



# SUPVOICE

A News Bulletin of State Bank of India Officers' Association (Bengal Circle)

**MAY 2018**



[sbioabengalcircle@gmail.com](mailto:sbioabengalcircle@gmail.com)



[www.sbioabengal.com](http://www.sbioabengal.com)

# TRIBUTE

**Comrade Santi Ranjan Sengupta,**  
a doyen of Bank Officers' movement,  
the Founder President of AIBOC,  
passed away on 14.01.2018.



**Comrade Rabindra Nath Banerjee,**  
one of the founders, former General Secretary  
of SBIOA (Bengal Circle) expired on 29.01.2018.  
At the time of demise he was holding the posts  
of General Secretary, SBIPA (Bengal Circle)  
& President, Federation of SBI Pensioners' Associations.

*Supvoice is expressing its heartfelt condolence to the bereaved families and pays deep respect with gratitude to the departed leaders for their contributions towards the cause of Officers' Rights and Movements in the Banking Industry.*

May Day is just not another day in our calendar. It is the Day of International Solidarity of the entire working class. It is a day for all workers across the world irrespective of caste, creed, religion, who are working in both organised and unorganised sectors, to reaffirm the pledge to protect their hard earned rights, to struggle for improving their conditions, to defeat the anti labour policies and emancipate themselves from all forms of exploitation.

All over the world, the working class is staging protests. Millions of public sector workers in France have been staging protest in various forms including strikes against President Emmanuel Macron's economic and labour law reforms. The French government plans to cut 120,000 public sector jobs in France over the next five years.

In Britain too, waves of protests from various sectors have been witnessed. Workers have demanded re-nationalisation of key sectors like energy, water and Banks. Even students in large numbers had occupied university premises in solidarity with the workers.

In USA , millions of workers marched across in various cities demanding better rights for workers and demonstrated against the Trump regime.

In India, too, May Day rallies were held across the country, to protest against the anti labour policies of the Government. The movement of workers and farmers have been gaining momentum as millions across the country are joining hands to raise their voices. All India Bank Officers' Confederation(AIBOC) has been leading the movement " Save Public- Save India" campaign. Due to the countrywide movement the draconian FRDI Bill has been put on hold. So have the proposed merger and closure of PSU Banks. There is a need to unite various sectors to resist the intentions of the Government, who are trying to tweak the labour laws, to introduce new bills in the guise of money bills in order to bypass the Upper House of the parliament for the interest of Big Corporate Houses. The government, it appears, is acting totally against the national interests by handing over the nation's wealth – lands, forests, water bodies, mines and

public sector undertakings including those in the strategic sector, to foreign corporations through 100% FDI while pitching for 'nationalism'.

We are witnessing crony capitalism. The assets of a select few groups, which are supposedly close to the powers that be, are increasing exponentially. The inequality of income is getting skewed by the day; Last year, a survey by Oxfam, had showed that India's richest 1% held 58% of the country's total wealth, which was higher than the global figure of about 50%. According to the latest survey, India's top 1% of the population now holds 73% of the wealth while 67 crore citizens, comprising the country's poorest half, saw their wealth rise by just 1%.

Let us, therefore, prepare ourselves to join hands for a massive struggle to protect our rights and also to protect the sovereignty of the nation.  
Long live May Day.

**Editor : Com Soumya Datta**  
**Convenor : Com Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay**  
**Com Sabuj Mistry**  
**Com Kusal Chaudhuri**  
**Com Prabir Sorkhel**

*— Let the nation and the world know the meaning of our numbers*

# PRIVATISATION IS NOT THE PANACEA FOR PSU BANKS' ISSUES



"There is a huge socio-economic agenda which only public sector banks cater to." State-run banks have been taking it on the chin due to the 11,300 crore fraud at Punjab National Bank. There are governance gaps that need to be plugged and that the private sector is not the epitome of high standards either.

*Edited excerpts of interview of State Bank of India, Chairman Shri Rajnish Kumar to Joel Rebello, Saloni Shukla and Sangita Mehta at the Kotak Institutional Equities' Investor Conference published in ET Bureau | Feb 27, 2018*

## **Confidence in the banking system has taken a hit after the Nirav Modi episode. How does one fix it?**

I don't think that people have withdrawn money from PNB. Customers have faith due to ownership of the government. If it was a private sector lender, by now there would have been a run on the bank. But yes, there has been a loss of trust in bank boards. Governance of those should be set right.

## **There is a clamour for privatisation of PSU banks. Can that be the panacea?**

No, it is not the panacea. When people talk about privatisation, the theory they must keep in mind is that it is government ownership that is saving the day. Even if it was a private sector bank, still the government would have

to step in to save the bank and everywhere in the world it has happened. People who speak about privatisation are missing the point. I am not advocating private or public sector banks or which model is better. All I am saying is that whatever the structure, there will be issues.

## **So there's scope to improve under the state-ownership itself?**

The debate has to be balanced. There is a huge socio-economic agenda which only public sector banks cater to. Does anyone speak about who will run branches in the troubled and remote parts of the country where you have to walk for 12 hours to reach the branch? If private sector is all about good corporate governance, then tell me which public sector company is in NCLT today? They are all private sector companies. We talk about privatisation

because we now have one bank as a good example. There are many public sector companies which have top-class corporate governance.

