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To,
All the Zonal/Divisional/State/Regional Units

No end to Corona Crisis in Sight
Hunger and Destitution Stalk the Streets
Employees' Contributions touch Rs.5 Crore
AIEA Once Again Stands with the Poor

The Covid19 pandemic has been spreading very fast in India. At the time of writing this, more than 1,10,000 people have been infected. Total deaths are in excess of 3300. Almost two months into the nationwide lockdown now, the government seems to be clueless. Barring the salutary exception of the left ruled state of Kerala, almost all the state governments seem to have been overwhelmed by the sweep and scale of the crisis. India stares at a grave humanitarian crisis. The poor and marginalized have been the hardest hit. Migrant workers stranded in the cities and on the highways continue to bear the brunt of governmental apathy and neglect. Deaths due to hunger and exhaustion may soon overtake deaths due to the virus infection.

The AIEA was therefore right in its assessment that it could not remain a mute spectator at this hour of crisis. The AIEA decided to intervene to provide some relief to the people in distress. We are happy that our units across the country responded very well to the AIEA's call for humanitarian intervention. Till now, the units of AIEA from across the country have remitted over Rs.3.71 crore to their respective Chief Minister's Relief Funds. This apart, our units have spent over Rs.1 crore in undertaking direct relief distribution measures, taking the total collections from the employees close to a massive Rs.5 crore. The zone wise breakup of the amounts collected is as follows: Central Zone- Rs.13.25 lakhs, East Central Zone- Rs.22.25 lakhs, Eastern Zone- Rs.11.95 lakhs, North Central Zone- Rs.11.56 lakhs, Northern Zone- Rs.37.42 lakhs, South Central Zone- Rs.51.31 lakhs, South Zone- Rs.2.62 crore, Western Zone- Rs.14.73 lakhs and General Insurance Sector- Rs.14 lakhs. With a massive mobilization of Rs.1.57 crore, Kerala units have been the biggest contributor followed by Tamil Nadu Divisions with an equally impressive contribution of Rs.1.04 crore. **Kozhikode** Divisional Unit alone has made a huge contribution of Rs.65.62 lakhs. **Thrissur**, **Ernakulam** and **Kottayam** in Kerala and **Coimbatore** in Tamil Nadu have also made good contributions. The response of our comrades all over the country has been overwhelming. We give a brief overview of the relief activities being undertaken by our units in this phase.

The relief efforts undertaken by our units has opened up new vistas of human relationships. Our comrades have experienced quite unique incidents during the course of relief distribution. The tea garden workers in West Bengal are having a tough time these days. Underfed and underpaid, they are staring at a bleak and rather uncertain future. Naturally therefore the eyes of 610 tea garden workers in **Joypur Tea Garden**, in a suburb of Jalpaiguri,



Jalpaiguri

lit up and faces radiated a new hope when our comrades of

Jalpaiguri division distributed food materials among them. Addressing an impromptu meeting of the workers, the local CITU leader profusely thanked our comrades and said that the relief efforts being undertaken by AIEA units all over India was symbolic of AIEA's class solidarity with workers in distress all over the country. Our units in **Guwahati, Howrah, Kolkata** and many other centres have also taken up relief activity in a big way.



Raipur

Our comrades in **Raipur** distributed more than 20,000 food packets through community kitchen. They distributed ration kits to 300 families. 2500 kg of banana and more than 6000 kg of vegetables were distributed with CITU & MPMSRU. They have been providing food packets to migrant workers passing through Raipur from different parts of the country.

Our comrades are working with other social organizations to provide transportation to the migrant workers. Our units in **Bilaspur, Raigarh, Bhopal** and **Gwalior** are also actively engaged in providing relief to the needy. Relief activities were taken up by our units in Bangalore, **Belgaum, Dharwad, Mysore, Shivamogga, Udupi, Warangal, Kadapa, Nellore, Puttur** and **Vishakhapatnam. Rajahmundry** and **Machilipatnam** are the two divisional units that deserve a special mention for the tireless efforts they have made in providing relief. Relief activities were taken up by almost all branch units of these two divisional units.

