



PRATHYASA

A BULLETIN OF RESERVE BANK RETIRED EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION, KOCHI

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Reserve Bank Retired Employees' Association wishes you all a Happy Onam

1.1 Annual General Meeting: The Annual General Meeting of our Association held at BTH, Ernakulam on June 10, 2017, marking its twelve years of meaningful existence, was the most significant event of the last quarter. The meeting chaired by Shri Raju Kurian, President, was attended by 79 members. Shri P. A. Paulose, Joint Secretary welcomed the gathering. Shri Raju Kurian, in his presidential address, mentioned that RBREA, Kochi was the only association of retired employees engaged so much in various social intervention activities and that all the members should be proud of it. After paying homage to the departed members, the Secretary presented the Annual Report and Shri K P Johnkutty, the Treasurer presented the Statements of Accounts for the year 2016-17. Many members participated in the discussion that followed on the Report and on the activities of the Association. The meeting, thereafter, unanimously adopted the Secretary's Report and the Audited Accounts. Shri P.J Thomas, our veteran octogenarian member, was honoured with the presentation of a shawl by the President. Thereafter, the elections to the Managing Committee for the year 2017-18 were held. Shri Abraham Mathew, proposed the vote of thanks and invited all present for the Kerala lunch of BTH. The meeting ended at 1.30 P.M. A detailed report (in Malayalam) on the proceedings of the AGM along with the list of newly elected office bearers and committee members has been included in this issue of Prathyasa. The Annual Report presented and approved by the AGM has also been made available in this issue.

1.2 On Pension Updation

1.2.1 There was no positive development from the Bank's side on this vital issue during the quarter. The present Governor appears to be unconcerned of the issue as he is not even prepared to meet the leaders of the United Forum / AIRBREA to discuss the issues relating to pension updation, reopening of pension option and improvements in family pension affecting 24000 plus retirees, their family members and even the serving staff. The bureaucrats in the Ministry of Finance are not at all in favour of granting us updation for their own reasons, while at the same time extending such revisions periodically to the retired

Government employees based on Pay Commission recommendations.

1.2.2 In the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) Pension case, the Rajasthan High Court on January 30, 2013 had given a decision in favour of the retirees and directed the LIC to give effect to its board decision dated November 24, 2001 to revise the pension and dearness allowance (DA) payable to its retired employees corresponding to the successive revisions of the pay scales of the serving employees, that had taken place in 1986, 1993, 1997, 2002 and 2007. It also ruled, "In the present matter, there was no reason to seek approval of the Central Government". The High Courts of Delhi and Punjab & Haryana had, relying on the decision of the Rajasthan High Court, allowed similar petitions of the LIC employees. These decisions were challenged in the Supreme Court by the LIC. The Supreme Court had held, "The Board Resolution dated 24th November, 2001 to amend the LIC of India (Employees) Pension Rules, 1955 (Pension Rules for short), for upgrading the basic pension to All India Consumer Price Index of 1740 point and 100 per cent dearness allowance neutralisation thereon in respect of retirees prior to 1st August, 1997 was non est and would not confer any legal right. Conferment of benefit, either pensionary or anything ancillary thereto, has to be conferred by the Pension Rules, and as prescribed, the Rule has to be tabled before Parliament. In the absence of a rule, no benefit could be granted on the basis of the resolution of the Board of Directors". The issue whether the rule 3(A) in the Appendix IV of the LIC (Employees) Pension Rules violated Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution was referred back to the Delhi High Court by the Supreme Court while also transferring to that Court the retired employees' petitions filed in the Rajasthan and Punjab & Haryana High Courts. The challenge of the retired employees' associations of LIC that non-revalorisation of basic pension or merger of dearness relief with basic pension upon re-fixation of pay scales of in-service employees, was in violation of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution was REJECTED by the Delhi High Court, setting aside all the previous decisions in this regard.

1.2.3 That the Courts have given unfavourable verdicts in the LIC case does not mean that it is now time for us to rest on our oars and forget about these cardinal issues. It is not that we have reached the end of the road. If we read between the lines of the judgment in the LIC case, it can be inferred that the issue is NOT to be decided by a court of law but settled bilaterally. The Court had observed, "Traditionally, pensions were non-alterable because the value of the money was stable. However, in the Indian context, pensions normally are revised or increased in line with the rise in the cost of living or inflation. To what extent there would be adjustment would again depend upon a number of factors. A fixed criteria or formula, which is applicable across the board or universally, cannot be adopted and applied". This means that the Court recognises that there is scope for revision of pension taking into account the Indian situation where inflation eats into the fixed incomes of people, especially pensioners. The AIRBREA and its units as also some of our veteran members like Shri P R R Nayar at the individual level have been taking up the issue through various letters and memoranda to RBI and Finance Ministry, Gol. AIRBREA has recently written to the Prime Minister of India to see reason and resolve our issues. In this regard, excerpts from a letter addressed to the Governor by Capt. Amar Jeet Kumar (Retd) which are given below are quite pertinent: " To make the pension scheme attractive and employee friendly, the Bank vide its Circular No. PPD.No.6 .G.66/2180/RII.CP.171D-91/92 dated 13 March 1992 assured the employees, 'While the choice of individual employee as between pension and CPF will be influenced by several factors like family composition, family obligations, etc., the general consensus is that globally, pension is considered to be one of the best social security measures as compared to others, because of certain unique features such as updation of basic pension'. With this assurance given by the Bank I opted for Bank's pension scheme by surrendering my contributory fund @10%. Pension updations were given in 1991-92 and 2003 based on 1997 settlement. I retired from the Bank on 31 August 2006 with a basic pension of Rs. 11,000 which is the same after 11 years. I was released from the army with disability and service element pension (of four and half year's qualifying service) of Rs. 186 in 1975 has now been updated to Rs.53,000. How can my basic pension of Rs.11,000 (from RBI) remain static like this for life in spite of the Bank's commitment to its employees to uniquely update it from time to time?....."

1.2.4 The Committee on Subordinate Legislation (2016-17) of the Sixteenth Lok Sabha with Shri Dilipkumar Mansukhlal Gandhi as the Chairperson, in its 20th Report on RBI Pension Regulations, presented to the Lok Sabha on 10.08.2017 have observed that no serious financial implications are likely to occur on account of giving one last

time option to the leftover employees under CPF . Moreover, to meet the principles of natural justice and keeping in mind the concept of the Welfare State, the Committee has further urged the Government to allow RBI to give one last option to its left over employees for switching over from CPF to the RBI Pension Scheme covering even those employees who retired after December 01, 2000.

1.2.5. While considering the issue of statutorisation of the RBI (Staff) Regulations, 1948, the Committee in the same report has observed and recommended as under:

"The Committee while recognising the RBI as a premier institution of the country regulating the functioning of the banking system including all the public/ private banks, find the autonomy and independence of the institution as imperative and integral part of any Central Bank of a Nation which, in the opinion of the Committee, should not be compromised at any cost. The Committee therefore, feel that statutorising the Service Regulations under Sec. 58 of the RBI Act instead of allowing them to continue under Section 7 is likely to have an adverse impact on the overall freedom available to RBI, besides causing procedural delays and urge the Government that the RBI (Staff) Regulations, 1948 may continue to be framed under Section 7 of the RBI Act, 1934." Although the final recommendation of the Committee deals mainly with allowing left out employees one last chance to opt for pension, but the Bank's powers as an autonomous body to revise pension without any Government approval is also indirectly spelt out in the report. In paragraph 3, Part II of the Report, the committee has recorded as under:

"The Committee express their concern over the abrupt restraining of RBI by the Ministry from giving any further option to the employees of the RBI for opting for pension through a letter which, in the opinion of the Committee, did not have any legal standing. In this regard, the Committee observe that though the Central Government are vested with the powers to give directions to the RBI under Section 7 of the RBI Act, 1934 but the direction given to RBI vide letter dated 4.2.2002 did not fall under the nature of directions given by the Central Government under Section 7 of the RBI Act, 1934."

