

# BANK FLAG

Monthly Organ of All India Bank Employees Association

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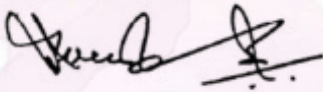


Birth centenary of our beloved leader  
**Com Tarakeswar Chakraborti**  
2nd June 2025 – 2nd June 2026

I do not know how long I will live but  
I want to live as long as I can.  
I have got a lot from this world.  
But I have given hardly anything in return.  
Everything on this earth has nursed me.  
It is so fascinating.  
I know there is no rebirth  
but as long as I live, it will be my aim and  
endeavour to be of some service  
in whatever capacity I can to the society.



(2.6.1926 - 2.5.2003)



**RED SALUTE**

Founder Editor - in - Chief : Late Tarakeswar Chakraborti  
Editorial Board : Kamal Bhattacharyya, Rajen Nagar, C.H. Venkatachalam, Sonali Biswas

# DEMONSTRATION & MASS MEETING ON 26 JUNE, 2025 IN SUPPORT OF 9TH JULY STRIKE



TNBEF, Chennai



BPBEA, Kolkata



MPBEA, Bhopal



APBEA, Guwahati

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The Finance Minister in an interview has said that there is no holding back on economic reforms. Ever since new economic policy was introduced the successive governments have talked about financial sector reforms mainly targeting the nationalized banks. Recommendation of Narasimham Committee to wide open the Banking Sector to private players has been implemented and we have seen new generation Private Bank came into being. It is a proven fact that for the planned development of the country's economy finance should be under state control. The present government at the Centre believes that bank should be privatized and left to the market's desire keeping only four banks under government's control which ultimately may also be sold out. This attitude of the government has resulted in shutting doors of the bank for common people. As a result, the gap between the rich and the poor are increasing every day. The major wealth of the nation is being cornered by a handful few. The cronies are having a hay day. Wealth of the nation be it mines, ports, airports, railways in parts are being handed over by the government to its cronies who have amassed fabulous wealth. To suit the corporate needs government has changed the labour laws and introduced four labour codes. Rights of the workers have been snatched away. Job permanency is going to be a thing of the past. Hire and fire are going to be rule of the day if we allow the labour reforms to be implemented. Some states have already done it. But as the part of the working-class movement bank employees cannot sit at rest. That is why it is our resolve to make the strike called by the Central Trade Unions and independent Trade Federations like AIBEA, a total success.

Struggle does not end on 9th July. Rather it is a day to resolve to intensify our struggle against anti-people and anti-worker and pro-corporate policy of the government.

## 9th July Strike – the Right Move To stop the country moving to the right

When our dear country was under subjugation by the British imperialism for nearly 200 years who came to India for trade and commerce, the struggle was for freedom and the then generation of people fought under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and the working class played a sterling role through their incessant struggles and making extreme sacrifices. After driving the British out and getting independence, our country has been forging ahead and making progress.

To accelerate the progress, public sector was evolved with huge investment from out of the public exchequer, that is people's money. Gigantic public sector infrastructure was created in all core sectors. Bank nationalisation was ushered in to utilize people's money for public welfare. Neglected sectors became priority sector for extending loans. Banking sector became the backbone of economic development. Socialistic pattern of growth and development became part of our constitutional objective.

Instead of further strengthening these policies to ensure broad-based and equitable economic growth, and in the process bridging and reducing the gap between the haves and have nots, policies of globalization, liberalization and privatisation was pushed in as our path. Since then, we have seen the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor and further marginalization of the poor. It is sad to read reports that India has the largest number of poor people in the world. This is surely not the India of our dreams for which our predecessors gave their lives and secured political freedom seventy eight years ago.

We are proud that we are the largest democracy in the world. This pride is not sustainable if the poor common masses suffer from neglect and deprivation. We can feel proud that our country's GDP is growing but how does it matter if the people at the bottom are not benefitted by this growth.

But we find that unmindful of this increasing widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, the same neo-liberal economic policies are being pursued vigorously, thus pushing our country from the balanced middle path. It is the duty of the working class to prevent this shift. Working class played its due role in securing political freedom. Today, we the working class, have our duty to fight for pro-people economic policies. 9th July General Strike is the right move. Let us make it a success.

  
C.H. Venkatachalam

# BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF COM. TARAKESWAR CHAKRABORTI

Commencement of Birth Centenary of Com. Tarakeswar Chakraborty  
Celebrations at AIBEA Headquarters, Chennai – 2nd June, 2025



Com. C H Venkatachalam,  
General Secretary, AIBEA,  
Paying floral tributes



Office-bearers of TNBEF and Bank-wise Unions gathered at  
TNBEF Office for floral tribute



Floral tribute by senior comrades



Blood Donation Camp organised to  
commemorate the occasion



Social Identification programme organised at  
Sister Nirmala Sishu Bhavan at Chennai

# CELEBRATION OF BIRTH CENTENARY OF COM. TARAKESWAR CHAKRABORTI BY BPBEA HEALTH CHECK UP AND BLOOD DONATION CAMP ORGANISED BY BPBEA



*Mr. Ashwani Pradhan, CMD, UCO bank inaugurating Blood Donation camp*



*Com. Rajen Nagar, President, AIBEA, General Secretary, BPBEA speaking on the occasion*



