

STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)



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

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Circular No. 38/2026

Date : 27.01.2026

To All Members (Please Circulate)

We reproduce hereunder the Circular No. 2026/09 dated 26.01.2026 issued by the General Secretary, AIBOC and also endorsed by AISBOF vide their Circular No. 24/2026 dated 26.01.2026 & AIBOC (WBSU) vide their Circular No. 13/2026 dated 27.01.2026, the contents of which are self-explicit.

With revolutionary greetings,

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
(General Secretary)

UFBU's call for Strike on 27th January, 2026 March on to make it a thunderous success

FAQ:

We reproduce below the text of AIBOC Circular No. 2026/09, dated 26.01.2026, contents of which are self-explanatory for the information of the members.

With Greetings,

Yours Comradely,

Sd/-

(Rupam Roy)

General Secretary

Dear Comrades,

We reproduce the text of UFBU Circular UFBU/2026/07 dated 26.01.2026 for your information and necessary action.

UFBU's call for Strike on 27th January, 2026 March on to make it a thunderous success

FAQ:

Member-facing FAQ to stop rumours and share only verified points.

Date	27 January 2026
Strike period	Midnight of 26 January 2026 to midnight of 27 January 2026 (24 hours)
Called by	UFBU (platform of nine constituent unions/associations)
Main demand	Government approval for 5-day banking week and remaining Saturdays as bank holidays (as recommended by IBA)
What members should remember	Verify updates via official circulars/local unit; avoid unverified forwards

What is the strike on 27 January 2026?

A 24-hour, all-India strike call under the banner of UFBU. The strike notice states the strike is to press the long-pending demand for 5-day banking. Since 2015 the UFBU is demanding for 5 Day work week for its members.

What is the strike period?

From midnight of 26 January 2026 to midnight of 27 January 2026 (24 hours).

Who has called the strike?

UFBU - a forum of nine constituent unions/associations representing bank employees and officers.

What is the main demand?

Government approval for 5-day work week in banking and declaring the remaining Saturdays as bank holidays (recommended by IBA).

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary

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Has there been conciliation? Does the strike still stand?

Conciliation meetings were held on 22 and 23 January 2026 with DFS/Finance Ministry, IBA and UFBU. There was no firm timeline/commitment; the strike call stands.

Can the strike be reconsidered if there is a positive development?

If there is positive development before the evening of 26 January, it would be considered. Until such development is officially confirmed, the strike call stands.

Why we are striking? Why is this action being taken now?

The demand has remained pending for many months after being agreed/recommended, and there were repeated deferments on assurances. The strike is presented as a measure of last resort to secure implementation of the agreed recommendation.

What documents are cited for the 5-day week recommendation?

A Memorandum of Understanding dated 07.12.2023 and a Joint Note/Settlement dated 08.03.2024 are cited in the materials as the basis for IBA recommending the 5-day week proposal to Government.

Is the objective to disrupt banking, or to get a decision?

The objective of the Strike is not to disrupt banking but for implementation of 5-day banking.

Participation and conduct

Who can participate?

All sections of bank employees/officers, including officers on Probation, Senior officers who are the members of the union/ Association.

Officers in Scale IV and above: what about intimidating letters/ communications?

The minutes of the conciliation meeting dated 22.01.2026 record that UFBU pointed out banks issuing/proposing intimidation letters to SMGS-IV/V to dissuade participation in lawful organisational programmes and the notified strike action. We are happy to share that the Conciliation Officer from the office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) has taken a serious view of such threats/intimidations/coercions and therefore made the following remarks:

"At this stage, the bank managements are advised by the conciliation officer that every employee/officer has the lawful right to form associations and participate in legitimate trade union activities as enshrined in the Constitution of India, including duly notified organisational action. Any intimidatory or coercive communication, particularly those selectively addressed to SMGSIV/SMGS-V or issued as blanket deterrents and may amount to impermissible interference with trade union rights and may attract action u/s 25(U) of the ID Act, 1947. Accordingly, all such letters/instructions already issued must be kept in abeyance and withdrawn/rescinded forthwith in order to avoid any legal complications." (CLC Minutes dated 22.01.2026, attached)

Officers on probation: can they participate?

All under probation should join the strike. Officers on probation are therefore assured that there is no illegality involved in being members of a recognised Trade Union or in participating in its lawful programmes/activities and assertion of individual rights for a collective good. Extending the probation of an officer specifically for participating in a union-called strike is considered an **unfair labour practice** under Indian labour law, specifically the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. Such an action is classified as victimization or discrimination based on legitimate union activities.

Members nearing retirement: will strike participation reduce pension?

IBA clarification (letter dated 25 February 2004) examined strikes in the last 10 months before retirement and stated such participation should not affect pension for all time to come.