1.2.6 This report has to be considered as a stepping stone to relaunch our struggle for resolution of the issues relating to pension revision and the fresh option for Pension with renewed vigour under the leadership of our All India, in association with the United Forum. Further mobilisation of the rank and file is the prime need of the hour. Submission of a memorandum to various Mps, Finance Ministry and the office of PM will strengthen our efforts.

1.2.7 We hope that the RBI management which find it

more expedient to 'crawl when asked to bend' will note the observations of the Parliamentary Committee and do everything necessary to protect the autonomy and independence of RBI and oppose any incursion into its freedom to frame its policies including those relating to pay, perks and pension paid to its employees.

1.2.8 While on the issue, it may be mentioned that the Bank's Central Board meeting was held at Hotel Crown Plaza, Kochi on 7th July 2017 and another meeting of the Payment System committee of the Central Board at the Kochi Office on 8th July 2017 in total secrecy, avoiding any kind of interaction with the Press and the Public, probably to avoid any inconvenient questions on demonetisation and also any agitational activity by the Associations. Despite such evasive tactics on the part of the bank's top brass to avoid the issue, it is heartening to note that one of our members, Shri M T Mani, along with four others had shown the grit and determination to carry the issue forward in their own way through a Dharna in front of the Central Office building and courting arrest, at the time of the recent Central Board meeting in Mumbai on August 10, 2017. They also managed, with the help of the Police, to meet senior officers of the HRMD and convey their grievances arising from denial of a chance to opt for the Pension Scheme. It is strongly felt that if such actions are carried out at different centres in an organised way, the RBI management will be compelled to see reason and resolve the issues.

1.2.9 The message is clear. The need of the hour is to intensify our struggle for convincing the RBI management that they have an obligation to honour the commitment and assurance given to its employees in their circular dated March 13, 1992. It is for them to convince the Government that it is unbecoming of an apex institution like RBI to renege on its promise to its employees and deny revision of pension to them on technical or other grounds. Unless we make all out efforts on our part and extend support to the United Forum for resolution of the issues bilaterally, achievement of our goal will remain an elusive dream. The Government have to be told that RBI pensioners are no less than their counterparts in the Central Government who are given periodical revision of pensions and it is not any dole that we are asking for, but our legitimate dues to be provided out of the RBI Pension Fund constituted by our surrender of entitlement to the Bank's Contributions to Provident Fund, at the rate of 10% of pay. We have to tell them in the language they understand - by struggles and sacrifices by the retiree community. Solutions to the issues through Courts appears a distant or nil possibility as Courts generally look into the legality of the issues and not always the human element involved.

1.3 In the Industry

1.3.1 The recognised Associations in the Banking Industry have submitted their combined Charter of Demands well in advance and negotiations with IBA has already commenced. The specific demands relating to improvements in pension scheme like periodical updation, full neutralisation of DA for all, improvements in family pension etc. are included under para 17 of their Charter. The preliminary round of negotiation covering introduction of five days week, improvements in medical insurance scheme, compassionate appointment, intra cadre career progression scheme etc. are over and the next round of discussions is scheduled to be held in August end.

1.3.2 In the meantime, it was reported that PNB has transferred Rs. 2056 Cr. from pension fund to show profit which was protested by the Associations of serving and retired employees.

1.3.3 As a positive outcome of a series of meetings the All India Pensioners and Retirees' Confederation had with the Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on the vital issues of pension updation, 100 percent DR for pre 2002 retirees and improvements in family pension, the Ministry of Finance has set up a committee to resolve the pending issues of the bank pensioners and retirees.

1.4 On Medical Facilities

1.4.1 The Bank has issued a revised Master Circular on MAF and Circular on renewal of GMP 2017-18. It is a matter of grave concern to all of us that there is virtually no improvement in the scheme as against our expectations. These aspects will be dealt with in more detail in our next issue of Prathyasa.

1.4.2 List of approved hospitals for cashless facility: We are happy to report that the TPA, M/s MD-India has since newly enlisted around 30 hospitals in Kerala including Rajagiri Hospital Ernakulam, Chazhikkattu Hospital, Thodupuzha, Thejaswini Co-operative Hospital Nileswaram, Modern Hospital, Thrissur, NIMS Hospital, Malappuram, Muvattupuzha Medical Centre, GG Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram, NIMS Hospital, Neyyattinkara etc., in their network hospitals to extend cashless facility.

1.5 Income Tax Deduction and issue of Form 16: The RBI retirees and even the serving staff were put to much harassment by the Bank when it failed to issue the Form 16 within the stipulated time frame under the provisions of the Income Tax Act. Our Association at the unit level and our All India Association, took up the issue with RBI Central office but the forms were supplied to us after inordinate delay. It was also observed that the amounts reported in Form 16 were at variance with those

appearing in Form 26AS uploaded to the IT site, under the much trumpeted Samadhan Package. In many cases it was observed that the tax deducted from pension was NOT uploaded to the IT portal within the statutory time limit. All these have caused much hassles to the retirees and many of us may have to file revised returns on the basis of the revised Form 16, the Bank is going to issue. It is unfair and unbecoming of a premier institution like RBI to have stooped to such a low level of professionalism in matters concerning income tax deducted from its employees' salary/pension income.

1.6 Dearness Relief: The DR figures for the current period from August 2017 to January 2018 released after issue of the last Prathyasa, are given below for your information:

Pension / Family pension based on	Rate of Dearness Relief as a % of Basic Pension	Rate of Dearness Relief as a % of Basic Pension
	Existing DR (Feb 2017 to July 2017)	Revised DR (Aug 2017 to Jan 20 18)
Pay scale effective from 1-11-2012	46.90%	47.8%
Pay scale effective from 1-11-2007	130.50%	131.85%
Pay scale effective from 1-11-2002	181.26%	182.88%
Pay scale effective from 1-11-1997	277.92%	280.08%
Rate of DR for family pensioners	130.50%	131.85%

1.7 Tatkal Tickets on deferred payment

1.7.1 While booking tickets, IRCTC users can opt to have tickets delivered at their doorstep and pay in cash or by a debit or credit card at that point. The service which was available for general reservations until now, has been extended to Tatkal tickets, according to the "pay-on-delivery" service provider for IRCTC. The 'pay on delivery' feature completely circumvents the use of a payment gateway and will help users make the bookings in just a few seconds, greatly increasing their chances of booking a confirmed ticket under the Tatkal quota.

1.7.2 IRCTC- For Senior Citizen's Care: The Indian Railways provide 40% concession in fare for men over 60 years of age and 50% concession for women over 58 years of age for travel on its trains. The concession was given by the previous Government after much deliberations and discussions as a welfare measure for senior citizens. It now appears that the present Government wants to take away the concession by some covert means. The IRCTC has adopted tricky methods for the same. Now, while booking train tickets online through IRCTC, a screen appears at the time of booking with an option for the senior citizens to give up the concessions. The screen comes with two

options OK to give up the concession and Cancel to proceed with the booking with concession. **One might think that OK means that one wants to continue with the concession and CANCEL means to forego the concession.** In Railway's parlance it is not so. It should have been a simple YES or NO. Such jugglery of words is intended to confuse the senior citizens/passengers.

