

STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

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

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To All Members (Please Circulate)

We reproduce hereunder the Circular No. 116 dated 06.10.2020 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:

35TH FOUNDATION DAY OF AIBOC - A DAY TO REMEMBER, REJOICE AND UNITE

We reproduce hereunder the text of AIBOC Circular No.2020/64 dated 06/10/2020 contents of which are self-explanatory for information of the members.

(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

Dear Comrade,

35th Foundation Day of AIBOC - A day to remember, rejoice and unite

Vibrant Greetings to all on this **35th Foundation Day** of **All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC)**. As a result of far-sighted thinking of our yester-year leaders, Confederation took its birth 35 years ago. Undoubtedly, today, Confederation has emerged as the single largest umbrella organisations of supervisory trade unions in the country in which more than 3.20 lakhs of officers have reposed trust and confidence.

2. COVID-19 pandemic has crippled the economy, society and strangulated the common man and it has its reflections on the officers' fraternity too. Right from day one of the Nationwide Lockdown period, our officers have been rendering yeoman service and have been exposed to the contagion, when the entire nation was virtually shut down. As true soldiers of the country's financial army, we have kept the wheels of the economy moving. Thousands of bankers have been infected and hundreds have laid down their lives in the line of duty. We dip our flag in honour of them, and pay our rich tributes to those martyrs.

3. Most often it is said that history has to be remembered, for it will show the path to be traversed in the days to come. It is very relevant to recollect the trying times which lead to formation of the Confederation. During 1980s, our country was constrained by international agencies to open up its economy, more particularly the financial sector through misplaced reforms. Public sector banks, being the low hanging fruits, became the preferred targets. Sensing the need and the requirement to protect the banking industry and the supervisory cadre, our leaders of the GenPast deemed it appropriate to form a Federation of Officers' Trade Unions. The result was the birth of All India Bank Officers' Confederation. Since then, the Confederation has grown from strength to strength as true representative body of supervisory cadre employees from banks in public and private sectors, RRBs, Co-operative Banks, and latest feather in the cap is the affiliation of the officers' association of India Postal Payment Banks Ltd. AIBOC is omnipresent, from Aizawl to Ahmedabad, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. It is noteworthy that AIBOC has remained as a principled, apolitical trade union.

4. On this Foundation Day, it is befitting that we recollect the path we traversed, the challenges and the achievements. The period from 1985 to 2020 were all through eventful, testing and continued to be stressful in one way or the other as banking is essentially a dynamic industry, marked by paradigm shift in the policies of the Government and the RBI. The process of liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation were taking shape in late 1980s, which turned to an aggressive

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mode in 1990s. The financial sector was the prime target of the reform initiative and bore the brunt. Confederation was and continued to be at the forefront of the struggle to defend the dominant public sector character of Indian banking sector in particular and that of financial sector in general. With the passing of each day, the challenges kept mounting. AIBOC was the vanguard in combating with these challenges.

5. During its 35 years of journey, the bargaining skills of Confederation have been responsible for a number of improvements in the service conditions of the officers, without compromising the principles and the dignity of the officers' fraternity and led the struggles against privatisation and anti-working class policies of successive governments at the Centre. AIBOC has made numerous value additions in all the wage negotiation processes. It has a huge contribution in the areas of rationalising disciplinary proceedings in the banking industry from time to time. It is also noteworthy that Confederation took up the challenge thrown when public sector banks were brought under Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) by the apex bank. AIBOC's think-tank, in association of the leading economists, and domain experts, came out with turnaround strategies and proved that PSBs are strong enough for leading the economy of the country. The draconian piece of legislation – FRDI bill had to be shelved by the Government on account of relentless efforts of AIBOC and the awareness created among the public. AIBOC has emerged stronger and stronger with the active participation of well-experienced seniors, active youth wing and enthusiastic women's wing. In addition to trade unionism, AIBOC has been contributing to the society at large in the form of community services, successfully engaging every section of citizenry such as students, NGOs, farmers, SHGs in its efforts to inculcate safe, useful and progressive banking habits.

6. There has been a continued onslaught on bankers, and banking industry in the country. Despite stiff opposition from trade unions and well-wishers of the country's economic and financial health, Government has gone ahead with the ill-conceived mergers of public sector banks. It is a clear writing on the wall that mergers / amalgamations will not yield any result, but robs of the options and next door banking facility to common man. The proclaimed advantages will just remain on paper, and nothing better is going to accrue to the country and its people. Policies of the Government have caused the sickness in banks, due to mounting stressed assets over the years and very unfortunately this happening has been misused as a plea to merge the PSBs. AIBOC has made humungous efforts, both on streets and before judicature against such attempts. We are determined to fight, voice against M&A in banking space, since we are convinced that it is more harmful than anyone can imagine. It is a pre-meditated exercise to hand over the huge network, resources and infrastructure of PSBs to private hands which is nothing short of financial subjugation to crony capitalists.

7. We are also witnessing unprecedented curtailing of rights of working class. Labour Codes are being promulgated to the disadvantage of working class. Pro-capitalistic stance is conspicuously visible. They appear to be instilling fear in working class instead of protecting them. AIBOC has been opposing them and will continue to do so. The other challenge bankers had to face was on account of pandemic COVID-19. AIBOC was in the forefront, taking up matter at all levels, to provide all possible safety measures, comforts and compensation to all the stake holders in general and the employees / officers who fought the battle at banking hall from the forefront in particular.

8. Comrades, much awaited, protracted negotiation on XI Bipartite Settlement is nearing conclusion. Every effort is being made to ensure a fair settlement under the present circumstances of economic and financial uncertainties. We are aware of the aspirations of every section of officers' fraternity and will make all endeavours to fulfil them in the best possible manner.

9. The legacy that we inherit from 6th October 1985 when this mighty organisation was formed is being championed by our affiliates and state / district units in every nook and corner of the country remaining true to the ideals and commitment of our founding leaders and comrades. This is the day to remember and pay our respect to the visionary leaders who built the edifice of this momentous movement brick by brick and left an indelible imprint for carrying the journey forward in the decades to come. On this historic day, let us pledge to carry the message of unity and solidarity. Let us uphold the objectives, vision, and mission of Confederation in all earnestness. Let us rekindle the fire of positive and protective trade unionism within ourselves in order to protect the banks, bankers and make them available to the common man of the country and towards the great task of nation building.

While congratulating the entire officers' community and each of our affiliates, who are the pillars of strength of the supervisory cadre trade union movement across the country's banking industry, we call upon all the affiliates and state & district units to espouse the cause of working class in general and officers' fraternity in particular.

With warm festive greetings,

Comradely yours,

Sd/-
(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

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