



STATE BANK OF HYDERABAD STAFF ASSOCIATION

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ALL THE MEMBERS:

Dear Comrades,

We reproduce hereunder the dated: **CIRCULAR NO. 27/156/2016/14** dated: **15th April, 2016**, issued by Our National Organization – AIBEA for your information.

With Greetings,

Yours Comradely.

(R. SREEKANTH REDDY)
GENERAL SECRETARY

TO ALL UNITS AND MEMBERS:

Dear Comrades,

BIRTH CENTENARY OF COM B.N. HOSKOTE

Com. B N Hoskote was a prominent leader of Hongkong Bank Employees' Union in Mumbai for more than 35 years from 1951 to 1986 and was also the Treasurer of Maharashtra State Bank Employees Federation for nearly two decades from 1967 to 1986.

He was born on this day 100 years ago (15-4-1916) and hence today is the birth Centenary of this beloved leader of our bank employees movement. He was a committed trade unionist and an ardent fighter against injustice. It is befitting that we remember him today and recall his contributions to our organisation. We furnish herein a small write-up about him, given by him in his own words during AIBEA's Golden Jubilee in 1996.

With greetings,

Yours comradely,

C.H.VENKATACHALAM
GENERAL SECRETARY

Com. B.N. Hoskote – in his own words

“There was no union worth the name when I joined the Hongkong Bank in 1948. However, there was something like a club which was only garlanding the incoming and outgoing European Managers. As it was in other banks, I had to be punctual in the morning at 9 a.m., but to my knowledge, no one was allowed to leave before 9 p.m. The only compensation myself and my colleagues used to get was on the half yearly closing day twice in a year. On these two occasions, over time will be paid at the rate of 12 Annas for one hour work plus one free lunch coupon.

During 1951 and 1952, employees in Bank of India were observing strike. Com. G.N. Trikannad was the leader. We became very curious. We moved and mingled with the striking employees. That strike in Bank of India inspired us. Slowly, we converted the club into a regular trade union.

Immediately thereafter, the management also became hostile. All of us in Hongkong Bank participated in a sympathetic strike action in support of the struggle in Premier Automobiles. A Bombay bundh in this connection took place in 1954. For participation, we were all charge sheeted. The management asked us to explain as to why we should support strikes in other companies and other banks. However, except charge sheeting, no further action was taken.

One peculiar character of our management was being very sensitive to their public image in India. Naturally, we took advantage of the same and began demanding many rights and privileges. Moreover, from the beginning, we had 100% membership in our union under the banner of AIBEA.

Broadly speaking, I must say that one by one the bank conceded our demands even though they never reconciled to the growth of a militant trade union.

I had appeared before the Sastry and Desai Tribunals. In various action programmes, called by AIBEA or by Maharashtra Federation, we all had fully participated.

After retirement in 1986, I was not participating in active trade union work.

I had the privilege to come into contact with giants in our movement like Com. Prabhat Kar and Com. Parvana and in Bombay, Com. K.K. Mundul, Com. P.K. Menon, Com. G.N. Trikanad and others. Bank employees movement and AIBEA were lucky to have such visionary leaders.

Regarding trade union responsibility, I have served the Mercantile Bank Employees' Union right from 1951 to 1986 either as a President or as General Secretary.

I also was Treasurer of Maharashtra State Bank Employees' Federation from 1967 to 1986.

It was in 1956, I joined the Communist Party of India and that was one of the sustaining forces that helped me to carry on my trade union way of life.
