

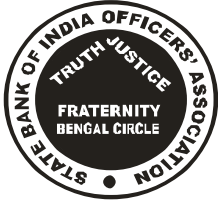
STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION

(BENGAL CIRCLE)

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

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Circular No. 168/2026

Date : 25.09.2026

To All Members (Please Circulate)

We reproduce hereunder the Circular No. 92/2026 dated 25.09.2026 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)

Subject: Intimidatory letters served selectively on SMGS-IV & V officers in connection with the UFBU strike notified for 28–30 September 2026, contrary to the advice of the Conciliation Officer recorded in F. No. 21(05)/2026-IR dated 22.01.2026. Demand for immediate withdrawal.

We have sent a communication to the Deputy Managing Director (HR) & Corporate Development Officer, State Bank of India, Corporate Centre, Mumbai- 400021, on the captioned subject.

The content of the communication is reproduced below.

With Greetings,

Yours Comradely,

Sd/-

(Rupam Roy)

General Secretary

Letter No. 6466/22/2026

Date: 25.09.2026

The Deputy Managing Director (HR) & CDO,
State Bank of India,
Corporate Centre,
Mumbai – 400 021.

Dear Sir,

Subject: Intimidatory letters served selectively on SMGS-IV & V officers in connection with the UFBU strike notified for 28–30 September 2026, contrary to the advice of the Conciliation Officer recorded in F. No. 21(05)/2026-IR dated 22.01.2026. Demand for immediate withdrawal.

It has come to our notice that a standard format letter titled "Letter to be served to all SMGS IV & V Officials", headed "Notice of Strike by United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU)", is being served on officers in SMGS-IV and SMGS-V under the signature of Branch/Department Heads across the country. A copy is enclosed.

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay

General Secretary

Mobile : 9434551152

State Bank of India Officers' Association

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2. The letter:

- a. is addressed exclusively to officers of a particular cadre, namely SMGSIV and V;
- b. invokes Section 36AD of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 against participation in organisational action;
- c. states in advance that participation "will entail serious consequences including termination of service", besides loss of emoluments and an entry in service records; and
- d. declares the addressees to be "part of the Senior Management" and directs them to attend office on the strike dates.

3. This Bank was a party to the conciliation proceedings held on 22.01.2026 before the Dy. Chief Labour Commissioner (Central)-cum-Conciliation Officer, and was represented there at the level of General Manager, who signed the minutes (F. No. 21(05)/2026-IR). In those proceedings, the Conciliation Officer specifically advised bank managements as follows:

"...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 SMGS-IV/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."

The minutes further record that managements "may, at best, issue a general appeal to all employees/officers" but "must not issue threats, blanket prohibitions, or cadre-based intimidations that undermine lawful collective action."

4. The impugned letter is exactly the kind of communication the Conciliation Officer cautioned against. It is selective, since it targets only SMGS-IV/V. It is coercive, since it threatens termination. And it is a blanket deterrent, since it pre-emptively prohibits participation by an entire cadre. Its issue eight months after the Bank's own representative signed those minutes is a serious disregard of the statutory conciliation machinery. It cannot be described as an oversight, but deliberate.

5. The minutes also record UFBU's submission that some banks were misquoting Section 36AD of the Banking Regulation Act. They further record that the Government of India assured Parliament in 1968 that the provision would not be invoked against legitimate trade union activity, and accordingly advised the Reserve Bank of India. That submission was not controverted by the representatives of DFS or IBA present. Section 36AD is a penal provision. It does not empower a Branch or Department Head to determine that an officer has contravened it, still less to announce the penalty in advance. Invoking it in a letter to individual officers can only be intended to intimidate and coerced.

6. The letter first says participation "may be viewed" as non-compliance, and in the next sentence declares that it "will entail" termination of service. This prejudices the outcome of any disciplinary process before any act has occurred, contrary to the principles of natural justice and to the procedure prescribed in the SBI Officers' Service Rules. It is also issued under the signature of Branch/Department Heads, who are not, to our understanding, the Disciplinary Authority for officers in SMGS-IV and V.

7. An officer's grade does not take away his or her right to be a member of, and to take part in the duly notified programmes of the association to which he or she belongs. SMGS-IV and V officers are members of our affiliated associations, which the Bank itself recognises. Attaching a "Senior Management" label to a cadre, and using it to compel attendance on the strike dates, is the "cadre-based intimidation" that the Conciliation Officer specifically disapproved.