*Donating blood by the comrades*



*Com. Raejn Nagar handing over the certificate to a donar*



*Volunteers in action*

## HEALTH CHECK UP PROGRAMME AT BPBEA OFFICE, KOLKATA



**Birth Centenary Celebration  
Central Bank of India  
Employees Union & Officers Union, Tamilnadu**



**Social Identification Programme at Manasu Rehabilitation Home, Pallavaram by Central Bank of India Employees Union and Officers Union**

**Central Bank of India Employees Association &  
Central Bank of India Officers Union [WB & Sikkim]**

**Social Identification programme with Bodhipith, a home for the children with learning disabilities**



**Com Gopal Nag, General Secretary, CBIUO & Com Samaresh Ghosal, General Secretary, CBIEA [WB & Sikkim] jointly inaugurating the new gate of the Home. Unions contributed to rebuild the Home of Bodhipith**

**Dedicated in memory of Com Tarakeswar Chakraborti**



**Inmates of the Home**

**Lunch was provided by the Unions**

## ORGANISATIONAL NEWS

[We reproduce hereunder the circular issued by AIBEA, AIBOA and BEFI on 9 th July General Strike]

### March on to nationwide General Strike on 9th July, 2025

In view of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam and the subsequent developments, war tension in the border areas, etc., the Central Trade Unions postponed the General Strike to 9th July, 2025 and accordingly we also postponed our strike. The strike is to support the demands of the National Convention of Workers and to highlight the following demands:

- Strengthen Public Sector Banks and Insurance Companies**
- Stop privatisation and disinvestment in Banks and LIC**
- Stop 100% FDI Hike in Insurance sector**
- Merge Public Sector General Insurance Companies as one entity**
- Ensure adequate recruitments**
- Stop outsourcing and contract jobs**
- Scrap NPS– Restore OPS**
- Take tough measure to cover bad loans from Corporates**
- Reduce service charges in Banks for ordinary customers**
- Withdraw GST on life and health insurance premiums**
- Do not impose retrograde Labour Codes**
- Do not infringe upon trade union rights**

#### Agitational programme

<b>20-6-2025</b>	Serving Strike Notice on IBA, Government and all the Banks
<b>21-6-2025</b>	Releasing the Declaration of National Convention of Workers
<b>23-6-2025</b>	Release the posters and commencing g poster campaign
<b>25-6-2025 To 8-7-2025</b>	Hold meetings at various cities and towns

<b>8-7-2025</b>	Evening time demonstrations after office hours
<b>9-7-2025</b>	<b>FULL DAY STAY OUT STRIKE-</b> Holding rallies and demonstrations

Comrades, we are sure that all our Unions and members will understand the gravity of the increasing attacks because of the anti-people, anti-labour policies of the Government and appreciate the need for such united actions to resist and repulse these challenges. Hence wider campaign and mobilization amongst our membership is imperative and the next six weeks should be utilized to explain the significance of the strike call and to ensure the active participation of our members in the same.

We are happy that AIBOC, NCBE, INBEF and INBOC have extended their fraternal support to this strike. In our campaign meetings and demonstrations, etc. we can invite and request the trade unions in the banking and insurance sector who are extending their fraternal support to the strike call.

Please note that Strike Notice has been served on the IBA jointly by AIBEA, AIBOA and BEFI and hence individual Unions need not serve any separate Notice. Unions in RRBs and Co-op. Banks need to service the notice on the respective managements.

With greetings,

Yours comradely,

Sd..  
**C.H. VENKATACHALAM**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
AIBEA

Sd..  
**SANJAY KUMAR KHAN**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
AIBOA

Sd..  
**DEBASISH BASU CHOUDHARY**  
GENERAL SECRETARY  
BEFI

## Conciliation meeting held on 17-6-2025 by CLC

**UFBU CIRCULAR:** Our members are aware that consequent to our call for Strike, the Chief Labour Commissioner of the Ministry of Labour, Government of India, held two rounds of conciliation meetings on 18-3-2025 and 21-3-2025 wherein it was decided, in view of the discussions with the IBA and the officials of the Dept. of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance and the assurances of the CLC, to postpone our two days' strike action.

Subsequently, IBA had called us for bipartite discussions on 23-4-2025, the outcome of which has been informed to members in our previous circular. This was followed by conciliation meeting on 29-4-2025 the details of which have also been communicated to all our unions.

As a follow up of this, one more round of conciliation proceedings were held yesterday i.e. 17-6-2025 by the Chief Labour Commissioner. Representatives from the Dept. of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, IBA and Bank managements were present. From UFBU, representatives of our 9 unions were present.

Gist of the discussions held during the conciliation proceedings:

**5 Days Banking:** We pointed out that the strike was postponed only on the assurance of the DFS that the issue is receiving serious attention of the Government and since there has been no development in the issue. We informed the Government that if there is further delay in the matter, UFBU will be constrained to revive the strike call. The CLC informed that he has also taken up the issue with the DFS. DFS representatives explained that they are of the sensitivity of the issue and that the matter is under consideration of the Government though timeline can be committed on the same. We informed the IBA and Government that UFBU cannot wait indefinitely and that the UFBU is considering reviving the strike call.