1.8 On GST Regime : Goods and Services Tax (GST) Law was rolled out by the Government in a historical midnight Joint Parliamentary Session on June 30, 2017 and the Act came into force from July 01, 2017, replacing the complex multiple indirect tax structure of the country. GST subsumes almost all the indirect taxes being levied on the supply of goods or services in India (except those

which are specifically exempted from the GST Law). It is expected to simplify the taxation system with a single tax for the country and the Government fixing tax slab for each goods and services. The new tax law is intended to remove tax barriers between states and create a single market for the country, making check posts at state borders irrelevant. Input Credit is one aspect of the GST that will impact businessmen. Under GST, the Govt. has fixed GST rates on 1211 goods and 500 services in the range of five to 28%. Basic necessities like milk, curd, meat, cereals, etc. are exempted from GST. Under GST, some products and services like tobacco, aerated drinks, restaurants, luxury cars, home appliances, jewellery, transportation, banking, mobile bills, etc. have become expensive. In general, services have become more expensive as GST for services has been fixed at 18% as against 15% (including cess) earlier. The goods and services that became cheaper with GST are online shopping, branded clothes, movie tickets, food grains, etc. Though it is too early to comment on the efficacy of the new system, consumers have been complaining that they are yet to benefit from the lower tax rates for many goods and services as the traders are refusing to pass on the tax

benefits to them while passing on higher rates of tax promptly to the consumers. The common man is still to feel the impact of the GST regime. It is expected that

things will improve after the Government undertakes a review.

2. അസോസിയേഷന്റെ വാർഷിക പൊതുയോഗം - ഒരു അവലോകനം

അസോസിയേഷന്റെ വാർഷിക പൊതുയോഗം 2017 ജൂൺമാസം 10-ാം തീയതി എറണാകുളത്ത് ഭാരത് ഹോട്ടലിലെ സൗഭ്യ ഓഡിറ്റോറിയത്തിൽ വെച്ച് നടന്നു. രാവിലെ 11 മണിക്ക് ആരംഭിച്ച യോഗത്തിൽ ശ്രീ. രാജു കുര്യൻ അദ്ധ്യക്ഷത വഹിച്ചു. 79 അംഗങ്ങൾ യോഗത്തിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തു. ജോയിന്റ് സെക്രട്ടറി ശ്രീ. പൗലോസ് എല്ലാവർക്കും സ്വാഗതം ആശംസിച്ചു. കഴിഞ്ഞ വാർഷിക പൊതുയോഗത്തിന്റെ മിനിറ്റ്സ് യോഗം അംഗീകരിച്ചു. സേവനത്തിൽ നിന്ന് വിരമിച്ചവരുടെ സംഘടനകളുടെ കൂട്ടത്തിൽ സാമൂഹ്യ പ്രതിബദ്ധതാ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളിൽ ഇത്രയധികം ഊർജ്ജസ്വലതയോടെ ഏർപ്പെടുന്ന മറ്റൊരു സംഘടനയും ഇല്ല എന്നത് അഭിമാനാവഹമാണെന്ന് ശ്രീ. രാജു കുര്യൻ തന്റെ അദ്ധ്യക്ഷ പ്രസംഗത്തിൽ ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി. നിർമ്മാണം നിരലംബരും ആയ കൂടുതൽ പേർക്ക് ആശ്വാസം നൽകാനാവും വിധം PLF പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ കാര്യക്ഷമമായി തുടരുന്നതിന് അംഗങ്ങളുടെ സഹകരണം അദ്ദേഹം അഭ്യർത്ഥിച്ചു. ഇത്തരം പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ വിപുലീകരിക്കേണ്ടതിന്റെ ആവശ്യകതയും അതിനുള്ള സാദ്ധ്യതയും നമ്മുടെ സമൂഹത്തിൽ നിലനിൽക്കുന്നുണ്ടെന്നുള്ള വസ്തുത അദ്ദേഹം ഊന്നിപ്പറഞ്ഞു. ഇക്കാര്യത്തിൽ അംഗങ്ങളിൽനിന്ന് ലഭിക്കുന്ന അഭിപ്രായങ്ങളും നിർദ്ദേശങ്ങളും പ്രവർത്തനം മെച്ചപ്പെടുത്തുന്നതിന് വളരെ പ്രയോജനപ്രദമായിരിക്കുമെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം എടുത്തുപറഞ്ഞു.

2. റിപ്പോർട്ട് കാലയളവിൽ നമ്മെ വിട്ടുപോയ സി.എം.മോഹനൻ, കെ.പുരുഷൻ, പി.ഐ.ജോൺ, ആന്റണി കൊച്ചുമുട്ടം, ജോൺ കെ. മത്തായി എന്നീ അംഗങ്ങളുടേയും RBREA തിരുവനന്തപുരം യൂണിറ്റിലെ അംഗവും റിസർവ് ബാങ്ക് എംപ്ലോയീസ് അസോസിയേഷന്റെ കൊച്ചി യൂണിറ്റിന്റെ മുൻകാല സെക്രട്ടറിയും ആയിരുന്ന എൻ. വി. സുബ്രഹ്മണ്യന്റേയും സ്മരണയോടടുത്തു ആദരസൂചകമായി യോഗം രണ്ടുമിനിറ്റ് മൗനം ആചരിച്ചു.

3. സെക്രട്ടറി 2016-17ലെ വാർഷിക റിപ്പോർട്ട് അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു. അസോസിയേഷന്റെ വിവിധ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചും അംഗങ്ങളുടെ എണ്ണത്തിലുണ്ടായ വർദ്ധനവിലെക്കുറിച്ചും അദ്ദേഹം പ്രതിപാദിച്ചു. കേന്ദ്രഗവൺമെന്റ് ജീവനക്കാരുടെ ശമ്പള പരിഷ്കരണം, കേന്ദ്രഗവൺമെന്റ് പൻഷൻകാരുടെ പൻഷൻപരിഷ്കരണം, 500 രൂപയുടേയും 1000 രൂപയുടേയും കറൻസി നോട്ടുകൾ റദ്ദാക്കിയ ഗവൺമെന്റ് നടപടി, നമ്മുടെ പെൻഷൻ പരിഷ്കരണം നേടിയെടുക്കുന്നതിലെ കീറാമുട്ടികൾ, MAF പദ്ധതിയിൽ ചേരാൻ റിസർവ് ബാങ്ക് ഒരവസരം കൂടി നൽകിയ നടപടി, ഗ്രൂപ്പ് മെഡിക്കലിംഗ്

പദ്ധതിയുടെ പുതുക്കൽ, ഈ വർഷം ഫെബ്രുവരിയിൽ നടന്ന കൂടുംബസംഗമം, അഖിലേന്ത്യാ അസോസിയേഷന്റെ ഈയിടെ മുൻബൈയിൽ നടന്ന സമ്മേളനം, നമ്മുടെ ത്രൈമാസ പ്രസിദ്ധീകരണമായ 'പ്രത്യാശ', പ്രത്യാശാ ലൈഫ്ലൈൻ ഫണ്ടിന്റെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങൾ, പ്രത്യാശാ ഭവന പദ്ധതി നടത്തിപ്പിലെ പുരോഗതി എന്നിവയെക്കുറിച്ചും അദ്ദേഹം സംസാരിച്ചു.

