



ALL INDIA PNB STAFF FEDERATION

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TO ALL MEMBERS

Dated: 01.01.2009

HAPPY NEW YEAR-2009

The year 2008 has passed away. We are at the threshold of 2009. We greet the entire fraternity of Punjab National Bank Employees " **A HAPPY NEW YEAR-2009**".

Comrades, this is a time to look at the happenings in the past and make some resolutions for the future. We also need to do a lot of soul searching. Can we really expect this New Year to be happy for all of us? If, we look at the National events of the last year, it will show the inhuman face of the society. These were blasts by terrorists in many parts of the country including Bangalore, Jaipur, Delhi, Ahmedabad & North-East and terrorist attack at Mumbai on 26.11.2008. The other important events of the last year were highest ever recorded rate of inflation, shifting of 'Nano' project from Singur (W.B.) to Gujarat, Gold Medal win by Abhinav Bindra & rise of boxers in Olympic games, rise of Sania Nehwal in Badminton, waiver of loans to farmers, flood in Bihar, violence in the name of cast and religion, Chandrayan Mission and Indo-US nuclear treaty, etc. In our bank long awaited posting of clerks promoted from sub staff was the cheerful event of the year.

INTERNATIONAL SCENE: On international scene victory of Barack Obama in US presidential election, global economic recession after the fall of US financial giants, end of Gen. Musharraf's rule & return of democracy in Pakistan and landslide win of Sheikh Hasina led Awami League in Bangladesh etc. were among the important events. The internal position of neighbouring country Pakistan clearly shows what can be the result of supporting terrorist activities. But the present government in Pakistan so far has not learnt any lesson from the past despite the impression is being given by the terrorists that even if their guardian does not behave according to their wishes and does not follow their line, he will be punished.

NATIONAL SCENE: Due to the diplomatic initiatives taken by Government of India, possibility of a war between India and Pakistan has reduced up to an extent. But still a lot is to be done by Pakistani government to reduce tension in the sub - continent by curbing infiltration of 'Jehadis' into Jammu & Kashmir and other parts of India. More than 62% voters' turnout in Jammu & Kashmir Vidhan Sabha elections despite call of boycott by separatists shows that Kashmir is limping back to peace and normalcy. However, as long as Pakistan does not take serious action to flush out or control 'Jehadis' infiltration, peace keeping efforts in Kashmir will not yield any lasting solution.

In our country millions of people are living without drinking water and other basic amenities like sanitation, health facilities and all weather roads etc. Economic Reforms without addressing these basic necessities, impoverish common men by throwing him out of jobs, make small farmers to pay higher prices of fertilizers, pesticides and seeds and forced them to compete with the produce of other countries which extend higher subsidies cannot be acceptable to the country merely for the reason that reforms will pave way for higher foreign exchange reserve.

Though our country is the largest democracy in the world, our political system is controlled by muscle men, mafia & ill-gotten money power. The situation demands purposeful awakening in the people of our country. The bank employees being important section of the society must play their role towards consolidation and integration of our country.

CHALLENGES BEFORE THE BANK EMPLOYEES: The year 2009 will pose challenges for bank employees in the name of proposed merger of Public Sector Banks, out-sourcing of jobs and negotiations for 9th wage settlement.

1) Threat of Merger of Public Sector Banks: We are observing that merger of Public Sector Banks has become a pet subject of UPA Government. To circumvent the hidden agenda, the global giant theory is being taken to the fore. The idea is simply bogus as we know that even if all the Public Sector Banks along with State Bank of India and its associate banks are merged together, the new entity will be nowhere nearer to the global giants. Our banks are otherwise strong enough and

gaining strength day by day as we observe that the rate of profit of Public Sector Banks has grown every year during last nine years. Steady increase in market- capitalization of Public Sector Banks leaving other industries far behind also proves their gaining strength. The mergers as being proposed will only help big borrowers to get loans at a better competitive rate of interest while small borrowers will be left in lurch. The mergers will also lead to cross- merger of branches and pave the way for staff redundancy. Moreover, after merger of banks the bigger entities will become more vulnerable to maneuvering by foreign investors as they will be able to take control of substantial part of our economy through lesser number of maneuvers. The proposed mergers will not help the country, the banks and its employees and the customers as well.

2) Ban on Compassionate Appointments: The bank managements and Government have arbitrarily introduced a lump- sum Ex-Gratia Scheme instead of compassionate appointments. The intention is to deny compassionate appointments in the banks and restrict financial compensation to very few families. The guidelines in this regard are obviously in-human and unfair. The compassionate appointments are still being offered in all other institutions, public sector undertakings and other Government departments. The compassionate appointments should be offered in the banks irrespective of economic condition of the family of the deceased.

3) Shortage of staff: Most of the banks' branches are experiencing severe shortage of clerical and sub-staff employees. Surplus staff, if any, created on account of computerization, has already been offset by reduction on account of VRS, retirement, promotion, death etc., whereas enormous business growth is not supported by adequate staff. As a result, existing serving employees are not able to provide quality service to the customers and they directly face ire of the public.

4) 2nd Option for Pension: Another important issue of immediate concern to Bank employees is 2nd option for pension. A more concerted action plan by UFBU is needed to settle this issue at the earliest to douse the growing discontentment among large section of employees.

5) Out-sourcing of jobs: Out-sourcing of various types of normal, regular and permanent banking jobs and services is an- other issue of serious concern to the bank employees. It is observed that the normal and regular banking services are being outsourced to private agencies. Wide canvas of all regular and routine bank jobs for which bank employees have all the competency, efficiency and knowledge to perform and which have been performed by them hitherto are going to be outsourced. There is need to oppose out-sourcing of jobs with all the strength in command.

6) Negotiations for 9th wage settlement: UFBU has submitted a common charter of demands for 9th wage settlement to IBA on 29.10.2007. Even after more than one year of negotiations nothing fruitful has been come out. There is need of sustained struggle ahead to achieve 9th wage settlement.

7) Customer Service: Today bank employees are under attack by Press, Public and Parliament. The media has spread rumors that the bank employees don't care for the work while this is not a fact. However, some of us are not improving their standards as required, while dealing with the customers. May we request to all of you to be more courteous and friendly to the customers.

Comrades, in the year to come we have to face a lot of problems and challenges, which is not going to be an easy task. We need to fight for our very existence. What we need today is that we should face the challenges in our path unitedly. So let us resolve that we will struggle and face all challenges unitedly. We can save ourselves and rise only if we are united. Struggle is the main 'Mantra' for maintaining our existence. Hence, we appeal for mass struggle with high spirit, since it is a key to success. We are sure to be crowned with success when we fight without any respite.

With revolutionary greetings,

Comradely Yours,

(R. K. Sharma)
General Secretary

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N.C.B.E..... ZINDABAD
WORKERS' UNITY..... ZINDABAD