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“ AIBEA completes 67 years” entering 68th year on 20th April, 2013

Circular No. 16/2013

For Members only Dear Comrades, “ AIBEA completes 67 years” entering 68th year on 20th April, 2013 We advise all the members to observe AIBEA’s 68th Foundation Day in a befitting manner as per programmes decided by the respective Local Federations . We reproduce hereunder the contents of Circular No.27/07/2013/13 dated 14/03/2013 issued by Com. C .H. Venkatachalam, General Secretary, AIBEA, on the above subject for information of our Members. After completing 67 glorious years of existence, our beloved AIBEA will be entering the 68th year on 20th April, 2013 “ the red letter day for bank employees of our country. We have been celebrating our founding day year after year, but this year, the founding day has a special significance. Only a month ago we witnessed, the grandeur of the 27th Conference of our great organisation wherein we also explored new vistas and dimensions for our onward march to meet the emerging challenges of the ensuing decade. We had also discussed about the seriousness of the challenges emerging before us in the movement. We had resolved to strategise our activities, focus on the priorities and make our organisation more stronger in order to effectively meet the challenges of the decade. We feel rejuvenated, more oriented and see great opportunities to further unite, to struggle and to achieve. It is in this background of challenges and opportunities that we will be celebrating our 68th Founding Day this year. **LET US REMEMBER:** When we talk of our founding day, we cannot but look back and think of our founding fathers, architects and the pioneers who have built up our beloved organisation all these years. We must recall the sacrifices of that generation of bank employees, who, by their unity, struggles and abiding faith in the organization, greatly contributed for the advancement of our movement in championing the cause of the Bank Industry in particular and working class in general. It has been a story of finding it as mud and turning it into gold. All the glory, reputation and achievements that we can boast of today are due to them. Our red salutes to them. Let us, as the proud inheritors of the movement, ever remain grateful and indebted to them all. **LET US NOT FORGET:** In those days, the living conditions of bank employees were so pitiable that a sympathetic daily newspaper wrote in its editorial lamenting why there is no one to espouse the cause of the bank employees while even for animals there was a society for prevention of cruelty to them. Such was the exploitation suffered by the bank employees at the hands of the then managements. Their wages were paltry, working conditions were insulting, working hours were unknown and job security was absent. Hire and fire was the rule of the day. Yet bank employees suffered in silence typical of their middle-class mindedness and only fervently hoped that things would change for the better someday. They did not muster courage to think of doing anything as they were afraid. A few who dared to think were victimised and finished off. It was sheer anarchy and virtual slavery. Bank employees were like bonded labour. **THE TURN:** The situation prevalent was so intolerable that some employees who were working in the banks started not only to think but also dared to act. The freedom struggle was at its peak. Working class and trade union movement was in the forefront, both, in the freedom struggle and in fighting for workers’ cause. Inspired, these daring employees started forming some trade unions for bank employees. It was the period of the beginning of the 1940s and the post-World War II scenario. But some of them also realised that unless we unite at national level, it would be difficult to take on the offensives of the managements. Employees also started to slowly realise that fear was no solution to their suffering and plight. The tide was turning. **BIRTH OF THE TINY PLANT:** Sensing this changing mood, some pioneers took the initiative and decided that an all India trade union organisation for bank employees had to be founded. The result was that a Preparatory Committee was formed in November, 1945, in Calcutta. And then, on the 20th April, 1946, AIBEA was formally launched in the foundation conference held in Calcutta. The vision was clear and their mission was loud and clear. The sapling was planted. It is difficult to fathom today whether even those founders would have imagined at that time that this sapling would grow into a mighty banyan tree of today’s magnitude and size. But