4. 2016-17 വർഷത്തെ ഓഡിറ്റ് ചെയ്ത വരവു ചെലവു കണക്കുകൾ ട്രഷറർ ശ്രീ. ജോൺകുട്ടി അവതരിപ്പിച്ചു. കഴിഞ്ഞ നാലു വർഷങ്ങളിൽ അസോസിയേഷന്റെ സാമ്പത്തിക സ്ഥിതി ഗണ്യമായി മെച്ചപ്പെട്ടിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി. തുടർന്നു നടന്ന ചർച്ചകളിൽ പങ്കെടുത്തുകൊണ്ട് ശ്രീ. വി. സോമസുന്ദരൻ, ശ്രീ. സി.വി.അലക്സാണ്ടർ, ശ്രീ.പി.എസ്.ജോസ്, ശ്രീ ടി. ഹെന്റി ലോറൻസ് എന്നിവർ അസോസിയേഷന്റെ സാമൂഹിക പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെ ശ്ലാഘിച്ചു സംസാരിച്ചു. അത്തരം പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളുടെ പ്രയോജനം കൂടുതൽ ആളുകളിലേക്കെത്തിക്കുന്നതിനുള്ള മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങൾ ശ്രീ. ലോറൻസ് നിർദ്ദേശിച്ചു. വിവിധ വിഭാഗങ്ങളിൽപ്പെട്ട അംഗങ്ങളുടെ പെൻഷൻ സംബന്ധിച്ച് നിലനിൽക്കുന്ന അപാകതകളെക്കുറിച്ച് പഠിക്കുന്നതിന് അസോസിയേഷന്റെ ഒരു സബ്കമ്മിറ്റി രൂപീകരിക്കണമെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം അഭിപ്രായപ്പെട്ടു. ശ്രീ. പി.എസ്.ജോസ്, ശ്രീ.ലോറൻസ് എന്നിവർ സ്വന്തം നിലയിൽ വിവിധ സന്നദ്ധസംഘടനകളുടെ ഭാഗമായി നടത്തുന്ന സാമൂഹിക പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ച് പ്രസ്ഥാനമായി വിവരിച്ചു. അതിനുശേഷം, വാർഷിക റിപ്പോർട്ടും വരവുചെലവുകണക്കുകളും യോഗം ഏകകണ്ഠമായി അംഗീകരിച്ചു.

5. പുതുതായി അസോസിയേഷനിൽ ചേർന്നവർ അവരവരെക്കുറിച്ച് ഒരു ലഘു വിവരണം നൽകിക്കൊണ്ട് സ്വയം പരിചയപ്പെടുത്തി. താരതമ്യേന പ്രായം കുറഞ്ഞവർ, ഭാവിയിൽ അസോസിയേഷന്റെ പ്രവർത്തനങ്ങളെ നല്ലനിലയിൽ മുന്നോട്ടുകൊണ്ടുപോകാൻ കെൽപ്പുള്ളവർ, അംഗങ്ങളായി എത്തുന്നു എന്നത് പ്രോത്സാഹനകമാണെന്ന് സെക്രട്ടറി അഭിപ്രായപ്പെട്ടു.

6. നമ്മുടെ അംഗം ശ്രീ. കെ.കെ.പ്രാബ് സുമധുരമായ ഒരു ഗാനം ആലപിച്ചു. പിന്നീട് തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ട നിർമ്മാണ വിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്ക് പഠനം തുടരാനാവശ്യമായ ധനസഹായം വിതരണം ചെയ്യപ്പെട്ടു. അർഹരായ വിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്ക് (നമ്മുടെ അംഗമായിരുന്ന തോമസ് എബ്രഹാമിന്റെ പുത്രി കുമാരി റിയാ തോമസ് ഉൾപ്പെടെ) മൊത്തം 1,50,000 രൂപ യോഗത്തിൽ വെച്ച് വിതരണം ചെയ്തു.

7. എൺപതു വയസ്സ് കടന്ന, മുതിർന്ന അംഗമായ ശ്രീ. പി. ജെ.തോമസിനെ അദ്ധ്യക്ഷൻ പാനാട അണിയിച്ച് ആദരിച്ചു.

ശ്രീ തോമസ് കൃതജ്ഞത പ്രകാശിപ്പിക്കുകയും ഗതകാല സ്മരണകൾ അയവിറക്കുകയും ചെയ്തു. പെൻഷൻ പരിഷ്കരണത്തിന്റെ കാര്യത്തിലായാലും കറൻസി നോട്ടുകൾ ന്ദാക്കുന്ന കാര്യത്തിലായാലും, റിസർവ്വ് ബാങ്കിന്റെ സ്വയം ഭരണത്തിൽ കേന്ദ്രഗവൺമെന്റ് തുടരത്തുടര ഇടപെടുന്നതായിട്ടാണ് അനുഭവമെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം ചൂണ്ടിക്കാട്ടി. എൺപതുവയസ്സുകടന്ന മറ്റൊരു അംഗമായ ശ്രീ. പി.വി.ബാലകൃഷ്ണൻ അനാരോഗ്യം മൂലം കോഴിക്കോട്ടുനിന്ന് യാത്രചെയ്ത് യോഗത്തിൽ സംബന്ധിക്കാൻ കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല.

8. ചില ആശുപത്രികളിൽ ക്യാഷ്ലെസ്സ് ചികിത്സാ സൗകര്യം പിൻവലിക്കപ്പെട്ട കാര്യവും ലിസി ആശുപത്രിയിലെ സ്പെഷ്യലിസ്റ്റ് ഡോക്ടർമാരെ കാണുന്നതിന് ചാർജ്ജ് ഈടാക്കുന്ന കാര്യവും ഉൾപ്പെടെ അംഗങ്ങൾ ഉന്നയിച്ച വിവിധ പ്രശ്നങ്ങളെ സംബന്ധിച്ച് സെക്രട്ടറി വിശദീകരണം നൽകി.

9. അതിനുശേഷം, യോഗം 2017 - 18 വർഷത്തേക്കുള്ള ഭരണസമിതിയെ തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കാനുള്ള നടപടികളിലേയ്ക്കു കടന്നു. താഴെ പറയുന്നവരടങ്ങുന്ന ഭരണസമിതിയെ യോഗം ഏകകണ്ഠമായി തിരഞ്ഞെടുത്തു.

	ഭരണസമിതിയിലെ സ്ഥാനം	തിരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ട വ്യക്തി	പേര് നിർദ്ദേശിച്ച വ്യക്തി	പിൻതാങ്ങിയ വ്യക്തി
1.	പ്രസിഡന്റ്	ശ്രീ. പി.എൻ നന്ദകുമാർ	ശ്രീ. സി.കെ.ശശികുമാർ	ശ്രീ. വി.വിനോദ്
2.	വൈസ് പ്രസിഡന്റ്	ശ്രീ. എബ്രഹാം മാത്യു	ശ്രീ കെ.കെ.പ്രാബ്	ശ്രീ. വി.സോമസുന്ദരൻ
3.	സെക്രട്ടറി	ശ്രീ. പി.എ.പൗലോസ്	ശ്രീ.സി.വി.അലക്സാണ്ടർ	ശ്രീ. പി.എ.സുകനിയ
4.	ജോയിന്റ് സെക്രട്ടറി	ശ്രീമതി മേരിക്കുട്ടി ജോസ്	ശ്രീമതി എസ്. പദ്മകുമാരി	ശ്രീമതി വി.ശ്യാമള
5.	ട്രഷറർ	ശ്രീ. കെ.പി.ജോൺകുട്ടി	ശ്രീ.വി.സോമസുന്ദരൻ	ശ്രീ.പി.എസ്.ജോസ്
6.	അംഗം	ശ്രീ.വി.സോമസുന്ദരൻ	ശ്രീ.കെ.രവീന്ദ്രൻ	ശ്രീ.കെ.രാമചന്ദ്രൻ
7.	അംഗം	ശ്രീ.അലക്സ് കുരിയൻ	ശ്രീ.വി.വിനോദ്	ശ്രീ.പി.എ.സുകനിയ
8.	അംഗം	ശ്രീമതി എസ്. പദ്മകുമാരി	ശ്രീമതി പി.കെ.അംബികാദേവി	ശ്രീമതി കെ.എൻ മോഹനകുമാരി
9.	അംഗം	ശ്രീ.കെ.കെ.ചന്ദ്രൻ	ശ്രീ.സത്യപ്രകാശ്	ശ്രീ.കെ.കെ.മോഹനൻ

