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PRESS STATEMENT

AIIEA EXTENDS SOLIDARITY TO THE ALL INDIA DEMANDS DAY OF FRONTLINE CORONA WARRIORS

The Frontline Corona warriors are observing All India Demands Day on 14 May 2020 as per the call of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU). They are demanding adequate safety measures for the frontline corona warriors including protection of the labour laws which are under attack today. The All India Insurance Employees' Association (AIIEA) extends solidarity with the demands of the frontline workers and reiterates its support to the thousands of corona warriors toiling day in and day out for the protection of the country and its people.

The COVID19 pandemic has already taken a heavy toll in terms of loss of lives and livelihoods. As the total number of corona infected cases keeps mounting, so also the number of infected frontline workers. According to media reports, more than 500 doctors, nurses and paramedics across the country have already been infected. This figure does not include field workers, ward boys, sanitation workers, security guards, lab attendants, peons, laundry and kitchen staff etc. There are reports that a large number of police personnel and journalists have also been affected. Workers in the unorganised sector have been the worst sufferers. It is a tragedy that quite a large number of these vulnerable sections of the workers are working without any protective gear and other safety measures. These workers deserve more than the mere clanging of bells, banging of utensils and showering of petals. The government should immediately provide safety gears to these workers, PPEs for those engaged in red zones and containment areas. There has to be adequate insurance coverage of the frontline workers and their family members.

The AIIEA is also greatly disturbed that rather than attending to the genuine needs and concerns of the working people in India, particularly the corona warriors, the government has mounted a savage attack on the hard-earned rights of the workers through wholesale changes in protective labour laws. The government has now allowed a 12-hour working day. The Uttar Pradesh government has issued an ordinance exempting existing and new industries from the purview of labour laws for three years. The Madhya Pradesh government has exempted new businesses from labour laws for a thousand days. The COVID-19 induced crisis is now being utilised to promote the interests of capital at the expense of labour.

While expressing its strongest opposition to the anti-worker policies of the government, the All India Insurance Employees' Association demands adequate safety measures for the frontline workers and requests the President of India not to give his consent to any of the anti-worker ordinances. The AIEA expresses solidarity to the frontline workers and calls upon all sections of the working people in India to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Corona warriors at this moment of crisis.


General Secretary