all this had come to pass because a few dared to act. **WHAT A WONDERFUL JOURNEY SINCE THEN:** The news that AIBEA had been founded percolated to the portals of here there and everywhere different banks and in different States. Unions started springing up at a feverish pace. Employees mustered more and more courage. Their suppressed feelings of anger, helplessness and humiliation found expression. They rallied behind the unions and bitter and prolonged struggles emanated in various Banks. The Government and the bankers sensed it. Banking which was till then a State subject, was brought under Central Government with a view to effectively "deal" with the bank employees. But this only added to the fillip and momentum of the movement. Unity and militant struggles became the order of the day. It started to yield results. To begin with, it was Tribunals and Awards. Later it transformed into unique bipartite settlements. It did not stop with fighting for wages and benefits. Our movement blossomed into a patriotic organisation by fighting for bank nationalisation. For the past two decades we have successfully resisted and thwarted privatisation of banks. In struggles and achievements, we have played a pioneering and trend-setter role. It is all due to AIBEA. It has become a cynosure of all eyes and it has become the owner's pride and neighbour's envy. **BUT WE CANNOT BE DROWNED IN PAST GLORY:** Our past had been glorious. Our history is studded with struggles and achievements. Our founding fathers are our inspiration and guide. Com. Prabhat Kar, Com H L Parvana, Com. Tarakeswar Chakraborti, Com. D.P. Chadha, Com. K.K. Mundal, Com. N.S. Purao, Com. T.K.V. Nair, Com. A.V.G. Nair, Com. P.K. Menon, Com. A. Sundara Rao, Com. H.S. Grewal, Com. Tushar Chakraborti, Com. Tara Das, Com. Ajit Bannerjee, Com. Rajender Sayal, Com. C.S. Subramanian, and many such others have been our glittering stars. We have our living giants like Com. P.L. Syal, Com. Sushil Ghosh, Com. N. Sampath, Com. K.J. Joseph, Com. P.S. Sundaresan and others who have led our movement with grit and determination. They sacrificed their precious present days for our safe tomorrow. They have built up a tradition. They have handed down a legacy for us to nourish and cherish. They have bequeathed to us the tradition of unity and legacy of struggle. Our bounden duty is to carry forward this worthy tradition and legacy and keep it alive. This should be our resolve on this Founding Day. **MULTIPLYING CHALLENGES AND MULTIPLE TASKS:** When we are proud of the past, we know that we have to face many challenges. Challenges to our jobs, our job security, job permanency, job conditions, wages and benefits, preserve our hard-won trade union rights, challenges to public sector banking and social orientation of banking policies - challenges to all that has been achieved by AIBEA in the last 67 years. Government's economic policies are surely drifting in favour of the rich and against the common masses. It is overtly and covertly promoting neo-liberalism. When trade unions and workers unite and fight against these anti-people policies, more and more attacks will be mounted. Thus, it is a situation of multiplicity of challenges and multiple tasks. **REMINDE YOURSELVES OF THE CONFERENCE TASKS:** It is in this background that our Conference had outlined our tasks. To fight against attacks on job security, to fight for more recruitments and fight against outsourcing of our regular jobs. To fight for the success of public sector banking, we have to fight against privatisation and banking reforms. We have to fight against the avowed policy of the Government to issue banking licenses to corporate and business houses. We must fight against the present model of Banking Correspondents. We must expose the growing menace of bulging bad loans in the banks and the nexus behind it. We have to fight to make banking a fundamental right. Clarity of thought in our approach and strenuous struggles are the only way to counter these onslaughts. Militant struggles are the only way. Our past would be our guide but present struggles would alone be the guarantee to success. **ENSURE A STRONGER ORGANISATION:** To fight as above, we need a stronger organisation. We need to strengthen our organisation at all levels, from the apex to the grass-roots. The task is to further improve and strengthen our membership in every Bank and in every State. The task is to strengthen our AIBOA. The task is to strengthen our unions in the Co-op. Banks and RRBs. Our task is to improve the service conditions of our Daily Deposit Collectors. Our task is to train and develop more and more cadres for the organisation. Our task is to integrate the young employees into the militant path of our trade unions. Our task is to integrate our movement more and more with the general trade union movement and their struggles. **To sum up, our task is to strengthen AIBEA. Celebrate the 68th Founding Day of AIBEA. AIBEA richly deserves to be glorified and celebrated. We need to go forward, and for that, we have to take AIBEA forward. Let us take the pledge to hold our flag ever aloft.** With Greetings, Yours comradely, Inder Paul President

Ps: Badges and Poster are being sent alongwith this circular.