ശ്രീ.രാജു കുറുനെ ഭരണസമിതിയുടെ യോഗങ്ങളിൽ സ്ഥിരം ക്ഷണിതാവ് ആയി നിശ്ചയിക്കാനുള്ള നിർദ്ദേശവും M/s പ്രഭു & ഹെഗ്ഡേ എന്ന ചാർട്ടേർഡ് അക്കൗണ്ടന്റ് സ്ഥാപനത്തെ 2017 - 18 വർഷത്തേക്കുള്ള ഓഡിറ്റർ ആയി നിയമിക്കാനുള്ള നിർദ്ദേശവും യോഗം ഏകകണ്ഠമായി അംഗീകരിച്ചു.

10. അസോസിയേഷന്റെ ബംഗളൂരു യൂണിറ്റുമായി ചേർന്ന് സംയുക്തമായി ഒരു ആന്തമാൻ - നിക്കോബാർ വിനോദയാത്ര സംഘടിപ്പിക്കാൻ ഉദ്ദേശിക്കുന്നതായി സെക്രട്ടറി അറിയിച്ചു. യാത്രയിൽ പങ്കുചേരാൻ താല്പര്യമുള്ളവർ കഴിവതും നേരത്തേ സെക്രട്ടറിയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെടണമെന്ന് അദ്ദേഹം അഭ്യർത്ഥിച്ചു.

11. ശ്രീ. എബ്രഹാം മാത്യു യോഗത്തിൽ സംബന്ധിച്ച എല്ലാവർക്കും കൃതജ്ഞത രേഖപ്പെടുത്തി. യോഗം ഉച്ചയ്ക്ക് 1.30ന് അവസാനിച്ചു. അതിനുശേഷം, ദാരത് ഹോട്ടലിൽ ഒരുക്കിയിരുന്ന വിഭവസമൃദ്ധമായ കേരളീയ സദ്യയിൽ അംഗങ്ങൾ പങ്കുകൊണ്ടു.

Office Bearers - Contacts :

Post	Name	Mail ID	Phone
President	Shri P.N.Nandakumar	pnnandu@gmail.com	9446541523
Vice President	Shri Abraham Mathew	abramath@gmail.com	9995124333
Secretary	Shri P.A.Paulose	pap29@rediffmail.com	9773090409
Joint Secretary	Smt. Marykutty Jose	marykuttyjose@gmail.com	9447818827
Treasurer	Shri K.P.Johnkutty	kpjohnkutty@rediffmail.com	9496319511

Our Member Shri V.C.Francis was falicitated by the Ettumanoor Municipality as the Best Organic Farmer. Our hearty Congratulations to Shri Francis.

3. Secretary's Report for the year 2016-2017

“On behalf of the Managing Committee of the Reserve Bank Retired Employees' Association, Kochi, I most cordially greet and welcome you to this Annual General Meeting and place before you this report on the activities of the Association during the year 2016-2017 (covering the period up to June 07, 2017). The audited statements of accounts for the year ended March 31, 2017 are also placed before this august body for consideration and adoption after due deliberations.

2. In Memoriam: We deeply mourn the sad demise of our beloved members C M Mohanan, K Purushan, P I John, Antony S Kochumuttom and John Mathai during the period and pay our respectful homage to their memory. We lost many legendary leaders of the country and many retirees from the RBI fraternity during the year. N.V.Subramanian from our Thiruvananthapuram unit who was also secretary of RBEA, Kochi in the 70s passed away during the reporting period. We deeply mourn their death and dip our banner in respectful homage to their memory.

3. Organisational Matters: The last Annual General Meeting was held on June 25, 2016. The Managing Committee consisting of the following members took charge on that day: Shri Raju Kurian, President; Shri Abraham Mathew, Vice President; Shri P. N. Nandakumar, Secretary; Shri P. A. Paulose, Joint Secretary; Shri K. P. John Kutty, Treasurer; Shri K. K. Chandran, Shri Alex Kurien, Smt. Marykutty Jose, and Smt. K.N.Mohanakumari - members. Shri C. A. Jacob was elected permanent invitee to the Managing Committee. Five MC meetings and a Family Get-Together were held during the period.

4. Membership: The membership of the Association increased from 325 as on March 31, 2016 to 357 by March 31, 2017. There is an increase in membership, but there is scope for betterment of the numbers by ensuring that all those who have retired from various offices of RBI, particularly those who have settled down in and around Kerala after retirement, are enrolled as members.

5. General

5.1 Pay and Pension Revision in Central Government:

The Ministry of Finance has issued Gazette Notification with regard to 7th Pay Commission Recommendations, on Monday the 25th July, 2016, notifying a 2.57-times hike in the basic salary of around one crore Central Government employees and pensioners. The minimum and maximum pay of the 47 lakh Central Government employees will

now be Rs. 18,000 and Rs. 2.5 lakh per month respectively. The pension of the 53 lakh retirees of the central government was also revised suitably. The Committee appointed by Gol has recommended further improvements in the pension formula as an ultimate solution for ending disparity in pension.

5.2 Demonetisation: The surprise announcement by the Prime Minister on November 8, 2016 to demonetise Rs. 1000 and Rs. 500 currency notes with immediate effect, was a major event during the reporting period. By this move, the government wanted to eliminate corruption and black money and to curb counterfeiting of currency. Ushering in an era of a 'less cash' economy was subsequently added as another objective. However, since bulk of the transactions in our economy is carried out in cash, this abrupt measure caused panic among the public. The lack of adequate preparations on the part of the government, RBI, and banks added to the woes of the common man. Whether the objectives of the move were achieved is debatable, but the confidence of the general public in the banking system got eroded to a large extent. Another fallout of the exercise was the loss of autonomy and reputation of the RBI. Also, the entire currency accounting system lost its credibility as individual banks approached RBI and got fresh currency by debit to their current accounts directly, instead of routing the transactions through the currency chest mechanism. Even now RBI is not in a position to say how much of these notes were in circulation or the value of such notes surrendered. Information in this regard sought for under RTI Act were refused on the plea that it is matter of national security. We were able to carry a detailed analysis of the various aspects of this event in our Prathyasa of Jan-Mach 2017.