### **So what is ailing corporate governance?**

The main issue is that steps should be taken to improve governance at PSU banks and for that matter, the private sector corporates in this country. They all default and sit in the front rows of the industry associations – that is the reality today. So when somebody is preaching, preach... for sure, but look at the reality. Why are these defaulters sitting in the front row and bankers sitting in the back row?

### **The PSU banking system is sick right now – something should be done to remedy it. Should there be a complete overhaul?**

Overhaul is definitely needed but it is a long-drawn process. It's not that today you decide that we are overhauling it and the results will be seen tomorrow. We need to focus on the quality of the board and the quality of top management.

### **Are commentators being unfair to PSU banks?**

I don't want to get into the fair-unfair debate, where media is the investigator, media is the judge, and media reaches all the conclusions... this will lead us nowhere. The debate should be on what things should be done to avoid a repeat of such episodes. Ninety-nine percent of the banking employees are no way involved. No one praises hardworking bank employees... Just because in some branch somewhere an unfortunate incident happened, the media narrative becomes negative. I agree that something like this should not have happened, but observation of experts or shouting on television channels that all bankers are corrupt... what are we doing? We are demoralising our people.

### **What are the lessons for your bank?**

The attention to non-credit risks has to be more because it could explode suddenly... And operational risk is where you just try to build scenarios that this may go wrong or that may go wrong and based on that, you would put risk mitigation measures.

### **Does reputation risk get triggered for Indian banks if the payment by PNB does not happen on time?**

All of us, regulators, private banks or PSU banks who constitute the financial system must take such action which does not result into lack of faith in the banking system. That should be the priority... I am very confident that PNB will not do anything that will erode the faith in the Indian banking system.

### **On the economy front, micros are improving. What about the macro?**

Last quarter was better. Lot of things are happening in the road sector where this new Hybrid Annuity Model is working out fine. There will be monetisation of assets. There is considerable interest in renewable energy where we have said we will not finance if you bid aggressively but there are reasonable bids where we are convinced of the viability. All these resolutions, whenever they happen, will lead to investments because it is not all about just paying the existing creditors but there are also investment plans which the bidders have given. The consumer story in any case is intact and we have not seen much slowdown.





*Com D.T. Franco Rajendra Dev  
General Secretary, AIBOC*

systems have not been corrected to prevent such things from happening. As a responsible union, we have taken up these issues with both the regulator and the Finance Ministry in the past. We had asked them on several occasions to strengthen the systems, ensure more effective supervision, and upgrade technology. It is not as if the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications) system for international communication among banks is state of the art. It has been proved to be hackable, as was highlighted recently when hackers in Russia stole \$6 million. [The Russian central bank confirmed on February 16 that hackers had taken control of a Russian bank and conducted “unsanctioned operations”. Reports quoted a central bank spokesperson as saying that this was “a common scheme”.

### RBI chiefly responsible for PNB scam'

Comrade D.T. Franco Rajendra Dev, a veteran officer of State Bank of India since 1980, Com Franco has seen the Harshad Mehta scandal of the early 1990s and the Ketan Parekh scam of the 2000s from close quarters. In the last two decades, he has been a vocal critic of the liberal regime in banking, which, he believes, has laid the basis of the non-performing assets (NPA) scam. In the wake of the PNB (Punjab National Bank) scam, Com Franco, as General Secretary of the All India Bank Officers' Confederation, called for severe punishment to be meted to bank officers and employees who cheated the bank, and also high-lighted the failure of both the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Finance Ministry in supervising and safe-guarding banks.

**As a veteran in the banking industry what is your understanding of how the so-called PNB scam hit the industry? The notion that a few rogue elements in the bank caused this appears facile.**

The modus operandi that was used in the PNB case is well known. It has been used in the past, on different occasions, involving various banks. Despite this, the

### Since when have you and your colleagues been aware of this?

I am aware of a case in 1999, which happened at SBI in Kolkata. Although core banking solution (CBS) was not in existence then, SWIFT was in existence. It had also happened in Union Bank of India and Bank of Baroda. So, we have been continuing with a system that has been known to get compromised. In some banks, the SWIFT system is linked to the CBS, but in many others it is not. It is the responsibility of the RBI to ensure that secure systems for financial transactions are implemented. As the prime supervisor of banking in the country, it is its duty to conduct periodic audits and monitor foreign exchange transactions. It is the RBI's duty to enforce technical solutions that ensure security. Since this is a systemic issue that affects not just one bank, it is the RBI that must take responsibility for ensuring that this happens.

While we are all for taking stringent action against officers and employees who have caused losses to banks, the blame for all this cannot be placed on a few officers or employees at the lower level, as if those higher in the banks' hierarchy did not know what was happening. That is not acceptable. There are supposed to be so many checks and balances in the system. What happened to them?

## ROLL OVER OF LETTERS OF UNDERTAKING

**It is obvious that the limits of the letters of undertaking issued to Nirav Modi's companies, which started in 2011, could not have been established then. It must have been enhanced over time. How come this increase in the value of LoUs escaped the attention of higher officials in the bank?**

The rollover of LoUs with enhanced limits must have happened over time. In this entire process, at least four different persons in the bank are involved. This is done specifically to prevent collusion. But in this case, the entire operation appears to have been handed over to the bank's client. Since these were false LoUs, it is possible that it never came to the attention of senior officials.

But when the client went to the foreign bank to encash the LoUs, it would have been credited to PNB's nostro account with a foreign bank. If that nostro account had been checked, the transaction would not have escaped the attention of PNB. It is possible that the other banks [counterparty] may have also been compromised. If these nostro accounts had been checked, this may not have happened. The imbalances in the nostro accounts is not a new problem; this has been a persistent problem which has been ignored by the RBI over several years.