**Increasing attacks on Bank staff in Branches :** We welcomed the communication sent by the Secretary, DFS to all the Chief Secretaries of the States and UTs to provide adequate safety

measures with instructions to issue suitable advisories to sensitize and instruct District Magistrates and the State Police to (i) Take all preventive measures to avoid such incidents in bank branches including deployment of local police/ patrolling during peak banking hours at vulnerable locations, (ii) Ensure prompt and effective response to such complaints by the designated law enforcement agencies and (iii) Take strong and deterrent action against perpetrators under relevant provisions. But we pointed out that such attacks still continue and quoted the instance that occurred in SBI, Dhule a few days ago. The CLC advised the IBA to follow up the matter and advise the Banks to take immediate steps to avoid any such occurrences in future.

**Revised PLI Scheme of the DFS for Scale IV officers and above:** We pointed out that even though the issue is under conciliation and hence the managements are expected to await further outcome of the proceedings, Punjab National Bank has implemented the PLI for employees and officers upto Scale III. CLC expressed his view that PNB management should not have done this when the issue is before him.

Representative of DFS that it is proposed to give flexibility to the Banks' Board for identification of officers in different brackets in each scale, within the ambit of the PLI scheme. However, we did not agree to this since according to us, any Incentive should be for collective performance. After a lot of discussions it was agreed that representatives of unions and the IBA would discuss the issue to come up with certain proposal within the ambit of the scheme.

Such proposal shall be submitted to the DFS for review of the present scheme in the light of the proposal so that a consensus may be arrived at in order to maintain smooth and cordial relation in the industry.

In the meantime, all the Banks are to await the outcome and not proceed with the implement of PLI for the year 2024-25.

**Recruitments and Outsourcing:** Some of the

Banks like Union Bank, Bank of Baroda, Indian Bank, SBI, Canara Bank and Punjab & Sind bank informed the details of the recruitments made for 2025-26 and the tentative intake for 2026-27. CLC opined that all the Banks should provide the details in order to understand the issue in totality in the light of the demands of the Unions. Hence it was decided that IBA would collect the necessary data before further discussions.

We pointed out that in respect of substaff, Banks are not resorting to recruitment in view of the minutes signed with DFS and this is resulting in huge unfilled vacancies and Banks employing casual and temporary employees for the same. Bank of Baroda management informed that they are going for recruitment of 500 substaff. We pointed out that managements are seeking to outsource these vacancies instead of recruiting regular employees. IBA informed that the issue of

areas of outsourcing needs to be discussed and resolved bilaterally as already advised by the CLC. CLC advised that IBA and the Unions have to sit together and bilaterally resolve the issue of recruitments and outsourcing.

**Enhancement in Gratuity limit:** We took up this issue and it was informed that the matter is under process at the Government level for increasing the limit to Rs. 25 lacs under the Gratuity Act.

**Appointment of Workman/Officer Directors:** We took up the issue and DFS representatives informed that the proposals sent by them to the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet – ACC are awaiting the approval.

The conciliation proceedings have been adjourned to 11th August, 2025 for further discussions.

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*[We reproduce hereunder UFBU circular on Bipartite discussion]*

## **Bipartite Talks with IBA on Group Medical Insurance Policy for employees, officers and retirees**

Further to last round of meeting with IBA held on 21-5-2025 on renewal of the policy for the year 2025-26 and for discussing improvements in the scheme, one more round of meeting took place today between IBA and UFBU in IBA's office in Mumbai. IBA was represented by their team led by Shri Rajneesh Karnatak, Chairman of the negotiating Committee (MD&CEO, Bank of India). From UFBU all our Unions participated in the meeting.

After discussion, it was agreed that this year also, it would be combined Policy covering both serving staff and retirees. While discussing the issue of improvement in base cover/sum assured, IBA informed that as per the statistical information available from the Insurance Company, it is observed that nearly 98% of the claims are below Rs. 3 lacs and about 85% of the claims ranged between Rs. 25,000 to Rs.30,000.

IBA also informed that an App is being developed by which claims upto Rs. 25,000 can be claimed digitally and to be settled without much hassle and

delay. IBA also informed that last year the total claim under buffer was around Rs. 103 crores against the limit of Rs. 100 crores.

After further discussions, the following have been agreed to be incorporated in the Policy for the ensuing year 2025-26:

1. The sum insured for
  - a. Award staff shall be increased to Rs.4 lakhs from the present level of Rs.3.00 lakhs
  - b. Officers upto Scale V :Increase to Rs.5.25 lakhs from the present level of Rs.4.00 lakhs
  - c. For scale VI and above: Increase to Rs.7 lakhs from the present level of Rs. 4.00 lakhs
2. Corporate Buffer Amount shall be increased to 125 Crores from the present level of 100 Crores
3. Cataract upper cap shall be Rs.40,000/- per eye.
4. Hormonal therapy for cancer and Immunotherapy for non-cancer to be included

5. Robotic surgery shall be considered in cases where the condition of patient warrants such treatment. This needs to be vetted by the treating doctor.

6. Thyroid cancer shall be included under critical illness

7. For retirees: Mentally/physically challenged Dependent family member shall be included by way of add-on. Premium to be paid by retiree/ spouse

8. Top-up options to be made available for Rs.1 lakh, 2 Lakhs and 3 Lakhs the premium of which shall be borne by the serving employee / retiree.

Based on the above, IBA would now take further steps to call for Tenders, etc. so that the Policy is renewed in time.

With greetings.