6. On Pension updation

6.1 The government found no issues with revising the pension of its own employees and meeting such expenditure from the Union budget, but continues to block the benefit to RBI retirees on grounds untenable. The RBI management also, though appearing sympathetic to our legitimate right, does not seem to be exerting enough pressure on the Finance Ministry in this regard. The revision of pension to RBI retirees has no budgetary implications as the expenditure would be met out of the

RBI Pension Fund created out of the contributory PF surrendered by the pension optees. In fact, the pension optees in RBI had surrendered the bank's contribution at the rate of 10% of their pay as against 8.33% surrendered by optees in similar organisations. Still the Gol has been denying clearance for the revision of pension in RBI pointing out that the Pension Regulations did not include a provision for revision of pension, disregarding the fact that there was a clear corporate commitment from the Bank by way of a circular issued by the Bank to its employees urging them to opt for pension at the time of introduction of the scheme.

6.2 Thus the issue remains unresolved despite the serious efforts made by the All India Association and the United Forum of RBI Employees for more than a decade. Maybe it is time for us to intensify the struggle jointly with the United Forum, with some direct actions if the present Governor also continues to give only lip sympathy to our demand. Failed by bureaucracy in the Ministry and frustrated by the inaction of the Bank for more than a decade, some retirees have resigned to their fate and feel we should forget the issue, some others want politicians to be roped in for our rescue and still another section intends to seek a legal remedy. One group has approached the Lucknow High Court for a remedy but the counter affidavit filed by the RBI appears to be as per the dictates of the MoF/ Gol. Meanwhile, the verdict of Delhi High Court (DHC) in the matter of LIC vs Union of India which was eagerly awaited, has since been pronounced. But it has not given much hope as it has indicated that pension updation is an issue to be settled bilaterally and not by a court of law.

6.3 The issue of pension updation is a prerogative of the RBI under its powers derived from its status as an autonomous institution (not a PSU). Dr. Bimal Jalan revised the pension accordingly but this power was subsequently surrendered

to the Government by his successors. The United Forum is seized of the gravity of the issues. The revision of pension and fresh pension option formed part of the demands of the Class III and IV employees in RBI when they joined the All India Strike on 2nd September 2016.

6.4 As part of the agitational programmes launched by the Forum, massive gate demonstrations on these demands were held in front of all the offices of RBI on 7 July 2016 and 24 April 2017, in which RBI retirees participated in large numbers. However the protest action proposed to be held in front of RBI Chennai before the Central Board Members on 3 May 2017 was 'moderated' as per the specific request made by Shri A.K.Sarangi, PCGM, HRMD, who suggested some more patience. We have waited enough and a further waiting for a couple of months may not be an issue. But an intensified and united struggle by the entire retired community of RBI / Banks with due support from the serving staff, only will expedite the matter.

7. Re-opening of MAFS: Mention was made in the last report about the MAF Advisory Committee Meeting and reopening of MAF option. We are very happy to inform you that our members who were outside the ambit of the MAF Scheme were able to join the scheme as it was once again opened. You will appreciate that the reopening of the MAF option was due to the persistent follow up action by our All India leadership with the Bank's Central Office. We record our profound thanks to the Bank for reopening the option and to the local office for their proactive stand in this regard.

8. Renewal of Group Mediclaim Policy for 2016-17: The Group Mediclaim Policy (GMP) under MAF Scheme has been renewed with effect from August 15, 2016 for a period of one year with United India Insurance Company. There is reasonable improvement in the grade-wise limit of the sum insured per hospitalisation and the ICU, room/ bed charges as given in the table below:

Category	Sum Insured. Rs.	Stoppage Charges (Normal Rs.)	Stoppage Charges (ICU)Rs.
1 Workmen (Class III & IV)	2,25,000	2,500	3,200
2 Officers Grade A, B&C	3,00,000	3,500	5,000
3 Officers Grade D,E & F	3,75,000	5,500	7,000
4 EDs	5,00,000	Unlimited	Unlimited
5 DG & Governors	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited

With this revision, the difference in stoppage charges between the serving and retired staff has narrowed down. Now that the eligibility of officers have been grouped A B C and D E F into respective groups, those retired in Grade A and B are placed on par with C and those in Grades D and E with F, some of the extant anomalies in eligibilities of especially those under PP at the time of retirement have been resolved. We appreciate this positive change in this GMP.

9. Basic Pension - Last month's pay instead of last ten months average pay: It is informed that the Government has since cleared the proposal to count last month's pay instead of last 10 month's average pay for reckoning of basic pension as prevalent in Government of India. If it is implemented from the date applicable to the Government employees, the anomalies could be set right; but If this is also implemented with effect from the date of gazette notification as in the case of reduction in qualifying service from 33 to 20 years, it will trigger a set of new anomalies. The anomalies arising out of reduction in qualifying service for full pension from 33 years to 20 years for those who retired from the Bank's service on or after January 12, 2013 continues as such despite our unit taking up by the issue with Central Office and follow up. Although the issue got special attention of Central Office, it is given to understand that there is no further developments on the plea that some of the members of the retired RBI Staff at New Delhi and Chennai have gone for litigation in the matter.

10. Family Get-Together 2017: This year also we had conducted the Family Get-Together function at Bharath Hotel, Ernakulam on February 04, 2017. The function commenced on time with a hearty welcome address by Shri P A Paulose, followed by the Secretary's brief, Presidential address, felicitation by Shri Salim Gangadharan (ex-RD, RBI, TVM and member) and Shri M K Mall, (CGM, RBI, Kochi), and the disbursement of the donations received from our members to help four poor students to complete / continue their studies. The highlight of the function was the talk by Dr. Sasikala, MD from the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS), Kochi. During the talk, she shared with élan her rich experience in geriatric medical care with the audience which lapped up her advice on how to handle age related problems. This was followed by a music concert by Zachariah and his team - S Pradeep and Kum Nanda. It was a pleasant surprise for all of us when Shri Mall rendered a melodious gazal. After the sumptuous Kerala lunch from BTH, a meeting of the PRHP Management Association was held at the same venue. The meeting expressed happiness that the project was on schedule, thanks to the whole hearted efforts by the Managing Committee of the project.

11. CEC Meeting at Mumbai on March 3 & 4, 2017: The CEC meeting of All India Reserve Bank Retirees Association held at Mumbai on March 3 and 4, 2017 discussed the further approach of the Association for resolving the issues relating

to pension updation and re-option based on organisational action.

12. Conference of All India Reserve Bank Retired Employees Association:

12.1 As decided in the Mumbai CEC Meeting, the third conference of All India Reserve Bank Retired Employees' Association was held in Mumbai from May 19 to 21, 2017. About ninety delegates from 19 different units from all over the country participated in the conference. Shri P N Nandakumar, Secretary and Shri P A Paulose, Joint Secretary attended the conference as our delegates. The inaugural function was held at 10.30 a.m. on May 19, 2017 at the Town Hall of Red Cross Society near RBI New Central Office building. Shri A.K.Sarangi, Principal Chief General Manager, HRMD, RBI, Central Office was the Chief Guest. Smt.Sushmita Phukan, CGM of HRMD also graced the occasion. All India leaders of the United Forum S/S.Jagtap, and Ajit Subedar, and Smt Chitra Patankar also graced the occasion and addressed the delegates, wishing the Conference all success. In the afternoon session on 19th, delegates from almost all the units participated in the discussion on the General Secretary's report. There was threadbare discussion on the happenings inside the organisation, the short comings etc. as well as on the suggestions to bring changes for more effective functioning.

12.2 On the second day, May 20, 2017, the audited statement of accounts were adopted by the meeting. All the unit representatives briefed about the functioning at their units – membership enrolment, convening of meetings, efforts taken to redress the members' grievances, welfare activities, correspondence with the Bank and the All India organisation, the rapport maintained with the Bank's management etc. The problems faced by the members in respect of hospitalisation and settlement of bills under the Bank's MAF scheme were dealt with in detail.