**Is it even clear, legally and financially, that the responsibility for the defaults in repayments by Nirav Modi and his related entities lies with PNB? Are we not in for a long legal haul before this is settled? Or, is it likely that the government may just force PNB to pick up the bill?**

It is not at all true that PNB's counterparties [banks] overseas are absolutely innocent. Any banker would have to see the credibility of the borrower. The LoU that is presented to him/her overseas gives a background description of the borrower, including a brief account of the borrower's business. But, at their end, they too have to check the status of the borrower when the LoU is presented to them. In fact, PNB is already arguing that counter-party banks ought to have done due diligence at their end. It is saying, "Don't put all the blame on us." Although the PNB Chairman has given an assurance that the bank will honour all its obligations, later, when the issue is contested, it could argue that responsibility also lies with the counterparty banks, especially if they have failed to act diligently in a commercial transaction.

Moreover, the government and the RBI are responsible for creating this situation. After all, the government has a policy to facilitate the jewellery industry through an import scheme. Nirav Modi was an importer of precious stones and metals. Normally, an importer is supposed to take buyers' credit within the country. This would have been a costlier credit [because of high interest rates in India]. In any case, importers of raw materials in general already enjoy several concessions. Despite all this, the RBI formulated the LoU scheme in order to enable some importers to access cheaper credit from overseas. Why was this necessary, especially when it was clear that this facility was open to abuse in order to enable capital flight? The entire scheme of LoUs was flawed and open to abuse, for which the RBI is to be held responsible.

**So, do you believe this will be a prolonged legal battle?**

Definitely, this may prolong. Already Nirav Modi has told PNB that it has blown things out of proportion. He has contested even his liabilities, saying it is only about half of what PNB claims it to be. He will even say that he had done nothing to do with the fraud, which may have been perpetrated by some rogue employees acting in collusion with bank employees. He may claim that this happened without his knowledge. He now accuses PNB of tarnishing his reputation, which impairs his ability to repay his dues.

**Do you see shades of the Harshad Mehta scam, involving SBI, when diligent bank officials were prevented from following the logical course of asking the scam mastermind to repay his dues? Many diligent officers suffered when the CBI came into the picture later.**

It is exactly similar. I understand that among the PNB officers placed under suspension is the one who detected the scam. After all, the scandal was unearthed by an officer who refused to issue fresh LoUs without margin payments by the Nirav Modi companies. This officer not only refused to issue the LoUs but also alerted higher officials in the bank, which resulted in the unearthing of the scam.

**Most of the large scams in India in the last quarter century have involved banks—the Harshad Mehta scam in the early 1990s, the Ketan Parekh scandal after that (2000), the scandals involving large-scale corporate borrowings that have turned delinquent and now the so-called PNB scam. What is different about the latest one?**

The one you refer to as the NPA scam is different from the others. The losses on account of bad loans have more to

do with government and RBI policies and are not, strictly speaking, banking scams. In the case of NPAs, I would prefer to call it an RBI-inspired scam because it forced banks to undergo a haircut while allowing large corporate entities to escape scot-free. It is the RBI norms on classification of NPAs that has brought PSBs [public sector banks] to the brink. I expect that at the end of 2017-18, the net loss of these banks will be about Rs.88,000 crore. This is mainly because the banks have to make provision for 50 per cent of the bad loans in the current year, and the remaining the next year. There is a big scam hidden in this because the borrowers are going to get away without a scratch.

The PNB scam is nothing new. It follows the same pattern as the Harshad Mehta and Ketan Parekh scams. All three happened because of negligence, not following due diligence, and the absence of checks and balances in the system. There is nothing new in the latest case. We do not appear to have learnt any lessons from the past.

### **Has the RBI learnt its lessons?**

I think it is the RBI which should primarily take the blame for what has happened. As a supervisor of the Indian banking system, it has failed miserably. I said the same when I criticised demonetisation because it gave up all its responsibilities, which resulted in the exercise becoming a monumental failure. After all, the RBI's main role is to supervise banking and prepare policies towards that end. It is responsible for carrying out statutory audits under the RBI Act. So, the question is this, What has been the quality of the audits it has done? Frauds in the banking sector are increasing. What has the RBI done to arrest the rising trend?

### **There are loud demands for privatisation in the wake of the PNB scandal.**

Private banking has not failed [anywhere] as spectacularly as it has in India. NPAs are also increasing in these banks. The old generation private banks are already in crisis. The new generation banks may appear to be better off, but I believe that is an illusion. Closer scrutiny will reveal a much bigger mess in these banks. All over the world, the collapse of entire banking activity and of economies has been triggered by private banking. It is perverse to argue that privatisation is a solution to the banking industry's problems.

## **AFTER-EFFECTS OF DEMONETISATION**

**You will recall that 2017 was a traumatic year not just for banks and their employees but for the banking regulator following the trauma that was demonetisation. It is well known that banks were so saddled by this task that they could do little else. Could it be possible that banks, their employees and the regulator were just too preoccupied with this gigantic operation that they could not focus on the requirements of basic diligence that would have prevented such a fraud?**

Definitely. Monitoring within banks and supervision by the RBI noticeably slackened after demonetisation. The situation in Indian banking is grave. Bank employees and officers are entrusted with so many other tasks that are beyond their normal line of work that they are distracted most of the time from their main work. The joke among us is: We also do banking!