It also states average emoluments for pension can be arrived at as per Regulation 38(4) of the Bank Employees' Pension Regulations, 1995.

What about Section 36AD being quoted to stop demonstrations?

The Minutes of conciliation at the office of CLC dated 22.01.2026 record that some banks proposed to call demonstrations illegal by mis-quoting Section 36AD.

The Minutes also record that the Government had assured on the floor of Parliament (1968) and advised RBI not to invoke Section 36AD, as noted in the proceedings.

What conduct is expected on strike day?

Keep conduct peaceful and disciplined.

Avoid provocative messaging or unverified forwards.

Follow only the programme/instructions issued by your local unit.

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General Secretary
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Media and public messaging

What can members say to customers/public in one line?

"A 24-hour strike is being observed to press for Government approval of 5-day banking and remaining Saturdays as holidays, as recommended by IBA."

If media or customers ask for details beyond the demand, what should we do?

Share only the confirmed demand and strike period.

Refer them to the union's official circulars/local unit for additional details.

Member support

Where do I check for authentic updates?

Use only official circulars/updates issued by constituent unions/associations and your local unit office-bearers.

Do not rely on forwarded screenshots without source.

What should I do if I receive/see an intimidatory letter or message?

Keep a copy/screenshot. The Minutes of conciliation at the office of CLC dated 22.01.2026 record advice that such letters targeting SMGS-IV/V should be withdrawn/kept in abeyance should be sent in response.

Inform your local unit/office-bearers promptly.

With greetings,

Comradely Yours,

Sd/-

Rupam Roy

General Secretary

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Annexure-A

**Minutes of the conciliation at the office of the Chief Labour
Commissioner (Central), dated 22.01.2026**

F. No. 21(05)/2026-IR
Government of India
Ministry of Labour & Employment
Office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (C)

Dated: 22.01.2026

Attendance of the parties is attached on a separate sheet.

The United Forum of Bank Unions comprising of nine unions/associations (i.e. AIBEA, AIBOC, NCBE, AIBOA, BEFI, INBEF, INBOC, NOBW & NOBO) served a strike notice in Form - L dated 08.01.2026 addressed to the Chairman IBA, Secretary DFS and the CLC(C), proposing to go on all India Strike from the Midnight of 26.01.2026 to the Midnight of 27.01.2026 to press the long pending demand for five day banking. The moment the notice was received in the office of Chief Labour Commissioner(C), the matter was seized into conciliation considering the nature of banking sector as public utility service and a notice was issued to all the stake holders asking them to attend the conciliation meeting on 22.01.2026 at 11.30 AM.

It was pointed out by the UFBU that certain banks have reportedly issued / are proposing to issue intimidating letters or communications, particularly targeting officers in SMGS-IV and SMGS-V, with a view to dissuading them from participating in lawful organisational programmes, including the notified strike action.

It is further reiterated by the Ld. Representatives of UFBU that every employee/officer has the fundamental right to form associations/unions and to participate in legitimate trade union activities, including organisational action in democratic form, duly decided and notified by the registered trade unions/associations to which they are affiliated. Any attempt by bank management to interfere with, restrain, coerce, or intimidate officers, especially by selectively targeting SMGS-IV/V, amounts to an impermissible infringement of trade union rights attracting section 25(T) of Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. While bank managements may, at best, issue a general appeal to all employees/officers, they must not issue threats, blanket prohibitions, or cadre-based intimidations that undermine lawful collective action. Accordingly, all such letters/communications already issued to SMGS-IV & SMGS-V (or any similar blanket instructions) should be kept in abeyance with immediate effect and withdrawn/rescinded, and no further action should be taken or pursued on the basis of such communications. Similarly, some other banks have called the proposed strike as 'illegal' which is beyond their jurisdiction. Further, some of the banks are also proposing the demonstrations by the unions as illegal by mis-quoting section 36(AD) of the Banking Regulation Act, whereas the Government on the floor of the parliament in 1968 had assured and accordingly advised the RBI not to invoke section 36(AD). The UFBU pointed out that these actions of the management are unwarranted and deliberate provocation and hence to be stopped forthwith.

The UFBU requested the Conciliation Officer to take strict cognizance of the same and advise the concerned management of the banks to not to resort to this practice as it goes beyond the spirit of provisions of Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

Regarding the core issue of the strike notice i.e. 5 days banking system in the banks, the unions pointed out that despite the understanding reached between the IBA and UFBU vide MoU dated 07.12.2023 and settlement dated 08.03.2024 under which the IBA has duly recommended to the Government for considering the recommendation. Even during the conciliation held on 21.03.2025, it was assured that the matter is under serious consideration but yet so far the Govt. approval has not been received. Hence, the UFBU pointed out that they are constrained to go ahead with the proposed strike on 27.01.2026.