12.3 On the third day, i.e. on May 21, 2017, the conference passed the following resolutions on:

(i) pension updation, (ii) requesting United Forum to include representatives from the Retirees' Association in their team whenever they meet to discuss retirees' issues, (iii) urging upon the Bank to improve facilities under medical scheme, (iv) demanding of the Bank to extend recognition to the Retirees' Association and to allot office space in the Bank's premises at the Central Office and Regional Offices, (v) requesting the Bank to extend Travel Concession (similar to LFC) to the retired employees and (vi) Insisting on the Bank to do away with the discriminatory treatment/irritants in the allotment of VOF/ Transit Holiday Homes/ Holiday homes/ Medical flats etc. to retirees.

12.4 The Conference approved some amendments to the constitution and adopted the duly amended constitution. The election of the office bearers and members of the

Central Executive Committee for the ensuing period was held unanimously. The meeting recorded its appreciation and conveyed its gratitude to the Mumbai unit for hosting the conference in an excellent manner. The following were elected as the principal office bearers: Shri R. P. Donde, President Emeritus; Shri S. V. Mahadik, President; Shri T. G. Nair, Working President; SHRI L.R. Parab, General Secretary; & Shri R P Deval, Treasurer.

13. Prathyasa: We continued to publish our quarterly in-house magazine, Prathyasa, which is well received and appreciated. The main focus of the publication is to apprise members of the developments at the local units and All India, reports of our get-togethers, issues taken up by us with the local office or the All India Association, developments in RBI and elsewhere relevant to us. The bulletin also carries articles of topical interest such as on the threats to RBI autonomy and effects of demonetisation.

14. Prathyasa Lifeline Fund: We are happy to report that we could collect around Rs 8 Lakh (Rupees eight lakh) from our members and well-wishers during the year. We have started helping six poor students from the lowest strata of the society to continue their studies in schools and colleges. Our target is to adopt 500 such students during the next four-five years. If every member can meet the expenses of at least one poor student, we will be able to accomplish our vision. If any of our members is already doing such kind gestures, please inform us and we can make it a collective venture. Friends, it will be like lighting a lamp and will have a chain effect when these children themselves will take the lead in helping the needy, once they are grown up and start earning. Let us strive to extend full support to this noble venture to reach the goal set by us.

15. Updates on PRHP : The news about Bhoomi Pooja and commencement of the pile foundation works were reported in the last AGM. Now, the construction of Prathyasa Retirement Homes – our signature project - is going on in full swing and has reached the last floor concreting stage. Simultaneously the ceiling plastering and brick works have also started in the ground and first floors. We are happy to inform all that the bridge across the Thumbolipuzha (branch of Periyar, touching our PRH complex) along the Seaport - Airport road has been opened for public. As such, we can go to the PRH from the Aluva – Perumbavoor road along the Sea Port Air Port road, by taking a left turn at Thottumukhom. This has reduced the distance from PRH to Rajagiri Hospital / Aluva/ Kochi substantially. Let us hope to complete the project before our next AGM.

16. SMS Charges levied by SBT: It was brought to our notice that State Bank of Travancore was deducting a flat amount of Rs. 120 towards SMS charges from the SB account of the pensioners, irrespective of the number of messages received. This is against the basic instructions issued by

Reserve Bank of India reiterating that such charges should be levied at actuals. The issue was taken up with the Head Office of SBT duly enclosing the Central Office instructions in this regard and copies were forwarded to DBOD/ DBS Central Office. We have since been advised by our Thruvananthapuram Office that they have taken up the matter with SBT and advised them to strictly adhere to the instructions issued by RBI. However, with the merger of SBT and SBI and subsequent hike in all service charges by SBI, we may have to be vigilant and address the issue afresh.

17. Conclusion: On behalf of the outgoing Managing Committee, I express my sincere thanks to all members of the Association for their whole-hearted co-operation. I thank all the members of the Managing Committee and our senior members who led our Association in the past, especially our founder member & advisor Shri C. A. Jacob, for their help and guidance during the period. I extend my sincere thanks to our All India Association, the leaders of the Kochi units of Reserve Bank Employees' Association, All India Reserve Bank Officers' Association, Reserve Bank of India Officers' Association and Reserve Bank Workers' Union and also to the central leadership of the United Forum for taking up the issues of RBI pensioners with RBI and the Government. I also thank all well-wishers and fraternal organisations and wish all success to the new managing team of RBREA, Kochi."

P.N.Nandakumar , Secretary

4. Prathyasa Life Line Fund (PLF)

4.1 We are happy to inform you that with the active support of our members, we could distribute about Rupees four lakh since April 2017 to a few needy persons in the society. This includes financial assistance of Rs 1.5 lakh to three needy patients from humble backgrounds, recommended by our members. We could assist 15 students belonging to BPL families, in their high school, HSC, Diploma, B Com, Nursing, etc. classes. But this number needs to be increased further. Our members are requested to continue to send their donations to the Association, besides recommending deserving cases (along with credentials) for extending our financial help. Members who are already doing such activities on their own or in association with any social organisation are requested to furnish such details to us so that such social intervention activities, in whatever form, become part of our PLF initiatives also.

4.2 Against this background, it will be worthwhile to refer to the activities our member Shri T. Henry Lawrence under "The Trivandrum Fuller Center for Housing-India".

4.2.1 The Trivandrum Fuller Center for Housing (TFCH), a nonprofit Trust formed in 2007, is engaged in providing financial assistance to the homeless people of Kerala for building their own homes. The TFCH works in partnership with the Fuller Center for Housing, USA (www.fullercenter.org) founded by Dr Millard Fuller in 2005. **The TFCH**

helps the low income group (LIG) of families in our society, regardless of religion, community or gender, to build simple, decent and affordable homes with *interest-free loans*, drawn upon its own funds or the funds raised or received by way of donations from philanthropic people and organisations at home and abroad. These loans are repayable, commensurate with the repayment potential of the homeowner families, over a period of time not exceeding 60 months. **Repayments made by the beneficiaries are recycled for building more and more houses.**

4.2.2 Despite various housing schemes being introduced by the Union and the State governments, the problem of housing continues to be so grave that numerous applications for loan assistance keep coming from homeless families. So, the Center is planning to associate or partner with individuals, agencies and governmental or non-governmental organisations as well.

4.2.3 The Center targets the needy families of masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, painters, drivers and the like who belong to the LIG, and who own an adequate area of land capable of accommodating a 500 sq.ft Fuller home. They should also be in possession of the title deed of their land.

4.2.4 If any of you would like to be a part of this great movement, there are some schemes for you:

- Sponsoring a house for a poor family of own choice, undertaking to repay the loan regularly for and on their behalf.
- Forming a group of 12 generous persons willing to contribute one monthly installment of Rs.3,000 to Rs.5,000 once a year for five years depending on the quantum of loan.
- Maintaining a fixed deposit for 60 months and earmark its yield for transfer and credit to the specified account of the TFCH under 'standing mandate' registered with the bank.
- Soliciting the support of philanthropic individuals and institutions by way of donations, no matter how large or small they are, whether in cash or in kind.