For three-four months after demonetisation, bank employees did nothing but collect and disburse cash; we kept putting all the money in government bonds and other instruments. The latest results of the PSBs show losses, mainly because of these investments. In the case of SBI, almost 80 per cent of these deposits were invested in the market. In one quarter alone, the bank lost Rs.4,400 crore. Bank employees could not attend to fresh lending after demonetisation, NPA follow-up collapsed, and prudential norms also were compromised because everybody in a bank was collecting and disbursing cash.

But another major scam is lurking in the banks. The cross-selling business that banks are indulging in, especially selling policies issued by insurance companies to bank customers. Most of the banks are now also in the insurance business; many others are collaborating with insurance companies. On almost every loan today, there is pressure on the borrower to also take an insurance policy. And, many of these policies do not get renewed after a year, which indicates that the customer is not interested in the policy; he/she only opted for it under pressure. Simply put, it is no different from a bribe.

But, this is not all. "Incentives" are paid to bank officers, right up to the top, for indulging in this kind of cross-selling. In fact, there is a hierarchy of rates, depending on the ranks of these officials. This has created immense pressure on bank officers and employees to attend to such tasks, at the cost of their regular banking work. How can they exercise due diligence in such a situation?

Bank managements have argued that cross-selling boosts “other income” in their balance sheets. This same argument may have appealed to the managements in the case of LOUs because banks earn fees and commissions on such instruments. When the focus is on boosting such incomes, it invariably results in the dilution of lending norms. I know of cases where delinquent borrowers with a poor track record have been given loans simply because they have also opted for insurance sold by the banks. I have written to the RBI, the IRDA [Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority] and the CVC [Central Vigilance Commission] about this pernicious practice, but nothing has happened.

Senior RBI officers have told me that they are overburdened by work pressure. They say they are given a very short time to conduct their inspections.

**If you were to apportion responsibility, or lack of it, for the fiasco among the bank managements, the regulator and the owners (the government), how would you do it?**

The first to be blamed is, obviously, the regulator, the RBI. It has clearly neglected to adhere to systems and procedures. In particular, its failure to ensure the integration of SWIFT with banks' core banking solution proves its negligence. Its failure to rein in the mounting foreign exchange balances in nostro accounts is another count on which it ought to be held culpable. Its failure to check cross-border flows by the jewellery industry constitutes another count on which it has failed.

The Finance Ministry, which controls the PSBs, has also failed utterly. It is supposed to get periodic reports of happenings in banks. The Ministry has its representatives

sitting on banks' boards as well as the RBI board. What were they doing when all this was happening? Instead, the government's focus has only been on making banks do things that are way beyond their normal line of work: pushing Jan Dhan accounts and the Atal Pension Yojana and, now, given the task of enrolling people under Aadhaar. I would say that this [Aadhaar enrolment] is precisely what a bank ought not to do. The bank is supposed to enrol people for Aadhaar and also link their bank accounts to Aadhaar. How safe is that? And, of course, there is no doubt that bank managements, too, are responsible for things coming to such a pass.



# PROCEDURE FOR SETTLEMENT OF DECEASED CLAIMS

PLEASE REFER TO E-CIRCULAR NO. **NBG/S&P-DECEASED/5/2009-10** DATED **25/05/2009**.

## **How to treat pipeline flows (credits in account of deceased person) in deceased accounts?**

The bank may be authorized by the survivor(s) / nominee to **return** the 'pipeline flows (funds)' to the remitter with the remark "Account holder deceased" and to intimate the survivor(s) / nominee accordingly. The survivor(s) / nominee / legal heir(s) could then approach the remitter to effect the payment through a negotiable instrument or through ECS transfer or any other suitable mode in the name of the appropriate beneficiary".

PLEASE REFER TO E-CIRCULAR NO. **NBG/S&P-DECEASED/30/2009-10** DATED **12/03/2010**.

## **Settlement of Claims in respect of Missing Persons: -**

Claims up to a threshold limit of **Rs 1,00,000/- (Rs one Lakh only)** will be entertained without insisting for valid death certificate. All such claims in respect of missing persons, reported missing for a **minimum period of one year**, shall be settled on production of the following documents.

1. FIR
2. Non-traceable report issued by the police authorities.
3. Indemnity from the claimant.

## **Delegation of Power**

The AGM (Admin) of the respective Region will be the authorized authority to settle such claims.

**The claims in respect of missing person above Rs 100000/-- may be settled as per the existing instructions i.e. after getting court order from the competent court. Presumption of death can be raised only after a lapse of 7 (seven) years from the date of his/her being reported missing.**

PLEASE REFER TO E-CIRCULAR NO. **NBG/PBBU/NRI-DEPOSIT/38/2014 -15** DATED **24/01/2015**.

## **How to verify the Death Certificate of an NRI who passed away abroad?**

1. A death certificate which is attested/certified by any of the following should be accepted as such for processing the claim:
  - a) Notary Public in that country.
  - b) Indian Embassy / High Commission in that country.
  - c) SBI's Foreign Office. (wherever it is possible/permissible to do attestation as per local regulations)
2. A death certificate which is attested/ certified by the Embassy / High Commission of that country in India should be accepted as such for processing the claim.
3. A death certificate accompanied by any of the following document as a corroboratory evidence, confirming incidence of death (**Ensure that the documents are issued by the same country who issued the Death Certificate**) :
  - i. Evidence of settlement of an insurance claim at foreign centre on account of death of our account holder.
  - ii. Evidence of settlement of proceeds of bank accounts at foreign centre on account of death of our account holder.
  - iii. Evidence of settlement of terminal benefits by the employer at foreign centre on account of death of our account holder. However, the employer would have to be a government institution or a multilateral organization only.
  - iv. Evidence of death as provided by a hospital or local police authorities at the foreign centre.

