



State Banks' Staff Union

(CHENNAI CIRCLE)

(Regd. No: 883)

(Affiliated to All India State Bank of India Staff Federation)

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CIRCULAR NO.17

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May Day greetings to all on this International Worker's Day

Many see this day as just another holiday. It is our common tendency to celebrate days of commemoration like May Day without knowing the history behind the celebration. We observe May Day reminiscing the struggles of the working class in the late 19th century in Chicago for 'eight hours work' which became a reality years later. The very purpose of celebration is to keep the fighting spirit stronger than ever and remind every worker to preserve the hard won rights. May Day is not an ordinary day because it is a day that cherishes extraordinary people, i.e., workers.

Behind every right and privilege we enjoy today there is a history of sustained struggle to achieve it. We should keep vigil in order to preserve these rights and privileges as attempts are being made from time to time to take them away by inimical forces.

Whilst doctors, nurses, paramedics from Government hospitals, Police personnel, sanitary workers, and employees of various other Government departments are in the battle ground relentlessly fighting against the deadly Novel Corona Virus risking their own lives, the private sector participation on the field is completely absent. In times of crisis, we, the public sector banks have rendered yeoman services to our people and country, be it the Demonetisation period or be it Covid-19 lockdown. While the private sector banks cater to the needs of corporates and affluent sections of the society, the public sector banks help the poor and the marginalised. Yet, in a country where the majority of population is poor and the occurrences of private sector banks failing and the public sector banks bailing them out are seen, there are serious attempts to privatise banks. We should not lose sight of what has happened to BSNL and the intentions of the Government to privatise Indian Railways, Air India and many other PSUs. Hence, we should be in all readiness to fight tooth and nail the imminent danger of privatisation.

As you may be aware, citing Covid-19 Lockdown and the eventual economic slow-down, it has been announced that Dearness Allowance/Dearness Relief rise for the 1.1 Crore Central Government employees and pensioners approved by the cabinet will not be paid up to July 2021 and many State Governments are proposing to impose wage cuts to their employees. Also the labour reforms which are on the anvil is a matter of serious concern for the entire labour force of our country. Apart from bringing the economy to a grinding halt, Covid-19 has also put on hold the much awaited 11th Bipartite Wage Settlement. The working class is always on the receiving end to bear the brunt in such situations.

At the Bank level, despite the provisions of Desai Award which ensures stipulated working hours for award staff, our comrades are being made to work for unduly long hours in branches without appropriate compensation. Outsourcing is another menace. Many incidences of frauds perpetuated by outsourced employees have come to light in the recent past. We have been persistently taking up these issues at the Bank and Federation levels and are hopeful of resolving them.

As a proactive Union, we always treat our duties and rights equally as depicted in our Union emblem. We have our own vision and mission. To take our vision and mission forward, the active involvement of the younger generation in the Union activities is the need of the hour as many of our senior comrades are on the verge of retirement. With this insight, we organised SBSU 4 YOUTH in Chennai and several other interactive meetings throughout the Circle. We are optimistic that our Union will be safe in the hands of younger comrades and reach greater heights in all its commitments towards members.

We should always remember the people who fought for the rights and dignities we enjoy today and there is lot more to fight for. The sacrifices of our forefathers cannot be forgotten or we will end up fighting for those same rights all over again. This is why we celebrate May Day. So, on this May Day let us take a pledge to stand united and be a formidable force to fight against any onslaughts that may be unleashed upon us, protect our rights, gain new rights and improve our working conditions.

With revolutionary greetings,

(G.KRIPAKARAN)
GENERAL SECRETARY