Yours comradely,

AIBEA

AIBOC

NCBE

AIBOA

BEFI

INBOC

INBEF

NOBW

NOBO

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## Increasing attacks & assaults in Branches DFS advisory to All State Governments

UFBU CIRCULAR :Our unions and members are aware that in the recent agitation and Strike Notice, we had highlighted the issue of increasing attacks and assaults on employees and officers in bank branches. During the conciliation meeting before the Chief Labour Commissioner, we pointed out that unruly customers and banking public are indulging in physical assaults on employees and officers in Branches and such customers also use abusing language on the staff members.

We demanded that in addition to Bank managements taking swift action on these erring customers, the State Governments should also ensure proper protection of bank staff. We also demanded that Banks should provide Security Staff/Armed Guards in the Branches.

The representatives of the Dept.of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, Government of India informed us in the conciliation that they also share our concerns and the issue will be escalated to the higher authorities.

Yesterday, the Secretary of the DFS has sent a communication to all the Chief Secretaries of the States as under:

**M.NAGARAJU SECRETARY**

**Government of India Ministry of Finance  
Department of Financial Services  
D.O. No. 9/9/7/2025-IR**

**4th June, 2025**

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Dear Chief Secretary,

Securing the availability of banking services to the public at all times is essential to enable households to meet their daily financial needs, access government welfare benefits through Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) and for traders, micro-entrepreneurs, farmers and industries to carry on their economic activities without disruption.

2. News reports and social media coverage in the recent past highlighted disturbing incidents of anti-social elements behaving aggressively with bank staff within bank premises, which includes verbal abuse, physical assault and even disruption of operations. These are the unlawful actions which discouragethemoraleofbankstaffandunderminepublictrustinthefedeliveryofbankingservices. Such actions must be dealt with firmly and promptly, with deterrent legal measures to protect bank staff and ensure uninterrupted public access to banking.

3. Inthiscontext,IrequestyoutoissuesuitableadvisoriesetosensitizeandinstructDistrict Magistrates and the State Police to:

**(I) Take all preventive measures to a void such incidents in bank branches including deployment of local police/ patrolling during peak banking hours at vulnerable locations.**

**(ii) Ensure prompt and effective response to such complaints by the designated law enforcement agencies.**

**(iii) Take strong and deterrent action against perpetrators under relevant provisions.**

4. These measures will enhance public trust, provide a secured environment for bank employees and facilitates the effective delivery of banking services.

With regards,

To

Chief Secretary [All States/UTS]

Copy to

1. Chief Executive, Indian Banks' Association  
-for in formation and circulation among members banks

Your Sincerely,  
Sd..(M. Nagaraju)

2. Chairman, State Bank of India and Managing Director & CEO of all Nationalized Banks for sensitizing senior bank executives to immediately take stock of such incidents and proactively approach the State and District Authorities concerned for appropriate action

*[We reproduce here under the circular issued by  
Com. C. H. Venkatachalam on the occasion of 56th anniversary of bank nationalisation]*

### 56th Anniversary of Bank Nationalisation 19th July, 1969 – 2025

56 years ago, on 19th July, 1969, 14 major private Banks were nationalised by the Government led by Mrs. Indira Gandhi marking an important watershed in the economic history of our country. It was also the culmination of more than 2 decades of campaign and struggle by AIBEA.

When AIBEA was founded in 1946, our country was still under British colonial yoke and all the Banks were in the private hands of big capitalists. Founding leaders of AIBEA not only spoke of freedom for the country but also demanded that that all the private Banks should be nationalized and brought under Government control so that Banks can help re-construction of country's shattered economy.

The demand got further momentum when many privately own Banks collapsed due to mismanagement and people lost their precious savings kept in these Banks.

The then General Secretary of AIBEA, Com Prabhat Kar was also a Member of Lok Sabha at that time from 1957 to 1967. So besides countrywide campaign and struggle, agitation and strikes, he also effectively championed the demand inside the Parliament by repeated speeches, motions, etc.

When Madam Indira Gandhi favoured nationalized of Banks, the then Finance Minister Morarji Desai proposed Social Control on Banks instead of nationalisation. AIBEA opposed this idea and demanded full-fledged nationalisation of Banks. Congress Party split on this issue but madam Indira Gandhi went ahead and nationalised the 14 major private Banks through an Ordinance on 19th July, 1969.

AIBEA welcomed this progressive move. Many political parties welcomed it. But parties like Swatantra party, Jan Sangh (Now known as BJP) opposed this decision. The Ordinance was

challenged in the Supreme Court. In February, 1970, on technical grounds, the Ordinance was struck down. AIBEA observed a flash strike demanding re-nationalisation. Madam Indira Gandhi issued another ordinance re-nationalising the Banks.

The story after this is by and large known to everyone. These Banks started opening Branches in remote rural areas. Banking services were made available to the common masses. In 1980, another 6 private Banks were nationalized. These 20 Nationalised Banks, along with SBI and its 6 Associate Banks (Total 27 Banks in Public Sector) became the main engine driving the Indian economy towards progress, growth and development.

These PSBs became the repository and depository of people's hard-earned savings. This huge public savings was made available for economic development by extending loans on priority basis to hitherto neglected sectors like agriculture, small and medium industries, rural development, women, health, education, infrastructure, exports, etc. PSBs became the backbone of the economy.

The growth of Banks since nationalisation has been overwhelming.

	<b>Deposits</b>	<b>Advances</b>
<b>1969</b>	5,000 cr	3,500 cr
<b>2025</b>	142 lac cr	110 lac cr

But in the wake of ushering in of economic reforms in the 1990s due to the pressure of IMF and World Bank and succumbing to the same by the then political administration, PSBs were also subjected

to reforms agenda. Law was amended to permit private capital in PSBs upto 49%. New private Banks were allowed entry.