The Ld. representatives of the IBA explained that the issue has been duly taken up with the Govt. and the instructions from the competent authority are still awaited and IBA would vigorously pursue the matter with the Govt.

The conciliation officer also informed the steps taken by their office and advised that further attempts should be made to find an amicable solution to the issue since the banks strike would adversely affect the banking system and hence, appealed to the UFBU to reconsider their proposed action.

The Ld. representatives of the DFS including Joint Secretary, DFS who were present in the conciliation also informed that the Govt. is fully seized of the issue and may take some more time before the competent authority takes a decision and hence appealed to the UFBU not to precipitate at this stage.

The UFBU informed that they have been pursuing the genuine demand for the past 10 years when 2nd and 4th Saturdays were declared as holidays and requested that the Govt. should give their

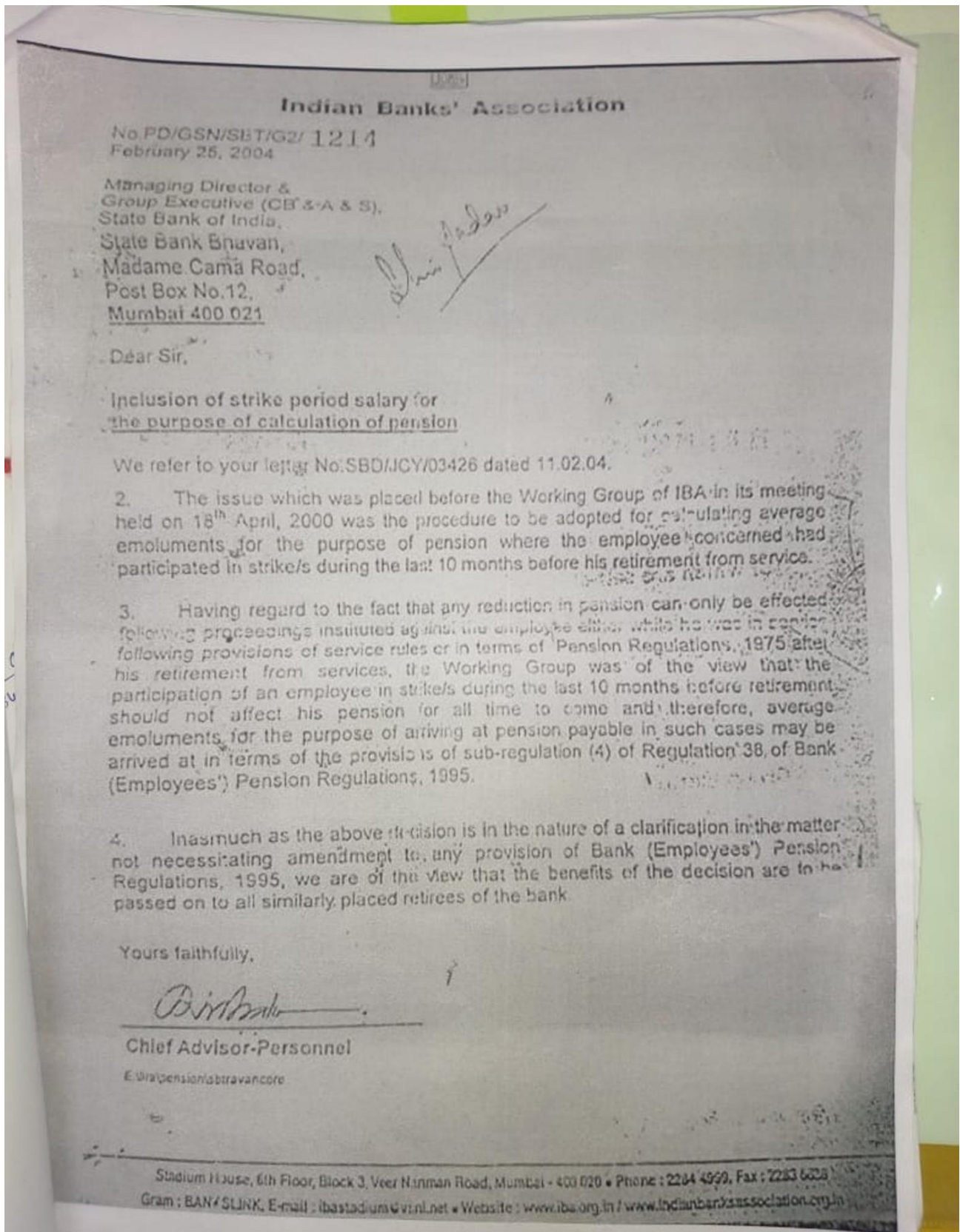
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Annexure B

IBA letter dated 25 February 2004 (strike participation and pension calculation)



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