PLEASE REFER TO E-CIRCULAR NO. **NBG/S&P-SP/10/2014-15** DATED **17/11/2014**.

## **Settlement of Claims without Legal Representation: -**

### **Up to and inclusive of Rs. 5 lakh (Total Balance + Interest):**

- Stamped letter of Indemnity from Claimants (Sureties not required)
- Revised Claim format signed by Claimants with one independent person well known to the family of the deceased signing the declaration (not connected to family) acceptable to the Bank.
- Photocopy of Death Certificate (Verified with original).
- KYC of Legal Heir/s.
- Account details of Claimants (if available).
- Letter of Disclaimer (if applicable).

### **Above Rs. 5 lakh (Total Balance + Interest):**

- Revised Claim format signed by the Claimants other than those who signed the Letter of Disclaimer.
- Stamped indemnity from Claimants plus one surety / two sureties jointly good for the amount.
- Stamped Affidavit from an independent person, well known to family of the deceased but not connected with it (COS-539), acceptable to the Bank.
- Photocopy of Death Certificate (Verified with original).
- KYC of Legal Heir/s.
- Account details of Claimants (if available).
- Details of Sureties (with proof) for compilation of the Opinion Report.
- Letter of Disclaimer (if applicable).

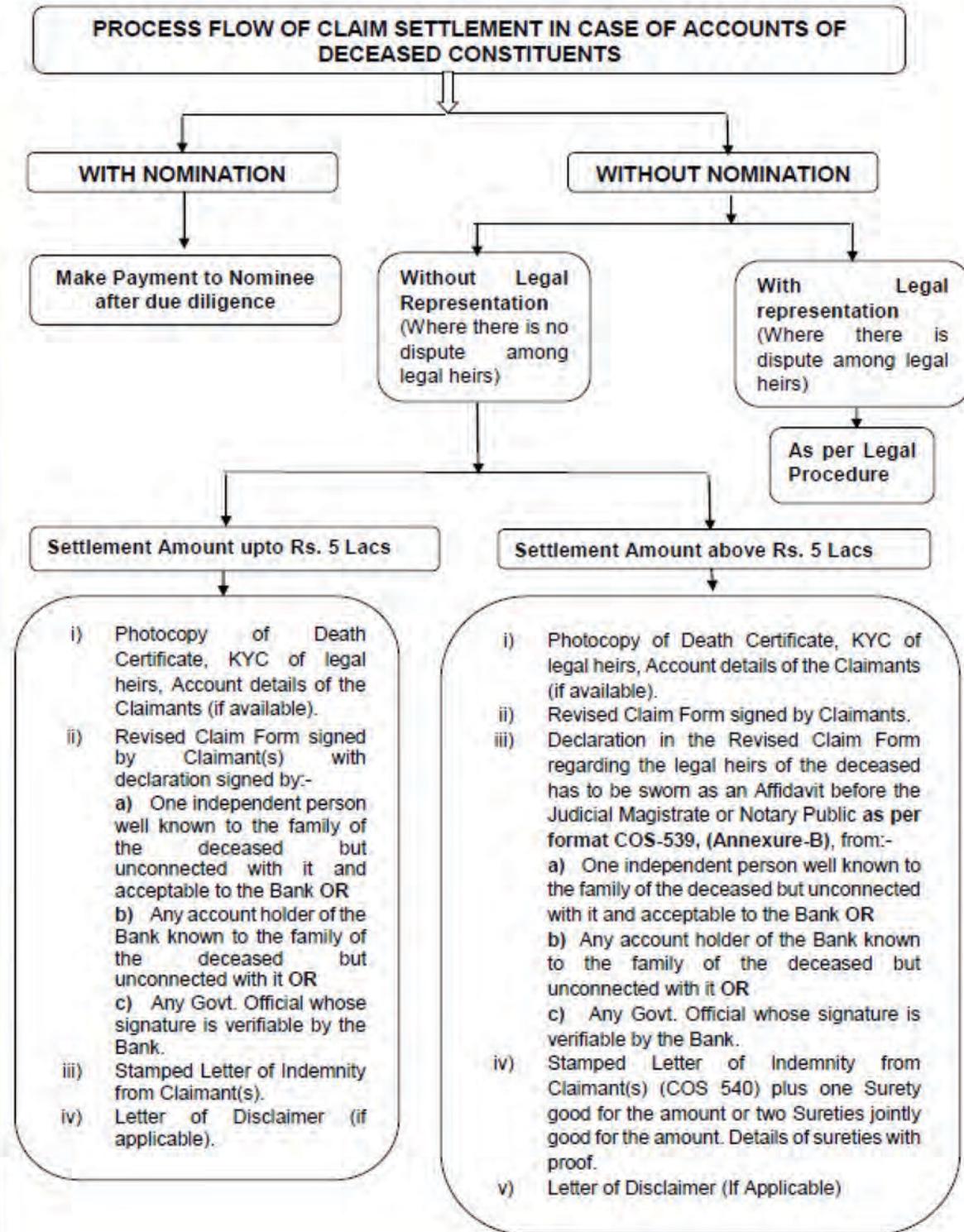
**Mode of payment of Deceased Deposit Balances:**

- Banker's Cheque – Stamped Receipt needs to be obtained.
- Bank Transfer (within SBI in India) – Copy of Statement of account showing the relevant Credit Entry.
- RTGS & NEFT – Copy of acknowledgement of Electronic Transfer Credit.

