

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. 15 dated 07.03.2024 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)

BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING BRIDGES



As we approach International Women's Day, it's paramount to acknowledge and celebrate the indispensable role of women, not only on a global scale but also within the fabric of the Indian economy, particularly within the banking sector.

2. Women across the globe have been instrumental in propelling progress, innovation, and inclusivity across various domains. Within the banking sector, their impact has been transformative, showcasing exceptional leadership, resilience, and acumen in navigating the intricacies of financial landscapes.

3. However, it's crucial to confront the ground realities that our lady officers face in their professional journeys. These realities encompass a spectrum of challenges ranging from issues related to transfers, accountability, and the uphill battle for promotions, to combating burnout, harassment, and the overwhelming pressures of work-life balance.

4. Statistics reveal that over half of working women experience significant work-family conflict, with 90% of them encountering stress due to multiple responsibilities. Moreover, the pervasive 'Superwoman Syndrome' often leads women to prioritize perfection across all facets of life, resulting in heightened stress levels and neglect of personal well-being. This phenomenon not only impacts mental health but also exacerbates physical ailments, leading to chronic fatigue, anxiety, and depression.

5. Additionally, women in Indian society still encounter discrimination and inequality, hindering their access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Societal attitudes and entrenched stereotypes further perpetuate these disparities, contributing to adverse effects on mental health and overall well-being.

6. Gender plays a pivotal role in determining mental health outcomes, with women exhibiting distinct patterns of psychological distress and psychiatric disorders. Socially constructed gender roles perpetuate imbalances in power dynamics, influencing all aspects of life, including household responsibilities and social status.

7. In line with our steadfast commitment to equity, inclusivity, and welfare, the All India State Bank Officers' Federation is actively engaged in addressing these challenges and implementing meaningful solutions. Advocacy for policies promoting a conducive work environment for our lady officers remains a top priority. Efforts are underway to ensure fair and transparent processes for transfers and promotions, provide support systems to mitigate risks and alleviate work pressure, and cultivate a culture of zero tolerance towards harassment.

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8. It is incumbent upon us all to provide a supportive environment for our women colleagues, nourishing a culture of mutual respect and empowerment. Moreover, self-reflection and prioritization of personal well-being are essential for combating the challenges faced by our female workforce. Taking breaks, seeking professional assistance, and dedicating time to mental and physical health are vital steps towards maintaining overall well-being.

9. It is imperative to acknowledge the significant strides women have made in the banking sector. However, it remains concerning that only a small fraction of our female colleagues holds top leadership positions, both within the bank and at the association/federation level. This persistent underrepresentation emphasizes the ongoing need for concerted efforts to cultivate a more inclusive and equitable environment.

10. As Diane Mariechild astutely noted, ***“A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture, and transform.”*** Our collective efforts will be truly fortified when we witness a greater presence of deserving, willing, and committed female leaders in these pivotal roles in the years ahead. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to remain dedicated to nurturing and empowering aspiring women leaders, providing them with the requisite support and opportunities to excel and lead with distinction.

On this International Women's Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to empowering and uplifting our lady officers, recognizing their invaluable contributions, and striving towards a more inclusive and equitable banking sector.

Wishing all our female colleagues a happy International Women's Day!

With greetings

Yours comradely,

Sd/-
(Deepak Kumar Sharma)
General Secretary