A delegation of NZIEA **Delhi Divisional Committee I** met **Sri Manish Sisodia, Deputy Chief Minister of Government of NCT Delhi** and handed over a DD for Rs.3,67,537/- towards the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. We are happy to inform that in spite of the difficult situation in Jammu & Kashmir, our Srinagar Divisional Unit could mobilise Rs.2,28,200/- towards the cause of the suffering people. One comrade Kasturi Lal Gupta of Udhampur Branch Unit



Delhi I

under Srinagar Division did a great job of humanitarian intervention by single handedly taking up relief work among the poor and

destitute people. Our units in **Ajmer, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jalandhar and Rohtak** also did a good job so far as mobilization of funds was concerned.



Srinagar

Maharashtra and Gujarat are the two states facing a grave situation due to the Covid19 pandemic. Life has been thrown completely out of gear in these two states. But even in this grim situation **Western Zonal Unit** has managed to contribute more than Rs.14 lacs to the Chief Minister's Relief Funds. Our units in **Kanpur, Allahabad and Varanasi** are also involved in relief activities.

The three states of Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand are facing a tough situation. Large number of migrant workers are coming back to these states almost on a daily basis. The reverse migration of poor, hungry and severely tired workers has created an unimaginably pathetic situation especially in the state of Bihar. Our comrades at many centres have intervened to help these people. Our comrades in **Aurangabad** Branch centre under Patna D.O. I along with class I officers, development officers, agents and policy holders have been providing food to the migrant workers since the last eight days. **Hazaribagh** divisional unit has done a commendable job in the matter of funds mobilization where all the employees have contributed one day's salary to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund at the call of the organization.

General Insurance units across India have taken up relief activities in a big way. They have mobilized funds to the tune of around Rs.14 lakh for different Chief Ministers' Relief Funds. Kerala units have contributed the lion's share of the funds. Our general insurance comrades in **Chennai, Madurai, Hyderabad, Patna, North East, Bangalore region and West Bengal**



South Zone

State have done particularly good work in relief distribution. However, what our comrades of **Chennai region** have been doing in Chennai and Vellore under the leadership of Com. G. Anand is something outstanding. For the last 43 days, as at the time of writing this, they have been providing

food and essential groceries to the poor and marginalized. Our

comrades along with some philanthropists collected a sum of Rs. 13.16 lakhs for the relief work. They received tremendous support from different mass organisations, Street Vendors Association, Unorganised Workers' Associations in identifying the beneficiaries and needy. They took great care in collecting the details of these beneficiaries like ID, contact numbers, residential addresses etc. before commencing the distribution of relief. **Based on the needs of the families**, they distributed grocery packets worth Rs.1000/- each among 1137 families, grocery packets worth Rs.750/- each among 180 families, grocery packets worth Rs.360/- each among 31 families and Rice was distributed among 766 families. As on the date of writing this, they have taken delivery of 2000 kgs of rice from Kalambur which they have planned to distribute among sanitary workers in Chennai.

As already mentioned earlier, it has all along been a learning experience for our comrades. Our comrades were treated to poignant yet inspiring tales of human endurance in the course of their work. When our comrades went to distribute relief in a small village of basically tribal people, Karasangai near Padappai, the villagers politely refused to accept our packets. Not because they were unhappy with our comrades; but because they had already received some grocery items



GIEA South Zone, Chennai

from the village VAO. They guided our volunteers to

another place where some people had not received any relief till then. What a powerful lesson on the virtue of 'honesty'! While the police have had to face much criticism for their harsh treatment of the people seen to be violating the lockdown, our comrades were

invited by the police personnel for dinner at some places in recognition of AIIEA's commitment to the poor and downtrodden. It has been an exhilarating experience indeed.

The response of our comrades and units has brought one issue into sharp focus. It contrasts the empathy, compassion and solidarity of our members with the apathy, indifference and contempt of the ruling elites towards the downtrodden. The response of our comrades is significant not so much for the huge sum they mobilized as for the class solidarity that they exhibited during the course of the relief distribution. AIIEA is thankful to each and every member of the organization for their commitment, dedication and indomitable spirit. AIIEA conveys its deep sense of gratitude to our members, well wishers, fraternal organisations and the administration at all levels for their help, support and guidance. We have once again shown through our actions that **AIIEA stands with the poor**. It stands with poor because it is socially committed. It undertakes these tasks not as a matter of charity but as an act of solidarity. The AIIEA abhors the inequalities in India. It is committed to struggle along with all progressive forces for the construction of a just, fair and equal society where every citizen of our great country lives with dignity.

With Greetings,

Comradely Yours



General Secretary