8. The Conciliation Officer's advice referred to Sections 25T/25U of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. The corresponding provisions now stand in Section 84 of the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, read with Part I of the Second Schedule. That Schedule lists as unfair labour practices by an employer: interfering with, restraining or coercing persons in the exercise of their right to organise and to engage in concerted activities (Item 1), and interfering with any Trade Union (Item 2). Penal consequences follow under Section 86 of the Code. The impugned letter interferes with the members of our affiliates and with the associations themselves.

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9. To avoid any misunderstanding, we clarify that we take an exception to such communication and register our objection to the selective, coercive and threatening content of this letter.

10. We therefore call upon the Bank to:

- (i) withdraw and rescind the impugned letter forthwith, and in any case before 28.09.2026, by a written communication sent through the same channels to every officer on whom it was served;
- (ii) instruct all controllers that no disciplinary action, adverse entry in service records or other adverse consequence shall be initiated or recorded on the basis of that letter;
- (iii) confine any further communication on the proposed strike to a general appeal addressed to all employees and officers, in line with the Conciliation Officer's advice.

11. If the letter is not withdrawn, we will be constrained to report this noncompliance to the Office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) for appropriate action under the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, and to pursue such other remedies as may be available, entirely at the Bank's risk as to cost and consequences.

We trust the Bank will act promptly and preserve the atmosphere of good faith that the conciliation process is meant to foster.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-
(Rupam Roy)
General Secretary

Encl.: (1) Copy of the impugned letter; (2) Minutes, F. No. 21(05)/2026-IR dated 22.01.2026

State Bank of India Officers' Association
(BENGAL CIRCLE)

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Letter to be served to all SMGS IV & V Officials

Shri / Smt. / Ms. _____

Designation: _____

State Bank of India

Place of Posting: _____

Madam / Dear Sir,

NOTICE OF STRIKE BY UNITED FORUM OF BANK UNIONS (UFBU)

We advise that UFBU has served strike notice informing that the members of unions / associations propose to go on strike from 28th to 30th September 2026.

2. In this connection, it is considered appropriate to draw your attention to the responsibilities attached to your position as an officer in Senior Management Grade Scale (SMGS) IV/ V. SMGS officials, by virtue of the nature and level of responsibilities entrusted to them, constitute an integral part of the Senior Management of the Bank. The position carries with it corresponding responsibilities towards the Bank, its customers and the continuity of banking operations.

3. The functioning of banking services is of significant importance to the public, and any disruption may cause inconvenience to customers and affect the normal operations of the Bank. Officers in SMGS are expected to remain mindful of the obligations attached to their position and to ensure the smooth functioning of the Branch(es) / Office(s).

4. Your attention is also drawn to the applicable provisions of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, including Section 36AD, and to the service conditions applicable to officers. Please ensure that your conduct and actions remain in conformity with the statutory provisions and obligations governing your service.

5. Participation in the strike on the above-mentioned dates may be viewed as noncompliance with the applicable statutory provisions. You are hereby cautioned that such action will entail serious consequences including termination of service, besides loss of salary and emoluments for the days and an appropriate entry in service records. 6. You are hereby put on notice that you are considered as part of the Senior Management of the Bank, and you will be responsible for smooth functioning of the Branch(es) / Office(s). Please, therefore, attend the office on the dates of the proposed Strike.

**Yours faithfully,
Branch/ Department Head**

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
General Secretary
Mobile : 9434551152

State Bank of India Officers' Association
(BENGAL CIRCLE)

: 5 :

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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SA

Gurdeep K.

Sanjay

Shubhajyoti Chattopadhyay
General Secretary
Mobile : 9434551152

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In the meantime, the provisions contained u/s 33(1) and 22 of the ID Act, 1947 shall remain in vogue.

UNION/ASSOCIATION

[Signature]
AS - AIRBET.

[Signature] G.S. AIRBOC

[Signature] G.S. NCBE
Dy. Chief L.
Conciliation Officer

[Signature] G.S. AIRBDA

[Signature] GS NOBCO

[Signature]
GS NOBCO

[Signature]
G.S. AIRBET

[Signature] GS. INVBOD

MANAGEMENT

(Tej Bahadur)

our Commissioner (Central)-cum
under the Industrial Disputes Act 1947

Ravindra Patel
GM - SCL

(Arvind Mehta)
Sr. Advisor (HREIR),
IBA

Gurmit h.
AGM-HRM
Bank of Baroda

(Banking India)

(Bank of Maharashtra).
Over money
Can mobilize

infected
SARMA MEHTA

Sanjay Narayan
CGM Union Bank

(S.H.M.)
600 less

Kushal Lal
Gula H.R.
controlling branch of work

Dam-HR/PMB

New up

c. J. V. V. P.
carada bank.