



# ALL INDIA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

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## Remembering Com. RJS on his death anniversary



## R.J. SRIDHARAN

( 26-10-1948 - 15-6-2013)

( President, AIBOA : 1986 – 1992)

(General Secretary, AIBOA : 1992- 2011)

(Chairman, AIBOA : 2011 – 2013 till his death)

**Com R. J. Sridharan**, affectionately and popularly called as RJS, was born on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1948 in a typical middle class family. After completing his graduation in St. Joseph's College in Trichy, like anyone else, he was in search of a job and he joined Canara Bank as an Apprentice Clerk in 1969.

Right from the beginning, his young mind was attracted to trade union philosophy and he was greatly inspired and influenced by courageous and dynamic leadership of Com C.S Subramanian, the then General Secretary of Canara Bank Employees union. Very soon,

Com RJS was found active in union activities and started showing up his innate leadership qualities.

Com. C S could sense the leader in this young comrade and soon he was spotted to be a potential leader. Com RJS also had the privilege of tutelage and baptism in trade union rudiments from Com K R Narasimha Rao, one of the founding leaders of Canara Bank Employees Union.

By his clarity of thought on organisational issues and effective oratory skills, Com RJS also attracted the attention of many in the organisation and the leader in Com RJS was fast blossoming.

Since Canara Bank Employees Union was an all-cadre composite union consisting of both workman and officers, Com RJS continued his trade union activities even after his promotion to officer cadre.

When as per the decision of AIBEA, All India Bank Officers Association was founded as a distinct trade union body to represent the bank officers sharing the same vision and perception of AIBEA, the doors were opened for Com RJS to show his mettle in the officers trade union movement.

When in 1983, Canara Bank Officers Union was formed under the banner of AIOBA, Com R S Sridharan was the obvious and popular choice to become its General Secretary in which post he was repeatedly re-elected till 2006 when he chose to become its President.

When AIOBA Conference was held in 1986 after the demise of Com Prabhat Kar, founder President of AIOBA, Com. RJS became the choice to be elected as the National President of AIOBA. He was just 38 years of age at that time.

The illogical 'active service' theory of IBA to shut out retired officers from negotiations, though created hurdles for Com P K Menon to take part in the talks with IBA, yet created opportunity for Com RJS to manifest his abilities in negotiations and soon earned a name for himself.

In 1992, in the Chennai Conference of AIOBA, he was elected as the General Secretary which post he adorably and admirably held till 2011 when he opted to become the Chairman of AIOBA. During his tenure, he tried constantly to boost the reputation of AIOBA and was trying to give a special identity for the organisation. He envisioned and planned blueprint for the organisation's future growth and continuously tried to achieve these objectives.

In every negotiations with IBA for wage revision, he made an ineradicable mark and indelible stamp of his contribution. As General Secretary of AIOBA, he took part in concluding the wage revision process successfully in 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010.

He kept AIBOA totally on the side of AIBEA, when Com. Tarakeswar Chakraborti was fighting a fierce battle to clinch pension settlement amidst all odds and against hurdles created by other unions. Similarly, he played a very supportive role in clinching one more option for pension to thousands and thousands of PF optees. While making all attempts to take AIBOA forward, he always kept AIBEA on the higher pedestal.

He had a wonderful bandwidth in his style of working by which he could adjust with others when warranted and differ when required. But in whatever he did, he was clear in his perceptions and kept the interest of AIBOA in mind.

Com RJS had the ability to look beyond his nose and this was amply manifested when he raised the slogan and demand for regulated working hours for the officers, an idea which was otherwise not thought of by others. He also pursued this issue vigorously in every platform and no wonder this became a focal issue during the last wage revision negotiations.

Com.RJS had a wonderful way of always thinking little out of box. When even Central Trade Unions had not thought of establishing a fund for Unorganised Sector workers, it was Com.RJS under whose leadership, initiative was taken by AIBOA and the ball has been set in motion. Couple of beneficiaries have been granted the support from that amount also.

He had a strong vision that upgrading the knowledge from time to time is an inevitable exercise for Bank officers in the ever changing Banking scenario due to advent of technology and in the digitalization era. Keeping in view of emerging necessities of the work situation, he took all steps to build the dream project at Mamallapuram and remembered the yeomen service rendered by the legendary leader Com. Tarak and the Institute is named "Tarak Institute of Banking & Trade Union Research".

The house journal "TWO ROSES" was launched during his tenure to channelise the efforts to educate the Bank officers on the present day crisis situation concerning the Nation as well as Industry.

Com. RJS worked closely with senior leaders like Com. Tarakeswar Chakraborti, Com N. Sampath and Com. D.P. Chadha, and also won their appreciation for his timely and alternative solutions offered often by him during the testing times of twin banners movement in the Industry.

His commitment to the working class ideology made him to be closely associated with the AITUC and its leaders at the national and State level. He did not suffer from any inhibition or embarrassment to identify himself and the organisation with the cause of working class and general trade union movement and was in the forefront in making AIBOA to take part in all common struggles and strike actions despite difficulties created by non-participation of other officers organisations.

He was an ardent communist due to his conviction in Marxism and that sustained him to remain in the movement without any oscillation or vacillation.

By sheer stint of his hard work in our movement coupled with his unshakeable conviction in

working class ideology along with a crusading determination to champion the cause of the bankmen, Com. RJS had become an outstanding leader of our movement in his own right. He became an acknowledged harbinger of the cause of bank officers and added to the credibility and reputation of AIBOA. He also played a very significant role in the UFBU. He had his vision and perceptions and moved steadfastly towards his convictions. He also had a lot of dreams for AIBOA and worked to fulfill the same.

Unfortunately, he suffered from cardiac and connected ailments but despite his failing health and against Doctor's advice, Com. RJS was straining himself for the cause of his trade union work. This deteriorated his health further and on 15-6-2013, Com RJS passed away creating a big void and vacuum in the organisation.

By his qualities of head and heart, Com. RJS had endeared himself to one and all.

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