Where TDR is issued in the form of an advice in place of receipt, return of the discharged TDR receipt may not be insisted upon.

**To download the Revised Claim Format please go to SBI Times --> E- Circular no. NBG / S&P-SP/10/2014-15 dated 17.11.2014 --> Annexure 3173 & 3174**

**Annexure- A**



# EVENTS / PROGRAMS ORGANISED DURING THE PERIOD

## 52nd AGM of Circle Association:

The 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Circle Association was held in a befitting manner on 12.01.2018 at Nazrul Mancha, Kolkata. More than 4000 members attended the meeting. The General Secretary of the Federation Com Y. Sudarshan along with Leadership from all the Circles and leaders from the affiliates of AIBOC



were present on the occasion. Leaders and members of yesteryears were also present in good number. The gala program started with a mesmerizing performance by the members of "Srijan", the cultural wing of the Circle Association. The entire Circle Management along with the top executives from Corporate Centre establishments graced the occasion. Our revamped Circle Website ([www.sbioabengal.com](http://www.sbioabengal.com)), in more informative form, was inaugurated by the respected Chief General Manager of our Circle on the occasion. Like earlier years, philanthropic activities were also carried out on the occasion in the presence of galaxy of leaders and members.



## SBIOA Coaching Classes for IBPS/SBI Clerk and P.O.:

Our Circle Association launched a coaching-cum-preparatory classes for the candidates appearing in examinations for IBPS / SBI Clerk and Probationary Officers at our Academy in SBIOA House, 78, Bentinck Street, Kolkata - 700001. The program was inaugurated by the Chief General Manager of our Circle, Shri Partha Pratim Sengupta. Presently more than hundred students, pre-dominantly from the weaker strata of the society have enrolled and are being guided by professionals.



## Mock Interview :



Mock interview for TO and JMG aspirants were organised as usual by Circle Association as well as by Regional Committee, Region - 2, Bidhannagar and Administrative Zonal Committees (Burdwan and Siliguri). The programs were attended by large number of contenders which evoked splendid response and was truly fruitful.



## Cricket Tournament:



A oneday inter-branch cricket tournament was organised on 11.02.2018 by AZC Mid-Corporate / Corporate module, the final match of which was held on 14.02.2018. All members of the module including the Top Executives participated in the tournament with utmost zeal and enthusiasm.



## Annual Sports Meet, 2018:

The 27th Annual Sports meet of the Circle Association was organised at Presidency University Ground on 23.01.2018 in a befitting manner. Our Chief General Manager, Shri Partha Pratim Sengupta inaugurated the meet. Members including retirees turned out in large number on the occasion and enjoyed the day in festive mood with their families.



AZC Siliguri also successfully organised their first ever Sports Meet on 18.02.2018 to facilitate the participation of the members, their families and Pensioners posted / habitants of North Bengal.



## Felicitation to Comrade Kalyan Kumar Dey



A felicitation program was arranged at the Officers' Mess, 3rd floor, 'E' Block of Samridhi Bhavan to pay respect to Com Kalyan Kumar Dey, Circle President on his superannuation on 31.01.2018. The meeting was attended by a huge number of members from Purulia to Canning and from Berhampore to Midnapore to pay their admiration to the leader. Leaders from AIBOC and SBISA and our leadership of yesteryears also graced the occasion.

## Observation of International Mother Language Day:



"International Mother Language Day" was celebrated on 21.02.2018 in a befitting manner at the Officers' Mess, 3rd floor, 'E' Block of

Samridhi Bhavan. Shri Partha Pratim Sengupta, Chief General Manager, Kolkata Circle graced the occasion as Chief Guest and remained present throughout the program. A bouquet of mesmerizing cultural program was presented by the cultural wing, 'Srijan' on the occasion. The Day was also celebrated by different AZCs and Regional Committees across the Circle.

## Branch Visit at Andaman

Extensive Branch-visit covering 17 branches at the Bay Islands was undertaken by the Circle President along with Chief Regional Secretary and AZC members of South 24 Parganas on the 9th and 10th April, 2018. The efficacy of the visit was effusive to the islanders.



## Social Responsibilities:



During the period different units across the Circle have conducted a bunch of social welfare activities. Through these programs the Association has not only stood beside the underprivileged but also heralded a message of belongingness to the Society. The programs conducted include distribution of garments, blankets, eye check – up camp, blood donation camp, financial assistance to socially and economically distressed people, financial assistance to organisations working in the area of social services, donation of sanitary napkin vending-cum-disposal machine to girls' school, financial assistance to needy but meritorious students, distribution of chicks to women of closed tea gardens under the slogan **“Duti chhagal akti hans; sansar cholbe baromas”** etc. All the programs got wide media coverage and were attended by chief functionaries and eminent persons of the locality in addition to the leadership of different tiers from SBIOA (Bengal Circle).



Supvoice extends heartiest greetings to the units for their intrepid efforts to carry out such noble and benevolent activities despite financial and operational constraints to



reach out to the needy and distressed section of the Society.

