



ALL INDIA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

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TO ALL UNITS AND MEMBERS:

Dear Comrades,

GREETINGS TO AIBOA ON ITS 40th ANNIVERSARY



13th February, 1981 – Founding Day of AIBOA: 13th February, 2021 marks the 40th Anniversary of AIBOA. 1981, on this day, the foundation Conference of AIBOA was held in Nagpur and AIBOA was born. After completing 40 years, AIBOA celebrates the completion of its 4 decades of meaningful existence.

Background: Even though AIBEA was founded in 1946, there was no separate organisation for officers. In some Banks, officers were part of the AIBEA unions. The founder General Secretary of AIBEA, Com. Ramesh Chakrabarti was himself an Officer in Bank of India. In many of our Unions, Officers were not only members but they were also the leaders of our organisation.

But in many of the banks, officers were not part of Trade Unions. Rather, it would be appropriate to say that management did not allow them to be part of the Unions. They were kept away and apart from the Unions. Later some Guild type Associations were formed at the instance of management. In due course of time, these Associations were slowly transformed as Trade Unions for officers.

Under the Awards (Sen Award-1950, Sastry Award-1953 and Desai Award-1962) as well as under Bipartite Settlement (1st BPS in 1966 and 2nd BPS in 1970), there was uniformity and standardisation of service conditions for the workmen employees working in various Banks, thanks to the struggles of AIBEA.

But, for officers, there was no uniformity. Different levels of wages and different types of service conditions prevailed in different Banks. Hence arose the demand amongst officers to remove such differences and discriminations. When these demands became loud enough, Government appointed Pillai Committee to look into and suggest standardisation of wages and service conditions for officers.

When Pillai Committee Report came and its recommendations adversely affected the service conditions of officers, officers organisations raised hue and cry.

At that time AIBEA was bitterly fighting the Morarji Desai Government for the 3rd Bipartite Settlement and against imposition of Boothalingam Committee DA formula which was proposed to reduce the DA of Bank employees.

At the same time, officers organisations were also up in arms and were crying foul against the retrograde recommendations of Pillai Committee. A joint call was given for indefinite strike from 2nd February, 1979.

Those who were shouting 'Pillai Committee Down Down' and were ready for indefinite strike, suddenly backtracked and demanded implementation of Pillai Committee recommendations and withdrew from the joint indefinite strike call. AIBEA-minded officers felt betrayed and thus the need was felt for founding an organization for Bank Officers on the lines and orientation of AIBEA. Thus was born our AIBOA on 13-2-1981.

The architect leader of AIBEA, Com. Prabhat Kar took a pioneering role in founding AIBOA and wanted AIBEA and AIOBA to work together against common hurdles and obstacles. Thus AIBEA and AIBOA became the twin banners to fight with a common goal.

Before the formation of AIBOA, there were no industry-level discussions with the Officers associations and after every wage revision award/settlement for workmen, each Bank extended some benefits to the officers on their own. But with the advent of AIBOA in the scene, with the efforts of Com Prabhat Kar, for the first time, IBA was compelled to discuss with Officers Associations and the first Joint Note on wage revision was signed in 1984.

Since then, this has become the trade union right for bank officers and 8 such Joint Notes have been signed IBA and Officers Associations. This is an important contribution of AIBOA for the community of officers.

To the apparent eye, it looks as though there is always a conflict between the interest of workmen and interest of officers and hence these two sections can never go together or work together. There is no doubt that the role and responsibilities of officers are quite different from the role and duties of workmen employees. But this does not mean it is a conflict. The only difference is that the workmen employees are covered by the protective provisions of Industrial Disputes Act while officers are not. But the redeeming point is that both are covered by the provisions of Trade Unions Act.

Notwithstanding the distinct role and duties in the workplace, AIBEA believes that both employees and officers are wage earners and hence are subject to the same vagaries of exploitation at the hands of managements and Government. Hence, beyond the cadre differentiation, AIBEA always believes that as far as trade union is concerned, the role of employees and officers are only supplementary and complimentary and not contradictory.

Hence there is every scope and need for employees and officers to work together and move together. This is the philosophy of AIBEA. This is the orientation of AIBEA.

The days before us are challenging times. Ruthlessness of capitalism is nakedly visible. Willingness of the Government to succumb to Corporate machinations are in full display. All those who make a living with their wages are bound to face further stress and strain. Hence it is in our interest to move together. Here comes the efficacy of AIBEA-AIBOA.

While we greet AIBOA on this happy and momentous occasion, it is important to realise that we need to nurture, nourish and navigate the twin banners in the right direction.

In the context of present-day challenges, there is an imperative need to further cement the bondage of fraternity between AIBEA and AIBOA and work together for a stronger AIBEA and AIBOA.

With greetings,

Yours comradely,



C.H. VENKATACHALAM
GENERAL SECRETARY