



BANK EMPLOYEES FEDERATION OF INDIA

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To All Affiliates/Office Bearers/CC/GC Members

Dear Comrades,

17th Lok Sabha Election

The schedule for election to the 17th Lok Sabha has been announced and the first phase of polling, scheduled to be held on 11th April 2019, is just three weeks away. Though we may not have anything to do directly in the matter of the election, still, as a class conscious Trade Union organisation, we cannot remain totally indifferent to the most important democratic exercise that is going to shape the destiny of our country for the next five years; while we do not subscribe to any particular political party, we shall, at the same time, have to evaluate and assess the parties in the fray with our specific class outlook. Our recently concluded 10th Conference has given us an unmistakable guideline in this matter.

Our 10th Conference has noted that the present BJP-led NDA Government at the centre is a Government “of the corporates, by the corporates and for the corporates” marked by, amongst others, “intensification of all round attacks on working people through administrative, political, cultural and legislative measures”, “communalisation of social fabric” and “attack on democracy and the constitution through undermining and decimation of parliamentary, constitutional and other institutions of national importance”; the Conference has, therefore, concluded that “the present Government at the centre is, indisputably, the most pro-corporate and, hence, the most anti-labour Government we have had since independence”.

Our position has been consistent in opposing the anti people policies of the successive governments at the centre since the advent of new economic policies in early nineties. In sharp contrast to all predecessor governments, the present regime at the centre has been desperate and aggressive to dismantle all public sector units including banks. Having failed to keep all the promises pronounced at the time of last general election, the main party in power at the centre is now trying to get mileage in the coming election by propagating on communal lines. No class conscious trade union, worth its name, can remain silent onlooker on such dangerous trends in electioneering.

During the tenure of the present regime, bank employees had to resort to strike actions on four occasions for five days under the banner of UFBU. This apart, our

Federation along with AIBEA joined countrywide General Strikes on 2nd September, 2015 and 2016, two days' strike on 8th and 9th, January this year. We participated in three days' Mahapadav in November, 2017 and Mazdoor Kishan Sangharsh Rally in September, 2018, both in New Delhi. All these actions were aimed at fighting back the pernicious policies of the central government.

Our fight has to be further advanced by taking firm position against the politics behind such policies and in that direction we have to play our role while exercising our franchise in the ensuing election.

As against the anti people trends of the ruling parties, we have had Left parties who have steadfastly stood beside us at all times and vociferously espoused our cause both inside and out of the Parliament. Be it our struggle against neo-liberal reforms or on our economic demands, the Leftists have stood beside us like truest comrades-in-arms, erudite philosopher and unerring guide.

Having considered all these factors, our 10th Conference has, charted our task in most unequivocal and unambiguous terms. Conference opined that the ***present BJP-led NDA Government at the centre has been the most anti-people-pro-corporate Government that India has had during the 70+ years of her independence. Hence, it deserves to be squarely defeated.*** Conference further stated that ***from experience, we have known that the left parties have all along stood by us and by the common working people in general, against all odds. Hence, we should direct all our energies to ensure victory of Left Forces, wherever possible. In places where candidates from left parties will not be there, we should ensure victory of other secular-democratic candidates.***

We, therefore, call upon our State-level affiliates, Bank-wise All India Federations and State/Regional/Zonal level Unions to discharge the responsibilities, as best as they can, in tune with the task assigned to all of us by our 10th Conference.

With greetings,

Yours comradely,

(Debasish Basu Chaudhury)
General Secretary.