Social orientation of PSBs got blurred and Banks were seen as profit making machine. Corporate loans were encouraged and this resulted in huge bad loans followed by huge provisions and write off. After BJP came to power at the Centre, this policy has further aggravated and privatisation of Banks became their important agenda. Private share capital is sought to be allowed even in RRBs and Co-op. Banks. AIBEA has been steadfastly fighting against these retrograde moves.

Between 1991 and 2025, there have been 53 strikes against attempts of privatisation of Banks by successive Governments' banking reforms agenda. We are marching towards one more strike on 9th July, 2025 demanding pro-people banking policies. Our slogan is – people's money for people's welfare, not for private corporate loot.

Because of the naked support being given by the Government to the private sector banks, the market share of PSBs has declined over the years.

**We need to retrieve the lost ground.**

**We need to fight against the attempts to privatise the PSBs.**

**We need to fight for nationalisation of remaining private banks.**

**We need to fight for increase in interest rate on Deposits for the customers.**

**We need to fight against indiscriminate increase in service charges and penalty charges for not maintaining minimum balance in savings accounts.**

**We need to fight for recovery of huge corporate bad loans.**

**We need to further improve customer services**

**Public Sector Banks are nation building institutions. They must remain so.**

**Let us resolve to strengthen public sector banks.**

**All our Unions are requested to organize meetings, seminars, etc. to celebrate the occasion of 56th Anniversary of Bank Nationalisation.**



4th All India Women's Convention of Federation of Bank of India Staff Union

*[The following interview with Comrade Tarakeswar Chakraborty, General Secretary, AIBEA was published in FOCUS in 2000. Later it was published in BANKFLAG also. We once again republish the same interview for the benefit of our readers.]*

### TRADE UNIONS IN THE NEW BUSINESS ERA: CHANGE REQUIREMENTS OF LIBERALISATION

**Q. How do you assess the role and relevance of Trade Unions in the new business era arising out of liberalisation?**

**ANS:** The Union has to fight for the interest of the employees, whether there is liberalisation or no liberalisation. The theory of market forces operating freely to determine a reasonable price for labour is never coming to the fore since labour is in abundance, marked by millions and millions of unemployed. We are not against liberalisation if it means more transparency, more stability and functional effectiveness. But there are three words used frequently and mixed up unjustifiably i.e. liberalisation, Privatisation and globalisation. Liberalisation in my opinion, has nothing to do with globalization or privatisation. Privatisation is different concept unconnected with liberalisation. Privatisation means all enterprises should be controlled country by individuals. This again depends upon the state of the economy which differs from country to country.

**Q. Are you satisfied with the level of understanding of the Trade Unions on the emerging scenario?**

**ANS :** I can't say I am fully satisfied. A lot of people are confusing various segments of our society on the real gains of globalisation. Quite a lot of trade unionists and labourers understand that this is not intended to do any good to them. If globalisation means we should have global banking conditions, if it means our country's economy must be increasingly competent and independent of other countries of the world. I am for it. But if globalisation means some countries of the world are going to dictate everything to our country and our country is going to be market for all their products then, I don't consider it globalisation. As of now, we are against foreign capital coming to the banking sector. We don't want increasing

number of foreign bank branches because it is not reciprocative. Today if an Indian bank opens a branch in London or New York, it will be only the ethnic Indians who will be the customers. But if a foreign bank comes to India, its customers will be mainly Indians. This is probably due to the attitude that anything foreign is superior.

**Q. Do you think Trade Unions haven't understanding of the implications of globalization?**

**ANS:** My impression is, there are some blind approaches on the part of parties. In India, Trade Union Movement is very much affiliated with political lines. The many trade unions are affiliated to many political parties and are dictated by their political party bosses. This apart, there have been some blind dogmatic approaches to some issues. That is wrong. Trade Unions must realise there are areas where we have to move with the times and adapt to them.

**Q. Trade Union are believed to be more comfortable in the public sector and therefore oppose measures like privatisation?**

**ANS:** If trade unions by virtue of their struggles have acquired a level of security of service conditions, there is indeed an element of comfort in it, comfort when compared to the time when we had to struggle. It is not as if it is confined to the public sector and not available to the private sector.

**Q. In the light of disinvestment of privatization of the banks, do you think a new approach or training is required for the Trade union leaders at various levels?**

**ANS:** Trade Unions cannot run in traditional styles. Whatever I have done in the Trade Union during 1948-50, I cannot think of in this 21st

century. Trade Unions act and react according to the changing situations at our workplace, our skills and technology. The more we stabilize, the less is the need to struggle. Our Trade union works at maintaining continuous dialogue and harmonious industry relations so that struggles and agitations are avoided.

**Q. In these circumstances what will be the strategy of Trade Union?**

**ANS:** Our strategy is to maintain public sector character of the banks. To frustrate the attack on job centers, to make banks nation building institutions and to enlist people's support of our cause and give better service to the banking customers and create a new work culture, we want more branches to be opened and more activities included for these banks.

**Q. There is a view that privatisation in the services sector will facilitate better competition benefitting the customer. How do you react to this?**

**ANS:** I find no logic between privatization and better competition. There can be competition among institutions with the government being the common owner can have 30 companies or 300 companies. Why not one government own 27 banks, each one being given total independence and some broad guidelines as to how they should function and how investments should be made. Privatisation can in fact, lead to Monopolies which can eliminate competition. That is what multinationals have done.

