

STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

(Registered under Trade Unions Act 1926-Regd. No. 6908)

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Circular No. 01/2020

Date : 01.01.2020

To All Members (Please Circulate)

We reproduce hereunder the Circular No. 1 dated 01.01.2020 issued by the General Secretary, All India State Bank Officers' Federation, the contents of which are self-explicit.

With revolutionary greetings,

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
(General Secretary)

To all our Affiliates / Members:

A CHALLENGING YEAR 2019 ENDS. LET YEAR 2020 BE A DEFINING ONE !!

We reproduce hereunder the text of AIBOC Circular No.2020/01 dated 01-01-2020 contents of which are self-explanatory for information of the members.

(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

A CHALLENGING YEAR 2019 ENDS. LET YEAR 2020 BE A DEFINING ONE !!

The year 2019 is now in history. From the very beginning, the year threw new challenges to the bank officers and employees and the entire banking industry.

02. On 2nd January, 2019, the Union Government published its Gazette Notification on its proposed first ever amalgamation of the nationalised banks, amidst country wide protest / agitation from the AIBOC and its affiliates, shareholders and customers of the banks proposed to be merged and the citizenry. Meanwhile, the wage negotiation talks came to a standstill position, since IBA refused to cover officers above Scale-III on the ground of non-receipt of mandate from a few banks and AIBOC continued with its principled stand of recusing itself from the wage talks unless and until the full mandate issue was resolved.

03. Carrying forward the legacy of a very successful independent strike observed on 21st December, 2018, the Confederation took a conscious decision to oppose the ill-conceived merger and retrograde banking reforms that were being initiated by the government, which culminated into a 'Maha Morcha' organised at Delhi on 4th February, 2019. The Maha Morcha, which originated in the form of a massive 'Jatha', witnessed a sea of humanity comprising of thousands of officers from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Ahmedabad to Aizawl, from Sikkim to Thrissur converging into the national capital, *opposing* the proposal of amalgamation / merger of BoB - Dena Bank - Vijaya Bank, mis-selling of third party products, attack and assault on bankers, the atrocities of Management on Catholic Syrian Bank Officers and the retrograde decision to reduce their retirement age and *demanding* five day banking, unconditional and clear mandate for all officers upto Scale-VII in the wage revision talks, negotiation on the Charter of Demands submitted by four Officers' organisations, improvement in family pension, updation of pension, replacement of New Pension Scheme (NPS) with Defined Benefit Scheme, *et al.*

04. AIBOC was in forefront of bringing awareness and mobilising public opinion on merger issue and later on the issues of full mandate as well as the National Pension Scheme by way of organising various seminars, symposia, public meetings, programmes and forming dedicated social media teams particularly for twitter hashtag campaign #Save Public Sector #Stop merger etc. The legal battle initiated by the Confederation by way of writ petitions filed at the Hon'ble Delhi High Court was subsequently transferred to the Supreme Court of India on the ground of multiple proceedings at different benches and finally the Supreme Court judgment dated 28th March, 2019 cleared the path of merger of Bank of Baroda, Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with effect from 1st April, 2019. AIBOC gave a clarion call for observing 1st April, 2019 as a 'Black Day' in the history of Indian banking industry.

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary

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05. Amidst the scenario of deepened economic slowdown, on 30th August, 2019, the government announced another round of mega merger of ten banks and formation of four banks, ignoring strong empirical evidence of absence of synergy witnessed in case of the previous mergers including that of State Bank group. It was categorically pointed out by the AIBOC that it is neither in the interest of the country nor that of the concerned banks or any of their stakeholders. The entire logic of creating big banks is based on mis-placed notion not backed by any solid macro-economic logic or realistic evidence, besides causing huge plight to the depositors, customers, small borrowers of these banks and thus being against the common man. AIBOC hit the street from the very next day along with the other constituents of UFBU in holding massive demonstration on 31.08.2019 to express strong protest throughout the country.

06. In the area of wage negotiation, a consensus among the officers' organisations was arrived in the meeting held on 25th June, 2019 at Bangalore, wherein it was decided that on the issue of the mandate, all those organisations would be together. Finally, the AIBOC was successful in its endeavour to rally the entire workforce under the banner of UFBU behind our justified stand of full mandate for wage negotiations. Later, AIBOC and all the constituents of UFBU took part in the subsequent wage talks.

07. On 19th November 2019, AIBOC along with other constituents of UFBU took a decision of holding a massive 'Dharna' at the National capital on 10th December, 2019. The Dharna against merger, misplaced banking reforms, unabated attacks on officers and demanding reduction in unreasonable service charges and more stringent measures for booking the wilful defaulters among others, was a stupendous show of strength and unity of bank employees, officers and also the retired bankmen, which was addressed by many central trade union leaders and lawmakers of the country, expressing solidarity to the movement.

08. By way of issuance of an advisory of 24th October, 2019, the Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance advised the State Bank of India and all the Nationalised banks to expeditiously set up the system for providing online facility for recording / modifying online mandate for deduction of union membership subscription from the salary and linking the same to HRMS. AIBOC lodged its strong protest against this guideline advising the banks for implementation of online check off facility. We have vouched to take all possible steps to thwart this unreasonable stand taken by the department, which is not only unethical but also in violation of the basic trade union norms as defined in the Indian Trade Union Act, 1926 regarding admission of members of trade unions.

09. We thank the entire membership for their unstinted support which demonstrated the might of this organisation. The unyielding leadership of the Confederation has attracted many more during the last one year and during the period three more unions / associations of different banks have taken affiliation of AIBOC. Comrades, our relentless struggles will not go unrewarded. The seeds have been sown. We need to sustain, nurture and nourish them to enjoy the fruit.

10. The year ahead is going to be tougher and more challenging and defining given the mindset of the government. We have several agenda to pursue, major important ones being stopping the misplaced reforms and the menace of mergers and de-nationalisation, ensuring dignity and respect of officers' fraternity etc., besides clinching a reasonable and dignified wage revision for the bank officers including five day week, achieving work-life balance, improvement in superannuation benefits such as pension, family pension *et al*. We would like to assure the membership and the entire officers' community that AIBOC is committed to these non-negotiable issues and will not rest till achievement.

11. We call upon our membership to be with us, extend whole-hearted support as has been extended by them till date. Attempts will be made to scuttle our unity, dilute and divide the banking trade union movement, destroy the very fabric of our public sector banks and reverse nationalisation. We firmly believe that at the end of focussed and determined struggle, there will always be rays of success. Let the New Year 2020 be victorious in all our endeavours.

12. AIBOC wishes you and your family members a very vibrant and New Year 2020, marked with more militant and organised struggles to achieve all our desired goals destined towards more happiness and upholding of our dignity.

With revolutionary greetings,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
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