## Photographic Exhibition – cum – Competition:



The 3rd photographic exhibition – cum – competition was organised in a row by 'Srijan', the cultural wing of the Circle Association at Gaganendra Pradarshasala, Nandan Complex from 19.04.2018 to 21.04.2018. The gala event was inaugurated by the Chief General Manager of the Circle, Shri Partha Pratim Sengupta. Over 1200 entries were received out of which 125 photos were displayed in the Gallery.

The Circle Association has been awarded with the prestigious membership of “Auspices of ICS, USA”, a rare distinction in the area of Photography, for conducting such exhibition of International Standard. The Circle also got recognition (No. CM 969) from the Federation of Indian Photography for successfully organising such stunning exhibitions for consecutive three years.

The exhibition was sojourned by Members, their families, seniors and general public in good numbers and was highly appreciated. Supvoice place on record its sincere appreciation to the personalities for their endeavour and dedication to organise this type of exhibition and place the Circle Association at a greater height.

# International Women's Day

March 17, 2018 was an eye opener of an evening. SBIOA (Bengal Circle) observed International Women's Day at Jeevan Deep, with a large number of both male and female including staff members from various branches and departments showing up for the event. The program started off on a soulful note with a melodious rendition of

Module, Shri Niraj Prasad and DGM & CDO, Kolkata Circle, Sm Suranjana Datta.

Before the actual discussion started, Anindita, a courageous staff member and cancer survivor was invited on stage to share her experience of fighting the disease.

She narrated her struggle, from fighting through the various stages of cancer to and returning to a normal work life, and left everyone dumbstruck. The main discussion then commenced, with some valuable and thought-provoking inputs from Sm Ghatak, who spoke about the current situation in regard to women in the workforce. She highlighted facts from the World Bank Report that indicated a shocking decline in



'Sanghachhadyam' by Ms Sumana Banerjee. The historical significance of Women's Day was commemorated, with references that harked back to the early women's protest against working conditions in the United States on February 28, 1909 and the maiden celebration of International Women's Day in Russia on March 8, 1917. One of the highlights of the evening was a talk by the eminent social activist, Sm Anchita Ghatak who works for the rights of domestic workers and has been associated with various social organizations such as the Centre for Health and Social Justice and Kolkata Initiative. She has also translated Taslima Nasreen's Lajja and writes for Maitri Sangbad. The next renowned personality to be called on stage was Sm Srabasti Majumdar, who works for rights of the transgenders and the LGBT community. The panel on stage was completed by DGM (Agricultural Business Unit, Sm Ranjana Bose, DGM(B&O) Kolkata

the percentage of women in professional fields, from 34.8% in the year 2004-05 to 27% in 2012 with almost 19.6 million females walking out of the workforce in India over the past few years. She also revealed that amongst the G20 countries, India is just above Saudi Arabia, when it comes to the employment of women, lagging behind all the other countries. This is indeed a grave state of affairs. As far as education is concerned, women are however faring far better than their male counterparts. The reason behind the



decreasing number of working women of late, according to Sm Ghatak, is the rising pressure from family and society on questions around work timings, schedules, locations and the like. Unable to cope with such mounting pressures, women are forced to resign from various professional fields as it is always the family that is supposed to come first for them. In fact, there is also a tendency to discriminate against women in recruitment; many employers think of women as a nuisance in the workplace. Evidence for this comes from India's Skill Report, which shows that the country's telecom sector workforce has 84% men, followed by banking, which has 79% men. The difference in gender proportions here is stark and disturbing.

Sm Ranjana Bose, DGM(ABU), spoke next, pointing out that banking has a comparatively privileged workforce, with women-centric facilities such as sabbaticals and maternity leave available to female employees. She also recommended that all present spread the word about banking amongst women so that they set aside their customary hesitation about coming to the bank and dealing with financial matters. Shri Niraj Prasad, DGM(B&O), Kolkata Module talked about women's empowerment in banks. At the same time, he warned against complacency and highlighted the need for women to keep upgrading their skills to be able to lead from the front. "A woman is not born but she is made", said the next speaker, Sm Srabasti Majumdar, who stressed the freedom of choice of gender with specific reference to the transgender community that she works with. In this connection, she explained some provisions of the NALSA Judgement 2014 and The Transgender

Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill 2016, both of which have played a key role in ensuring the freedom of gender choice in India.

General Secretary, SBIOA(Bengal Circle) addressed the meeting next, underlining the escalating difficulties faced by female employees of the bank. He also spoke about Ms Paromita Bera, an acid attack victim, who has fought through several challenges to continue her studies. Sm Suranjana Datta, DGM & CDO, Kolkata Circle, put forth her points next, saying that women should not take everything for granted but fight on the basis of their merits instead.

The discussion was then opened to the house and an interactive session followed, with other participants adding their questions and contributing their inputs. Later, the program transformed into a cultural event, with spectacular skit and dance performances by our very own staff members. Themes for these were in tune with Women's Day: the present situation of women at home and in the workplace and the sacrifices they keep having to make to balance family demands and job requirements. As the performance ended, the curtains fell on an eventful, enjoyable and instructive day.