**Q. Will customers be benefitted better from privatization?**

**ANS:** People's money or deposits are kept with banks. Who will be the best trustees of people's money? The Government of India or Tom, Dick and Harry. In a country like India where banking habits are slow and sluggish, where poverty is more than 40%, illiteracy is 50%, whatever little savings the people have, its first guarantor should be the Government. Even though, some banks have incurred losses in the Balance Sheet, the deposit graph has moved up. People's confidence in our banks is evident.

**Q. Do you see a stronger presence for the foreign banks with possibilities of their taking over a few Indian banks?**

**ANS:** These foreign banks will corner our deposits. With this money, they will not help in developing our country but will only give loans to foreign companies and engage in speculative activities like stock markets or financial markets of the world. We are not for this type of globalization.

**Q. Is it not part of globalization?**

**ANS:** The globe is clearly uneven. Is there any commonality between our country and any other European country? There are wide diversities even among them. If there is real globalization, where is the need for European Union, or at the instance of America the Attitudinal Committees or why is there a trade war between Japan and the US? So globalization means some power want to dominate and dictate the markets of the globe.

**Q. After opening up, is it possible to restrict?**

**ANS:** If the country opens up completely, then its own individuality is lost beating even the private sector which will have its natural death. This is dangerous, India accounts for 1/6th of world population and only 1% of India's business is in the international market. So globalization means nothing to us. We may exploit our trade connections with other countries of the world, but opening up everything in the country in the name of globalization doing everything in the country as per their dictates and allowing them to have a free hand to run our economy is ultimately going to compromise political independence and sovereignty of the country.

**Q. You used the 3 words-privatisation, liberalisation and globalisation. When it comes to financial sector there is a fourth world, reforms. Important personalities like Narasimham and M.S. Verma are of the view that Reforms necessitate privatization. How do you react to this?**

**ANS:** They are honorable men I should say, but a common man like me should disagree with them. First, what do we mean by reforms. Reforms mean a step towards progress. Whatever takes you

back is retardation, regression not reforms. What are the main ills of our country? Poverty, illiteracy, high price level and unemployment. They are the four worst curses of our country. Anything that is done by the reforms has to be measured by the yardstick of how it benefits the poor multitudes.

The Indian reforms, is it for the benefit of the country? No. These reforms were started with the mortgaging of our country's gold in 91. Today when we are on the threshold of 21 st century, we should not open our doors to the philosophy of Survival of the Fittest. Those who are unfit, fit, fitter have to right to exist-this is not a social philosophy.

**Q. How do you look at unemployment/staff reduction, arising out of the Recommendation of need for staff reduction in weak banks. Do you agree that staff reduction is unavoidable to cut costs?**

**ANS:** Staff reduction cannot be the solution. Even if all the staff in the weak banks go on VRS, the problems of the banks will continue. It is the problem of inherited NPAs-inherited through faulty management policies and outside pressures. Surplus staff does exist and there is imbalance in the deployment of staff. So open more branches, introduce more products, have 2-3 shifts banking and Sunday banking, send the staff for door-to-door marketing for our products.

**Q. VRS is being very often mentioned as an inevitable step?**

**ANS:** I'm told government is thinking of it. This will only lead to confrontation. We are against VRS and we will oppose it because we know it is being forced on us.

**Q. What is your advice to those going on VRS?**

**ANS:** My only advice is "Don't take VRS".

I believe if a person who has been working well, leaves his job to stay at home, it will lead to mental, family, neighbourly and social tensions which are socially unwarranted.

**Q. Do you think that the basic character of the bank employees will change with complete automation in the branches and their fighting spirit will get diluted in a sophisticated work**

**atmosphere?**

**ANS:** Employee's militancy will be dictated or influenced not by technology but by the level of satisfaction and environment existing in the institution. When optimum size of the branch is worked out, if head counts go down, to the extent militancy is affected.

**Q. Is the extent of employees priority and involvement in Trade Union activities the same with the new generation?**

**ANS :** The new generation is not playing a very active role. The present generation is enjoying the benefits of the struggles the older generation went through against the British Managements. The normally organized trade unions are now being dispensed with.

**Q. With the new generation stock of employees, how do you assess the role and relevance of Trade Union in the reform era?**

**ANS:** I think Trade Unions have greater responsibility now in safeguarding the interest of employees. Many fallouts of liberalisation warrant us to react. In a country like ours where unemployment is a major social problem, concepts like downsizing will only further aggravate it.

**Q. Don't you, with your service of nearly four decades in banking agree that there is a need for change in Bank Managements?**

**ANS:** Absolutely! We have been asking for reforms in the form of recovery of bad loans for the past 15 years. In 1985 itself, we asked the government to publish the defaulters list. Even now, we are insisting on publishing the same. Publish the defaulters list make stringent laws to recover bad loans. As nation building institutions, bank have to ensure flow of credit to those segment like rural sector and such other key sectors. Since ours is a mixed economy industry too should get sufficient credit. Our second demand is that we want the Chairman of the Bank to be appointed for a period of five years and Deputy General Managers should be appointed by a Panel consisting of say a Supreme Court Judge and an Economist and other such eligible

and acceptable experts. We feel that there is no need for a person to be in the same bank throughout his career.

