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

COM. CHANDRASEKHAR BOSE TURNS HUNDRED

The doyen of insurance employees' movement, the founding member of AIIEA and beloved leader of generations of insurance employees, Com. Chandrasekhar Bose, turns hundred on the 14th of December 2021. We join thousands of insurance employees and their family members all over the country in conveying warm birthday greetings to Com. Bose on his hundredth birthday. We also take this opportunity to place on record our gratitude to Com. Bose for his enormous contribution to improve the lives of insurance employees even at the cost of great personal sacrifices.

Com. Chandra Sekhar Bose is a living history of the insurance employees' movement in India. Born on 14th December 1922 in the village Panjia under Jessore district (now in Bangladesh) of undivided India, Com. Bose joined Hindustan Co-operative Insurance Company in the pre-nationalisation days. Coming from a well-educated middle-class family, he had many choices including a very rewarding career in the insurance industry. But he chose to work to ameliorate the gruelling working conditions in the private insurance industry. It was not easy to take the initiative for organizing the employees under private management in the pre-independence days. Countless hurdles and dangers had to be confronted on the way. Com. Bose however could do it because of his irrepressible courage, self-confidence, unfathomable love for his fellow workers and above all because of his firm political beliefs and commitment to the ideology of the working class.

Com. Bose was drawn to the national liberation movement at a very young age. It was during this period that he came in contact with the stalwarts of the freedom movement and firmed up his political beliefs. He was clear right from his formative years that injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere. The trial of the imprisoned soldiers of the Indian National Army and the mutiny of the naval ratings in Bombay (now Mumbai) rekindled a new revolutionary zeal in the young Chandrasekhar Bose. He like many of his contemporaries had hoped that freedom from British colonial rule would usher in freedom for the working class, peasantry and other toiling sections of society and ensure a decent life for all of them. But his hopes were dashed when that did not happen. This further motivated him to carry on the struggle for the true emancipation of the working class. He has never looked back since then.

The Hindustan Cooperative Insurance where Com. Bose was working was the second biggest life insurance company in India then. Owned by a Congress leader and minister, the company was a hotbed of exploitation. The monthly salary of the employees was a pittance; only Rs.40! The efforts that began in uniting the employees against the exploitative working conditions in the private insurance companies finally culminated in the formation of the All India Insurance Employees' Association (AIIEA) in 1951.

The formation of the AIIEA was the turning point in the life and struggle of the insurance employees. Com. Bose played a stellar role in bringing together employees from all over the country under the banner of the AIIEA. Ever since he has not only been associated with all movements of the AIIEA, he has imparted leadership and vision to all the struggles of the AIIEA. Be it the struggle for nationalization of life insurance, struggle for standardization of wages after nationalization, struggle to secure bonus for LIC employees defeating the government's decision of 'no bonus in nationalized industry', struggle to secure D.A. based on price index, struggle to introduce LTC, the glorious struggle against automation in the sixties, struggle for nationalization of general insurance, the long and arduous struggle to defeat the lockout, struggle against the ill-conceived move to split the LIC into five independent corporations, the struggle to secure pension for the insurance employees, epic struggle against the privatization of public sector insurance industry, struggles for wage negotiations and efforts to bring about improvements in the material life of insurance employees- all these bear the unmistakable imprint of Com. Chandra Sekhar Bose's skillful negotiations, careful strategizing, masterclass planning for agitation and flawless execution.

Com. Bose is something more than a mere trade unionist. A gentleman to the core, his cool and amiable temperament coupled with his persuasive manner can convert even a sworn enemy into a lifelong friend. He is an inexhaustible reservoir of patience. He is not only a leader, but a leaders' leader. He has identified, nurtured and groomed generations of leaders and activists for the organization. Almost all the leaders of the AIIEA-past and present- have grown under his tutelage only. It would be a truism to say that the biggest strength of Com. Bose is the strength of his character. Many of his contemporaries would say that even in the realm of thought Com. Bose cannot be false. Com. Amanulla Khan would often say that Com. Bose perfectly fits the description of that brilliant American playwright James Maxwell Anderson who said: "There are some men who lift the age they live in, till all men walk on higher ground in that lifetime."


He is going to be a centenarian now. Not a day passes when he is not concerned about the organization. He is an active social media user at this age who can toggle between WhatsApp and Facebook with the agility of a twenty-year-old. It is nothing short of adventurous to write about such a great man. The legendary leader of AIIEA Com. Saroj Chowdhury used to quote Thomas Mann to describe Com. Bose as the 'complete man'. Com. Saroj had written long back: "In future when some historian writes the history of the middle-class trade union movement of India, it will contain a significant part being the multifarious and vast flow of activities of Com. Chandrasekhar Bose. Our glory consists in our being his comrades, co-workers and contemporaries"

The AIIEA along with thousands of its members all over the country wishes Com. Chandra Sekhar Bose a very happy hundredth birthday and hopes that he will continue to guide the insurance employees' movement in the future too.

Red Salute Com. Chandrasekhar Bose!!

With Greetings,

Comradely Yours



General Secretary