

## **CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE – CLARION CALL FROM UFBU**

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Meeting of the UFBU was held at Kolkata today, in the aftermath of our successful strike on 15th and 16th March, 2021 against the decision of the Government to privatise public sector banks and against the retrograde banking reforms. Congratulations: The meeting conveyed its congratulations and greetings to all the constituent unions and all our members all over the country for making the strike a massive success with unprecedented and enthusiastic participation of the rank and file. The meeting was appreciative of the determination exhibited by the employees and officers manifesting their unequivocal objection to the decision to privatise public sector banks. Â

Special kudos to youngsters: The meeting conveyed its special greetings to the younger generation of employees and officers who turned out in large number in the rallies and demonstrations. Support from Trade Unions :The meeting expressed its thankfulness to all the Central Trade Unions – BMS, INTUC, AITUC, HMS, CITU, AIUTUC, TUCC, AICCTU, SEWA, LPF, UTUC and BKS – for extending their support to our struggle. Similarly, the meeting was thankful to Samyukt Kisan Morcha representing 42 farmersâ€™ organisations for their support to the strike of UFBU. Many sectoral trade unions of employees and officers extended their support to our strike and the meeting conveyed its thanks to all of them. In the insurance sector, in addition to supporting our strike, the employees and officers of GIC and LIC also observed strike on 17th and 18th March against privatisation of insurance sector respectively. Support from political parties : The meeting was thankful to the various political parties – Congress, DMK, AITC, Shiv Sena, NCP, YSRC, TRS, TDP, AAP, SP, RJD, NCP, CPI, CPI-M, CPI-ML-L, VCK, and others for their support to our struggle. Many of their MPs also took up the issue in the Parliament on 15th and 16th and also addressing letters to the Government to reconsider the decision to privatise the Banks. Successful Mass Petition and Twitter Campaign: The meeting noted that our online Mass Petition campaign was endorsed by more than one lakh people and our twitter campaign was supported by more than 2,20,000 people including tweets by many political leaders and eminent public personalities. It wasÂ notable that our Hashtag – #BANK BACHAO DESH BACHAO – was trending at No.1 and made a mark on that day. Governmentâ€™s attitude: The meeting noted that despite our very successful strike, the Governmentâ€™s attitude was disappointing. On the other hand, during the press briefing, Finance Minister reiterated the Governmentâ€™s stand to privatise the Banks. The Finance Minister also clarified in a reply to a question in the Parliament that after necessary recommendations are received from NITI Aayog, the matter would be considered by the Alternative Mechanism and after that the Government would take a final decision. Hence, the meeting came to the conclusion that our campaign and struggle has to be further carried forward and intensified. However, the meeting noted that so far the Government has not come out with any specific Bill in the current Budget Session of the Parliament to amend the existing Banking Laws to facilitate privatisation of Banks. Get ready for more campaigns and struggles: In view of this, after discussions, it was felt that we must intensify our campaign amongst the people, particularly the beneficiaries and other sections of the people. To enable and to solicit the support of the people, it was decided to undertake a mass campaign of collection of supportive signatures in the petition to Prime Minister. It was also decided to undertake further preparatory programmes to involve the employees and officers to go for intermittent strikes, prolonged strikes and also indefinite strike. Keeping these in view, the following programmes have been decided upon: 1. Collection of 5 crore signatures from the people in the Petition to Prime Minister with a copy to the Honâ€™ble Speaker during April, May, June, 2021. 2. Organisational meetings at all levels during April, 2021 to ensure total membership contact. 3. Mass Rallies, Dharnas, Seminars, Workshops, etc. in all the States in April, May and June, 2021. (to be decided in respective States according to local convenience) 4. Nationwide Strikes, intermittent strike strikes, prolonged strikes as may be warranted looking to developments. (Dates to be announced later). 5. Strike call at short notice, if Government announces any decision on privatisation of banks. Details of campaign programmes to be undertaken in the next two months will be given in the next circular. Comrades, as everyone of us will understand and appreciate, we are facing the challenge on account of the Governmentâ€™s announcement to privatise public sector Banks. We are opposed to privatisation of Banks and we are convinced that privatisation is not the solution to the problems faced by the Banks. It is imperative that we should prepare ourselves for a prolonged and sustained struggle and also elicit support from the people. We call upon all our unions and members to prepare accordingly to make our struggle a successful one. Sd.. Sanjeev K Bandlish, Convener.