**Q. Do you ask for more autonomy for Management? Is it not against the concept of public sector?**

**ANS:** If everything is to be controlled by Government means brokers are in control. All in the government are not experts. Every public sector should be run by professionals with specialization in the line of business. Nationalised banks should be run by professionals and there is no dearth of professionals in our country. Indian bankers have got a very good name in South East Asia, Gulf countries, Africa and even in Europe. We have very good experts, but these people would not like to come here and be dictated.

**Q. So, do you see any role for the Banking division in the Government?**

**ANS:** The Banking Division should be there to only provide the guidelines. Government should guide as to how the banking resources should be utilized in the overall planning process of the country for its development. Banking Division should monitor, not dictate. Banking division is also a link between the Parliament, the people's representative and the institutions.

**Q. A large section of people have grievances about the attitude of the bank employees?**

**ANS:** I would definitely say there is substantial scope for improvement in banking services. Customer service in banks is not what it should be. I would not like to justify it by saying that all over the country there is indiscipline. We do understand that we can attract the people to our point of view only by giving them the best of services.

**Q. What role do you visualize for the Union in the Financial Sector, taking into view global trends in banking**

**ANS:** In banking industry, the customer is given many services which are either free of cost or are undersold. To engage a good lawyer or a doctor, I have to pay very high fees but if I go to a substandard person I need not pay very high fees. So too in banking industry customers must get what he deserves and his expectations must be limited by the conditions existing in the country as whole. Living in India, one cannot expect the service that are being

given in US and UK. Our duty as employees must be to give the best of services to the customers within the constraints in which he operates.

Now we are introducing technology in banks, but it cannot be done in all our branches because of the cost factor. In our villages, sometimes there is no electricity also, but in Europe even a village is fully computerized. So we should not try to compare our services to those of Europe. Attempt should be made to purposefully reach this in a systematic manner. Our customers should also realise that our satisfaction has to be within our limitations.

**Q. You said, among banking services many of them are given away free to the customers? Do you think they have to be charged for them?**

**ANS:** Yes, why not? The corporate sector is always clamoring for reduction of interest rates. From, 19-20% it has come down to 9-10%. Have they reduced the price of any goods, which means they have only pocketed that money. They are only charging the consumer more. Here in banking industry we are giving them credit at low interest, thereby depriving the poor depositors of their due return on their deposits. We in banks are underselling our service. Why should that be?

**Q. It is widely believed that with certain legislative measures, disinvestment in public sector banks is on the cards?**

**ANS:** I know there is an attempt to bring down the government's holding below 51%. We will resort to highest form of agitation if it happens even in one bank. We will go on indefinite strike not in one bank but in all banks.

**Q. If government retains 51% disinvesting the balance, what will be the reaction of Unions?**

**ANS:** We oppose disinvestment in banks. We have made our stand clear in this regard, our stand is whatever is done, the govt. should continue to be the owner with 51% holding.

**Q. So, if government holds 51% stake and continues to be the owner and disinvests 26% or 49%, you will not object.....**

**ANS:** We will be happy if disinvestment is not done in banks. Disinvestment is an infectious disease. If it takes place in one bank, it will slowly stretch to other banks. That is why we oppose. We may be defeated but, we will not accept it lying down.

## Public Sector Banks are Seeing a Steady Decline in Staff Headcount: Report

*[Several bank unions have raised concerns over the decline of staff strength in recent years. Earlier this year, bank employees also staged protests in some cities.]*

Over the last three years, the number of employees in most public-sector banks (PSBs) has declined even as banks have continued to expand its branches, Business Standard reported.

According to a data compiled by the daily, PSBs including Bank of India, Canara Bank, Bank of Baroda and Uco Bank witnessed a drop in its employee size, whereas the State Bank of India and Punjab National Bank saw a slight increase in the headcount.

The number of employees for Bank of India fell from 52,374 in financial year (FY) 2023 to 50,944 in 2024, while it dipped to 50,564 in 2025, as per the report. Similarly, Canara Bank showed a downward trend in its employee count, falling from 84,978 in FY23 to 82,638 in FY24 and 81,260 in FY25, while Bank of Baroda also continued its reduction from 76,513 in FY23 to 74,227 in FY24 and further down to 73,742 in FY25. Uco Bank's headcount dropped from 21,698 in FY23 to 21,456 in FY24 and further to 21,049 in FY25.

On the other hand, for SBI, which is the largest PSB in India, there was a slight recovery after falling from 235,858 in FY23 to 232,596 in FY24. In FY25, the headcount increased to 236,226, the report stated. Meanwhile, PNB also saw its employee count increase slightly from 102,319 in

FY23 to 102,349 in FY24 before slightly falling to 102,316 in FY25.

The branch networks for all these PSBs increased in FY 2025.

Several bank unions have raised concerns over the decline of staff strength in recent years. Earlier this year, bank employees also staged protests in some cities. Being short-handed is impacting customer service and the well-being of the staff, they have complained.

"There are many branches where only two people are working. In extreme cases, we found one or two branches are running with only three employees. This needs to be addressed," a senior bank official was quoted as saying to Business Standard.

Meanwhile, the finance ministry has reportedly asked the chief secretaries of states and union territories to employees to sensitise bank employees and maintain uninterrupted service for the public. This comes after news reports and social media posts of incidents of verbal abuse, physical assault and threats of violent actions against bank staff on bank premises.