# MAY DAY



May day was observed befittingly for consecutive four years by Circle Association at LHO premises on 1st May, 2018 by hoisting the flag of our esteemed Association by Circle President, General Secretary and leaders of yesteryears. The program was attended by members at a large number. The day was also observed at Asansol, Burdwan, Bankura, Durgapur, Purulia of Burdwan Module; Siliguri, Malda, Rajibpur, Karnajora, Raiganj, Kaliyagunj, Balurghat, Jalpaiguri, Coochbehar, Gangtok, Islampur of Siliguri Module; Midnapore of Howrah Module, Port Blair and Baruipur of South 24 Parganas Module and Krishnagar and Berhampore of Bidhannagar Module with a great enthusiasm and zeal.



## Barsha Baran, an initiative of 'Srijan'



Similar program in the name of “Bangla Barsha Baran Utsav” was organised by Regional Committee, MID-I, Mid-Corporate/Corporate module on 4th May, 2018. Members including General Manager (MCRO-I) have enjoyed the program. Circle President and DGS were present in the occasion. Both the programs were organised under the banner of “Srijan”.

The Zonal Office Composite Unit of Kolkata Module organised a cultural program, “Baisakhi Adda” on 26th April, 2018 to welcome the Bengali New Year. The program was attended by the General Secretary and the Deputy General Manager (B&O) of Kolkata Module and the program was highly praised by all.

## EC Meeting of AIBOC :

The 88th meeting of the Executive Committee, AIBOC was convened at Port Blair on 10th May, 2018. Leaders of all affiliates including Chairman, President and General Secretary of AIBOC were present in the meeting. Comrades of Port Blair have set an exemplary standrad in arranging the meeting which was applauded by all.

# ARE YOU AWARE ?

Probationary / Trainee officers are entitled to avail maternity leave (including maximum 60 days for hysterectomy) during their probation not affecting the seniority / next promotion (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-PM/11/2017-18 dated 05.05.2017.)

Officials holding the positions / posts termed as "Sensitive" are invariably to be covered under the "Vacation Policy" without any exception. The list of such positions / posts is depicted in e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD/95/2017-18 dated 14.02.2018.

The Group Insurance Policy (Sampoorn Suraksha) of SBI Life for the employees' and officers' ranging from Rs.5.00 lakh to Rs.12.00 lakh (amt. for officers') has been renewed w.e.f. 07.02.2018 for one year (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-PM/96/2017-18 dated 20.02.2018).

Promotion policy for General Cadre officers has been revised (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-CDS/99/2017-18 dated 06/03/2018 & CDO/P&HRD-CDS/100/2017-18 dated 06/03/2018).

Roles and responsibilities of Specialist Cadre officer (FO Agri & FI) have been reviewed and realigned accordingly (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-CM/105/2017-18 dated 15/03/2018).

Some diseases and facilities have been added in the existing medical reimbursement scheme e.g. reimbursement of vaccination to the children, reimbursement of expenses towards normal delivery to the employee and spouse of employee, reimbursement of expenses on the use of medical implants, reimbursement of expenses in case of kidney and liver donation by employees to third party/ non-dependent family members (e-cir No. CDO/P & HRD-IR /111 / 2017-18 dated 23.03.2018).

A new head namely "Assistance to retired employees / family pensioners in case of critical illness" has been introduced from the FY 2018-19 simultaneously with the existing Retired Employees Medical Benefit Scheme / Mediclaim Policy for Retired Employees (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-IR/107/2017-18 dated 21.03.2018).

Provision of leave encashment with LFC after retirement has been extended (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-

PM/112/2017-18 dated 28.03.23018).

Working Children of an employee can be made as guarantor in Individual Housing Loan Scheme (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-IR/119/2017-18 dated 31.03.2018)

Cost of installing Solar System at own house can be included in the Project cost in Individual Housing Loan Scheme (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-IR/79/2017-18 dated 05.01.2018).

A unique type of leave named Bereavement Leave has been introduced in case of demise of any family member whether dependent or not (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-PM/75/2017-18 dt.28.12.2017).

Scrutiny of medical bills by Bank's Medical Officer / Authorised Doctor upto Rs.2000/- has been waived (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-IR/83/2017-18 dated 08.01.2018)

Bill with GST component is not compulsory for reimbursement of cost of i-pad (for TEGS VI & above), cost of Brief Case, Laptop, Mobile handset, Handbag, items of other furniture & fixtures (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-PM/72/2017-18 dated 18.12.2017 & CDO/P&HRD-PM/82/2017-18 dated 08.01.2018).

The 20% additional entitlement over the grade wise entitlement of an officer on inter-circle transfer will not be reduced on his repatriation to his parent circle henceforth (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-PM/81/2017-18 dated 06.01.2018).

List of "Difficult Centre" branches has been reviewed. Now 147 branches are classified in the Circle as Difficult Centre (e-cir No. CDO/CirDO/P&HRD/03/2018-19 dated 13.04.2018)

Functionality for applying and approval of "Work from Home" policy has been rolled out in HRMS (e-cir No. CDO/P&HRD-PM/5/2018-19 dated 06.04.2018)

**UNITED FORUM BANK UNIONS**  
(AIBEA-AIBOC-NCBE-AIBOA-BEFI-INBEF-INBOC-NOBW-NOBO)

# DHARNA

At Parliament 21st March, 2018

## SCRAP FRDI BILL 2017

Save Public Sector Banks - Save Peoples Money  
Initiate Strong Action Against Wilful Defaulters  
Bring Bank Scammer to



**STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION (BENGAL CIRCLE)**

Office: Samriddhi Bhavan, E Block, 6th Floor, 1, Strand Road, Kolkata 700001