in developing Unions in various Banks. Many Foreign Bank Unions were founded by him. He was the President and founder of the Union in British Bank of Middle East (now extinct) and began a movement for improving the working conditions of the substaff in this Bank.

He coined a slogan 'sipahi ko chhatri dho', a demand for umbrellas to protect the substaff working outdoors in the sun and rain of Mumbai;

He was the President and a founder member of Standard Chartered Bank Employees Union, Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation Employees Union (now HSBC) and several others.

He was an Office Bearer in Reserve Bank Workers Union in Mumbai. He used to encourage employees of the then Bank of Maharashtra Ltd and Central Bank of India Ltd to strengthen their Unions, while guiding them and encouraging them in times of adversity.

He was also actively associated in the struggles of employees in Canara bank Employees Union in Mumbai. Especially, when the

Joint Secretary of the Union Com A K Nayak was vindictively dismissed by the Bank, Com Mundal gave shelter to him, his wife and newly born son to stay in his house and took care of him.

The role and leadership of Com Mundul in building up Syndicate Bank Employees Union was very notable. He fought against the anti-labour attitude of the Syndicate Bank Management, which dismissed 149 Union leaders and activists of Syndicate Bank Employees Union in 1964.

As the All India General Secretary from 1952 to 1967, and thereafter as President till his death in 1991, Com. Mundul consolidated and knit the Syndicate Bank employees Union into a strong fighting force with fierce conviction, well equipped to counter the communal and dynastic aspirations of the Syndicate Bank Management.

He was also connected with Corporation Bank Employees Union and was its All India President for 32 long years from 1956 to 1988.

By his association with the various Unions in different Banks, he became a part of bank employees movement and played an important role in the formation of Bombay Bank Employees Federation (which later has become MSBEF). He was the President of MSBEF and later its Vice President for a pretty long time.

He was elected as Asst. Secretary of AIBEA in its 8th Conference held in Kolkata in 1956 and in 1959 he was elected as its Vice President. He continued as Vice President till 1989. He was an office bearer of AIBEA for 33 years and was held in high esteem by one and all. He was part of the negotiating team of AIBEA in four Bipartite negotiations, from 1966 onwards.

In those early periods, the Syndicate Bank Employees Union was paying Com. K.K. Mundal a salary of Rs. 25/- because he had no income of his own. But when 149 comrades were dismissed by the management in 1965, he declined to draw the salary.

Later during the Silver Jubilee year of the Union, in 1977, he was given a donation of Rs. 25,000/-. On the spot, he re-donated this amount to the union with a request that it may be invested and income arising out this may be used for helping towards medical assistance for full time employees of the union.

Similarly, in those early periods when Com. K. K. Mundal was struggling for his existence without any remuneration, Maharashtra State Bank Employees' Federation used to pay him a monthly honorarium of Rs. 300/-.

After a few years, the twin sons of Com. Mundul secured jobs. Thereafter, Com. Mundul wrote to the Federation that since his sons were employed, it would not be proper for him to draw honorarium any longer. However, he requested that the amount be sent to the Communist Party so that some struggling party worker will be benefited.

Mundulda was a towering personality in our AIBEA movement and was one of the stalwarts of our organisation.

Those who had moved with him could see his undiminishing, irreconcilable anger against exploitation of workers by employers and managements and his boundless commitment and concern for the cause of workers and bank employees.

Mundulda died on 6th January 1991 at the age of 76. His entire life was saga of struggles, sacrifices, courage, conviction and exemplary determination to fight against exploitation. His luminous and illustrious life will continue to inspire all us.

Leaders like Com K K Mundul are very rare.

Without exaggeration, we can say that bank employees movement under the banner of AIBEA was fortunate to have a leader like Mundulda to lead us.