Donations will qualify for deduction under section 80G (vi) of the Income Tax Act vide Order C.No.302/4/Trivandrum/2011-2012 dated March 20, 2012. The PAN is AABTT7920P. Contact details: 094956 30595/094957 40255/0471 2336330, trivandrumfullercenter@gmail.com, thlawrence@gmail.com, 7th Floor, Carmel Towers, Cotton Hill, Vazhuthacaud, TVPM – 695 014. Our member, Adv T H Lawrence, Chairman of Trivandrum Fuller Center for Housing had briefly explained these points at our last Annual General Meeting. It is felt that we could associate closely

with this venture as part of our social intervention measures under PLF.

5. Mazha Yathra - A Picnic with a Difference

A group of 42 members from different parts of the State, under the banner of RBREA, Kochi, met at the PWD Rest House Chalakudy at 7:30 am on August 11, 2017 for the Mazhayathra conducted by the Athirampilly Tourism under the KTDC a Govt. of Kerala undertaking. The icing on the cake was the participatory presence of an octogenarian- 87+ in our group. The journey commenced in two groups, rather in two vehicles operated by the Department of Tourism, Athirappilly at 7:45 am as scheduled. The first point of attraction was Thumboomuzhy River and Butterfly garden. It was raining moderately. But all the participants enjoyed the serene beauty of the Chalakudy river, flowing with all its splendour and majesty, from the hanging bridge connecting the garden with the Ezhattumughom side. It is from this part of the river that the two long canals through both banks of the river carry water to the two districts – Ernakulam and Thrissur for irrigation and drinking purposes. After enjoying the typical Kerala breakfast which included a surprise item - the puttu made of jackfruit nuts, we proceeded to Athirappilly.

The experience at Athirappilly, the largest waterfall in Kerala nicknamed as "The Niagra of India", was superb. This scenery will be ever green in the memory of those who have seen the film 'Bahubali'. Watching the fall, with the picturesque scenes of embedded mountains amidst rain, shower and mystified mist, from atop and the bottom level was a life time experience - '*paisa vasool*' to borrow a Hindi expression.

Vazhachal waterfalls was our next destination, and en route we stopped over on the roadside at the beautiful Charpa Waterfalls and enjoyed the splash of the silvery cascades of water falling from a hill. The entire group posed for a photograph with the beautiful waterfall as backdrop. At Vazhachal, the flow of river over the pebble filled sloppy river bed is a smoothening experience. As water flows over slippery slopes, tourists are strictly prohibited from entering/ walking in the river water to prevent any mishap which used to be common in the past, even though the river is not so deep. This is close to the dense green forests of Pariyaram. At Vazhachal, the garden adjoining the waterfall was occupied by families of monkeys which offered enough fun.

Another picnic spot was Anakkayam which is noted for its lake with cool and placid waters famous for the sight of herd of elephants. However, we could not see any of them, as the elephants, as informed by our guide, prefer to keep themselves in deep forests enjoying the rains. This is yet another Bahubali fame spot.

The Peringalkuthu dam and the view of the dam-site from the Inspection Bungalow (IB) of KSEB at the top of the mountain was the next attraction. At times the entire area

was covered with mist, but we could enjoy its beauty when the mist gave way to the drizzling breeze. We had our sumptuous and delicious lunch from the IB. During our return journey we could see some deer grazing at a distance and variety of monkeys - langurs, lion tailed macaques etc.

The highlight of the journey was the service provided by the guides in both the vehicles. Both were knowledgeable and exhibited their sense of belonging to the mother nature. Their narrations about the presence of four types of Hornbills in the area, unfortunate incidents of small creatures in the forest dying under running vehicles, lifestyle of the five sects of tribals in the area engaged in collecting honey from lofty rocks and trees in the deep forest, their cultivations, collecting herbal plants medicinal value, fishing and its marketing, their activities jointly with the Bamboo Corporation and VSS (Vana Samrakshana Samithi), description about the geography of Athirappilly Panchayath which is one of the lengthiest Panchayaths in Kerala and about the strips of forests which are abode to many endangered and endemic species of flora and fauna were all learning points to the participants. Their proficiency in the subject and devotion merit appreciation and all round applause. A big salute to our guides-Santax and Sudhi.

After enjoying the mouth watering kappa with the hot *kanthari* chilly chutney and jaggery coffee served at Vazhachal, we returned to the boarding point at Chalakkudy at 7:00 pm

A recap at the end of the day revealed that the participants unanimously upheld the slogan 'individually we enjoy, collectively we celebrate'. Let us hope that these untouched lands, free from the toxicity of city smoke and blessed with mystical mist, rain, shower and sunshine will play host to heaven itself in God's Own Country for generations to come.

- Courtesy: V. Somasundaran

6. Updates on PRHP

6.1 We are happy to report that the structural works – concreting of all the five roof slabs- has been completed and the brick work is progressing in the second floor. Against this back ground, it has been decided to conduct a General Body meeting of the members of PRHP, hopefully in the premises of our project on November 11, 2017, to decide on the finer aspects of completing the project. All members of PRHP and members of RBREA Kochi who can offer their valuable suggestions are welcome. Formal notice to members will be forwarded subsequently. All

PRHP members should attend the meeting and give their suggestions without fail as we have to take important policy decisions on the finer aspects of the project and fund flow in that meeting.

6.2 We are getting a number of enquiries from retirees at different centres asking whether there is any chance of getting an allotment of a unit in our project. As the existing project is NOT constructed and sold by us, but is common property of all the 68 stake holders, the chances for such allotment at present in this project are nil. In case we are getting a suitable plot of land in the vicinity of our existing project, we may perhaps consider a second phase. As the allotment in case of such a second phase being taken up, is open to members of RBREA, Kochi only, those interested may become life members of the Association early by paying the lifetime subscription of Rs.3100/-

7. New Members: Smt.Suma John (97464 59973), Shri Alden George, Chennai (94441 91611), Shri Paulsil Mathai, Mumbai (98690 36466), Smt. Thankam Mathai, family pensioner , Bengaluru (94953 29590), Shri. M.K.Sukumaran (94460 93843), Smt. Elizabeth Joseph (94471 30104), Shri. P.K.Sathyaprakash (94953 10245) and Shri G.Vijayakumar (99476 00330), have since joined our Association. We extend a hearty welcome to our new members. Address/ details of all new members since the release of our present Directory (February 2016) will be published in due course. In the meantime, if we all make a concerted effort to enroll a good number of new members, we will be able to bring out a revised Members' Directory in the near future.

8. Annual Membership Those very few members who have not paid the annual membership charges for the current/ previous years are requested to kindly clear the arrears@ Rs 300/- per year. The payments may be made by cash/ cheque favouring “Reserve Bank Retired Employees' Association, Kochi” and forwarded to the Treasurer (Shri. K.P.John Kutty (9496319511), House No 32/2022, NERWA 132A, Nethaji Road, Mamangalam, Edappally PO, Kochi -682024). Those who want to make the payment (Subscription/ Donation/ Prathyasa Life Line Fund, etc) through net banking may kindly transfer the amount to our SB account No. 67006272846 in the name of RBREA, Kochi with State Bank of India, Metro station, MG Road, Ernakulam- IFSC code: SBIN0070142. In such cases, please note to send an SMS to the Treasurer to keep accounts reconciled.

IN A DEMOCRATIC SCENARIO, THE MIGHT OF AN ORGANISATION LIES IN THE STRENGTH OF ITS MEMBERSHIP. WE APPEAL TO YOU TO PERSUADE YOUR RBI RETIREE FRIENDS TO JOIN OUR FRATERNITY. LET EVERY MEMBER RESOLVE TO BRING IN ONE NEW MEMBER.

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