

Circular No. 1 /2015

TO ALL UNITS

1st January 2015

Dear Friends,

New Year 2015

AIRBEA wishes its members and all well-wishers a Happy New Year 2015.

The New Year brings challenges and opportunities as well as new responsibilities.

Attacks on RBI continue. The Finance Ministry have categorically stated that they will implement FSLRC recommendations by 2015. This will mean RBI will be further crippled, important areas of jobs and responsibilities of RBI will be taken away, the process of withering away of RBI will continue unabated. Monetary Policy, exclusive domain of RBI, is being sought to be attuned to corporate interests by ostensible governmental pressure. It is to be seen whether RBI will succumb despite Governor's firm statement that he does not like RBI doing "flip flop" on interest rates.

It was assured to us that jobs related to RBI regulation and supervision of NBFCs will be expanded, and MFI regulation / supervision will come under the ambit of RBI. This has not happened so far and seems to be a far cry. Only redeeming feature is that at Governor's intervention RBI have not closed all public counters, which, otherwise, Bank would have done by now further depleting posts and job.

Updation of Pension in RBI and a fresh option pursued since 2008 remain as it is. Successive Governors have been pursuing, the Board is solidly behind us, we are agitating; but Government seems unconcerned.

Banking industry is in doldrums; employees there are pushed to the extreme by bankers' rigidity on wage revision. RBI warns about "stressed assets" in banks. Those who are responsible for this are the "captains of industry" and the political mentors. But hard working bank employees are sought to be made the scapegoats. We strongly deplore.

Governor Raghuram Rajan cautions about global volatility of currencies, stagnation in Euro Zone, constriction of emerging economies, crisis in Russian economy and worries about another looming global melt-down. Because of dominance of public sector banks and RBI's cautionary policies Indian banking system could escape last crisis from 2008 onwards. Once again RBI has to come to the fore. But Government meanwhile decides to urgently privatise Public Sector Banks to the extent of 48%, just marginally less than 50%. It portends ominous.

Foreign equity participation in Insurance in India has been raised to 49%, not through Parliamentary consensus or approval, but by Ordinance route. Other such measures are in the offing, Government spokesmen say. This militates against the concept of Parliamentary Democracy, hall-mark of our country. Pro-people measures like MNREGA, public health, education etc. are being diluted openly or clandestinely. Nation's assets like Public Sectors are on sale.

Terrorism has raised its ugly head everywhere. India has been a victim and is a target. Innocent children in Peshwar have been mercilessly gunned down. Very poor people, women and children in particular, have been massacred in Kokrajhar district in Assam. Religious intolerance seeks to tear the secular fabric of our great country.

Worldwide, disparities between poor and rich are widening dangerously. "We are 99%, they are only 1%" but this 1% grabs the world's riches and resources – is the slogan that rends the world.

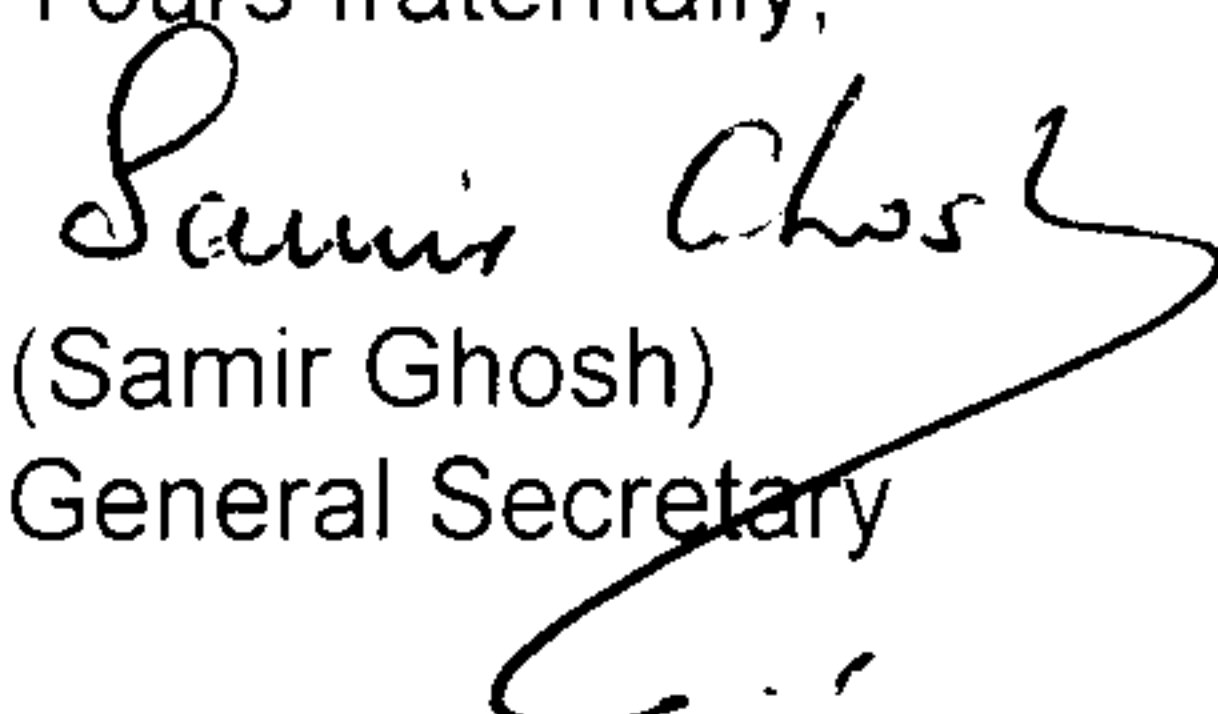
We, Reserve Bank employees, have to protest and mobilize along with others. We, as part of broader collectivity, have to save the central bank of the country, the public sector banking and public sector. We have to fight to retain country's sovereignty, independence, its democratic and secular credentials, its values and ethos for peace and humanity.

Let us not be lulled into complacency of an easy life and an illusory comfortable future. When there is turmoil everywhere, there cannot be an oasis of peace, however much some "wise" men here and there may preach. If the ship sinks, everybody on board, be it decks or first class cabin, meets a watery grave.

Let us welcome 2015 in this spirit. Let us make it a milestone in our collective, social and institutional life.

With warm greetings,

Yours fraternally,


(Samir Ghosh)
General Secretary