*Courtesy: The Wire*



A view of TNBEF conference

## Deliberate Innocence of a Fugitive Businessman

T M Murthi

A recent podcast appearance by fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya has stirred controversy, reviving debate over crony capitalism, political protection, and the double standards in India's loan recovery system.

Speaking from the UK, Mallya accused Indian banks and the government of India targeting him unfairly. He claimed that although the Debt Recovery Tribunal ruled in 2017 that he owed <sup>1</sup> 6,848 crore, Indian authorities have already seized assets worth <sup>1</sup> 14,000 crore — far exceeding the dues. Yet, he said, banks continue to assert that <sup>1</sup> 7,000 crore remains unpaid.

Mallya portrays himself as a victim, but his narrative skips over a crucial detail: loans don't freeze in time. Over eight years, interest and penalties compound, and a 2017 figure doesn't reflect today's burden. His interview, many observers note, gives the impression of deliberate innocence.

The businessman further criticized the Indian system, saying that excessive political and bureaucratic interference has made it impossible to run a business in the country. The irony isn't lost on many — Mallya is no stranger to politics. From 2002 to 2008, he was a Rajya Sabha MP with the support of Congress and Janata Dal (Secular), and he returned in 2010 with backing from both JD(S) and the BJP.

For corporate heavyweights like Mallya, politics is often transactional — ideology takes a back seat to influence.

More than just a borrower who defaulted, Mallya faces serious charges of financial fraud, including the diversion of loan funds abroad. He was booked under PMLA.

He left India on May 2, 2016 — a day before he was to be expelled from Parliament. His departure raised many questions. His passport had already been revoked on April 24, and the Hyderabad High Court had ordered his arrest under non-bailable charges in March that year. Yet, he managed to

board a flight to London without resistance.

In a 2018 interview, Mallya claimed he had “met senior ministers” and “paid a large amount” before being allowed to leave India — a claim never officially addressed.

It was only after he landed in London that authorities moved to formally bar him from leaving the country.

While Mallya's allegations of selective treatment might seem self-serving, they highlight a broader issue. India's “haircut”, they somewhat hesitated to name it in Sanskrit, policy — under which companies are sold at a fraction of their debt value — has sparked outrage. In one high-profile example, the Adani Group acquired 10 heavily indebted companies owing <sup>1</sup> 62,000 crore by paying just <sup>1</sup> 16,000 crore, a 74 percent waiver. The All India Bank Employees' Association has released data pointing to dozens of such deals, often kept hidden from public scrutiny.

Mallya filed a case in the UK to block his extradition, but it was dismissed in 2020. Still, five years later, he remains in London. He now insists that the Indian government must offer legal assurances about his safety, detention conditions, and dignity before he returns.

If Mallya believes he is innocent, the proper course is to return, contest the charges, and clear his name in court. Critics say Mallya's case exposes a deeper flaw in India's financial system — one where the powerful can default with impunity, shielded by legal and political networks. As things stand, corporate borrowers are often not held personally liable when their companies collapse.

There are growing calls for reform. India needs a stronger legal framework to classify willful defaulters as criminal offenders, allowing authorities to seize their entire assets and prevent flight. Until then, cases like Mallya's will continue to symbolise not just financial fraud — but the impunity that shields it.

## BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION BY MPBEA



*Floral tribute to Com. Tarakeswar Chakraborti by Leaders of MPBEA*

## Birth Centenary celebration jointly by Tarakeswar Chakraborti Memorial Trust & North 24 Pargana District Committee, BPBA



*Com. Kamal Bhattacharya, Chairman, BPBEA lighting the lamp in the programme*



*Com. Bhaskar Banerjee, Secretary, District Committee speaking on the occasion*



*Dr. Pradip Das, a renowned physician of the locality speaking on donating blood*



*Blood donation by the members*



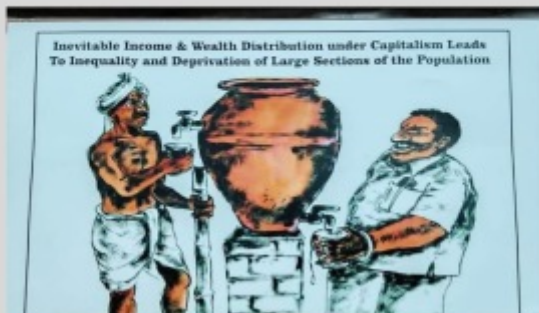
**Private Sector Bank Unions'**  
A meeting of AIBEA's private sector bank unions cell was held on 28 June, 2025 at Mangalore

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**TO OPPOSE ANTI-PEOPLE,  
PRO-CORPORATE ECONOMIC POLICIES**



Percentage of share in Income			Percentage of share in Wealth				
Year	Highest 10% Income Group	Middle 40% Income Group	Lower 50% Income Group	Year	Highest 10% Income Group	Middle 40% Income Group	Lower 50% Income Group
1961	37	42	21	1961	43	45	12
1991	34	44	22	1991	50	41	9
2012	55	30	15	2012	63	31	6
2019	56	30	14	2020	74	23	3

Source: Ghatak Maiteesh, Professor, London School of Economics – The India Today Forum, 2, July, 2021

**March on to 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2025  
Nationwide General Strike  
By 15 crores workers**

To



From

**BANKFLAG**

ALL INDIA BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION  
3B, LALBAZAR STREET  
1ST FLOOR  
KOLKATA – 700001  
PHONE: 2262-2192

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