

ALL INDIA BANK OFFICERS' CONFEDERATION

(Registered under the Trade Unions Act 1926, Registration No.3427/Delhi)

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To All Affiliates (Please Circulate)

Fraternal Support to Nationwide General Strike on 8th January, 2020 called by Central Trade Unions

The National Open Mass Convention of Workers comprising of various Central Trade Unions of the country viz. INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, AICCTU, SEWA, LPFUTUC and so on, convened on 30th September, 2019, chalked out a series of agitation programmes culminating in a nationwide general strike on 8th January, 2020. The Joint National Forum of Peasants Organisations has also come in support of this general strike, based on their 12 point charter of demands. Five constituents of UFBU have separately given a call for a one day all India bank strike on the same date in support of the charter of demands adopted by the National Convention of Workers and against banking reforms and unwarranted merger of banks.

02. You are aware that the country has been experiencing a continuous and all-pervading economic slowdown as has been reflected in the official statistics published by RBI, continuing job losses, skyrocketing unemployment, deepening impoverishment and steep decline in average level of earnings. On the other hand, the nation has been witnessing aggressive and reckless move for privatisation of strategic CPSUs / SPSUs and government sector including defence production, public sector banks, state sector insurers, railways, public road transport, ports, coal, power, steel and so on, through different routes such as disinvestment, strategic sale / outsourcing in favour of private sector, replacement of indigenous capabilities by allowing multinationals to have control of strategic national productive assets, 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in vital areas such as railways, coal, defence *et al* and abnormal widening of economic inequalities. Even RBI was compelled to transfer Rs 1.76 lakh crore of 'surplus' reserves to contain the budget deficit caused by tax concession unduly extended to the corporates.

03. Now, introduction of Acts like Wage Code Bill, Code on Occupational Health, Safety and Working Condition and Reform of Labour Laws have all set in motion a process which has a highly destructive impact on the livelihoods and democratic rights of the entire working class. The government has also announced its intention to introduce two more codes: Code on Social Security and Code on Industrial Relation, which together with the bills / codes already introduced by the Union Government, are effectively aiming at imposing condition of extreme exploitation on the working mass of the country.

04. The government has announced mega merger of 10 public sector banks into 4 ignoring the strong protest lodged by AIBOC singlehandedly and jointly under the banner of UFBU ignoring the negative impact of previous round of mergers on banking services. The interest rate on deposit rates is being lowered continuously for giving more and more concessions to the corporates. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016 legitimises syphoning of the bank money by the crony corporate defaulters, while the genuine demands of the bank employees / officers as well as of the bank retirees are being systematically neglected under the plea of scrawny financials of the bank and 'lack of paying capacity'.

05. The task before the trade union movement today is to further intensify the surging struggles in various sectors through a concerted united agitation and mobilisation for action. We, at AIBOC, strongly

support the just and legitimate demands raised by the National Open Mass Convention of Workers. AIBOC also notes with gratitude that the Convention has extended its full support to the on-going struggle of the bank employees and officers against the arbitrary and ill-conceived decision of one more round of mega merger of banks despite utter failure of the earlier series of unfortunate bank mergers / amalgamations that have caused huge plight to the common man, demanding scrapping of National Pension Scheme and replacement of the same by Old Pension Scheme, stringent measures to recover defaulted loans from corporate borrowers, adequate recruitments in banks and expeditious wage revision of bankmen.

06. Some of the constituents of UFBU, have also called a Bank strike on 8th January, 2020, in support of the Central Trade Union strike call. Meanwhile, on 10th December, 2019, AIBOC along with other Constituents of UFBU, have organised a Maha Dharna before Parliament against the proposed mega merger of 10 PSU banks into 4 and retrograde banking reforms being pursued by the government, and in support of demands for decreasing abnormal service charges being charged on bank customers, initiating stringent action against defaulter borrowers, increasing interest rate on bank deposits and adequate recruitments in all banks among others. Leaders from different Central Trade Unions and lawmakers addressed the Dharna and greeted all success to it.

07. Needless to emphasise that there are huge commonalities between the demands on which the Dharna was organised on 10th December, 2019 and those which form the grounds of the Nationwide General Strike at the call given by various trade unions / organisations. In other words, the issues of general strike are very close to our heart and in consonance with our demands. The mounting challenge on the life and existence of the working class and organised trade union movement has to be combated with renewed focus, determination and militancy.

08. Against the above backdrop, the National Executive Committee of AIBOC, the largest apex Trade Union of bank officers, which had met at Delhi on 26th & 27th December, decided to extend its total fraternal support to the Nationwide strike call given by Central Trade Unions, independent Federations and Associations and Joint National Forum of Peasants Organisations and also the coordinated call for Nationwide bank strike given separately by some constituents of UFBU and request our affiliates and state units to act accordingly for the cause. We request our State and District Units and all affiliates to be present and address Dharnas / Demonstrations / gatherings convened in support of the strike, if invited, so as to convey our whole-hearted fraternal support to the cause.

09. We also advise our affiliates that our members ***shall not demand or accept any keys and shall not perform any clerical duties*** on the day of the strike.

With vibrant greetings,

Yours sincerely,



(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary
