



THE SHIELD

A Monthly Magazine from

State Banks' Staff Union (Chennai Circle)



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Dear Comrades,

It is always a pleasure connecting with you all again through our in-house magazine "The Shield". While, April holds significance for banks in India primarily because it marks the start of the new financial year, it also gives us the opportunity to set goals for the year thereby bringing us new challenges which in turn will help us widen our horizon.

There are certain reasons why April was chosen as the start of a Financial year;

- 1) It coincides with our crop cycle
- 2) It coincides with our Hindu/ Lunar calendar
- 3) It aligns with the global practices.

I am sure with your dedication and hard work we will set new milestones in this year as well.

In the conciliation meeting held before the CLC on 21.03.2025 it was decided to defer the strike temporarily at the request of the CLC. Another round of discussions between IBA & UFBU was held on 23.04.2025 at IBA office in Mumbai. Representatives from AIBEA, AIBOC, NCBE, BEFI, INBEF, INBOC, NOBW, and NOBO participated in the discussions regarding 5 days banking, Revised PLI Scheme, Recruitment clerks and substaff, Revision in Ex-gratia for pensioner, Uniform DA formula for pensioners, NPS to OPS, Leave Bank, Disciplinary Action modifications, Review of efficiency of workmen at the age of 57/58, Safety of employees and officers, Income tax on perquisites and Maternity Benefits. Both IBA and DFS were informed to consider these requests favourably, failing which UFBU may have to revive the strike call.

In this background, one more round of conciliation meeting was held on 29.04.2025 by the CLC in his office in New Delhi. Revised PLI Scheme, Recruitment of adequate staff and substaff, 5 days Banking, gratuity enhancement and appointment of Workmen Director/ Office Directors were discussed. The conciliation proceedings have been adjourned to 17.6.2025. Looking

to the developments further decision including revival of the deferred strike will be taken in due course.

It is heartbreaking to hear the news of the Pahalgam terror attack where 26 civilians were killed including one of our retired comrade Shri J Chandra Mouli and Area Manager of SBI Life, Rajkot Shri Shailesh Kalthiya. We pray to the almighty for their souls to find peace in heaven.

As we are nearing May Day on 1st of May it is important to remember those who have shed blood and sweat to make the trade union movement a successful worldwide phenomenon, thereby ensuring the basic workmen rights. Let us remember those who gave their lives at Chicago's Haymarket Square and people thereafter who has invigorated the labour movement and led to the establishment of May Day as a day of labour solidarity and protest.

"May Day is not an ordinary day because it is a day that cherishes the extraordinary people, the workers!"

Comrades, in the days ahead we may face new challenges along with the existing ones which will test our solidarity and oneness. However, I am sure with your wholehearted support we can overcome these challenges and come out as successful as we had always done before.

Happy May Day.

V. SRIDHARAN
GENERAL SECRETARY



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MEMBERS' MEET AT PUDUKOTTAI

Meeting members directly, interacting and addressing their concerns has always been a core practice of our Union. On 20th April 2025, a Member's meet was organised in Pudukottai District, as advised by our General Secretary, marking the first such gathering in over two decades. Com. M. Pandi, Deputy General Secretary (Brs) welcomed the gathering. Our President Com. P.A. Khaja Fakrudeen, in his presidential address briefed the gathering about the history of Trade Union and emphasized on the need for Union and its achievements.

Vice-President (Hq) of our Union and Secretary, Circle Welfare Committee Com. R. Rangunathan and Deputy General Secretary (Trichy) Com. D. Krishnamurthy addressed the gathering. Deputy General Secretary Com. Andrews Paulraj and Vice-President Com. N. Ananthakrishnan of the module also participated. Our General Secretary Com. V. Sridharan interacted with the members. During the interaction, he responded to all the queries put forth by the members. He elaborated the gathering on the recent happenings at Industry level and also at the Federation level. He emphasized that unity and solidarity of members is the need of the hour and to respond to the calls of our organization to achieve our demands. He also insisted all to follow systems and procedures. Nearly 200 members from Thanjavur and Pudukottai district participated. Vote of thanks was delivered by AGS Com. R. Vijayarajan.





REQUESTING ALL UNIT SECRETARIES TO CONDUCT UNIT MEETING AT QUARTERLY INTERVALS REGULARLY. MINUTES OF THE MEETING TO BE RECORDED AND SENT TO YOUR CONCERNED AGS AND DGS OF YOUR MODULE.

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STRUCTURE MEETING COIMBATORE AT OOTY

Structure Meeting for the 1st Quarter of FY 2025-26 of Coimbatore Module was held at Ooty on 28th April 2025. Issues related to the staff members of Coimbatore Module were discussed elaborately. Our General Secretary and President had visited the Udhagamandalam branch that was opened in the year 1866 and interacted with the members there.



As per e-Circular - P&HRD - SI No.33/2025-26

Circular No.CDO/P&HRD-PM/2/2025-26 Dated.07.04.2025

- INCASE ANY EMPLOYEE IS MAINTAINING ANY ACCOUNT WITH OTHER BANK WE HAVE TO DECLARE IT TO THE BANK AND SEEK POST FACTO APPROVAL FROM THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY.
- ALL EMPLOYEES SHALL MAINTAIN THEIR PERSONAL ACCOUNTS AND JOINT ACCOUNTS WITH SBI.
- IN CASE THEY NEED TO OPEN ACCOUNT WITH OTHER BANK THEY WILL SEEK PRIOR PERMISSION FROM THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY. (i.e. IN THE RANK OF CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER)

"ECHOES OF OUR LEGACY: THE JOURNEY OF OUR TRADE UNION"

INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN BANKING INDUSTRY - ADJUDICATION TO BILATERALISM

Bilateralism prevails in the banking industry since the first bipartite settlement, which came into existence in the year 1966. It is desirable to review briefly the disputes in the banking industry till then and the various awards passed from time to time in order to properly understand the background of the industrial disputes in banking industry, which have been referred to various Tribunals for adjudication, prior to the concept of bilateralism in the banking industry.

It is well known that during World war II there was a sharp rise in the prices of commodities and cost of living went up. People with fixed incomes and particularly those in the middle class had to suffer great hardships. Efforts were made by various organisations to improve the living conditions of workmen. Banking, being an all-India industry, efforts were made by the workmen employed in banks to unite together for the purpose of improving their living conditions. The concerned Local Governments referred those industrial disputes for adjudication.

There were awards given by the various Tribunals in connection with the labour disputes that arose at diverse places in India between some of the banks and their workmen. The industrial disputes relating to banking industry were initially referred to various tribunals for adjudication by State Governments. Later, the Government realized the necessity of dealing with the disputes in the banking industry on an all-india basis and the Central Government acquired the power to refer any dispute [pending before a Provincial Tribunal to an Industrial Tribunal constituted under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 for adjudication. The brief details of those awards are as under:

- Divatia Award - Around 1946, the employees in the banking industry bestirred themselves. Trade Unions of bank employees presented demands for higher salaries and allowances and better conditions of service. The unrest became acute in the Provinces of Bombay, the United provinces and Bengal as they were then known. In Bombay, Shri Justice H V Divatia passed a consent award in the dispute between the Bank of India Ltd., and its employees (other than Officers) working at the Head Office and branches in the City of Bombay and its suburbs. It was published in the Bombay Government Gazette dated 15th August 1946. Later, Industrial disputes between thirty specified banking companies operating in Bombay City and their employees were referred to the Tribunal with Shri H V Divatia as the Chairman and the Award was published in the Bombay Government Gazette Extraordinary dated 9th April, 1947.

This Award is referred to as "Divatia Award". The benefits of the Divatia Award were later on extended to bank employees in Ahmedabad by means of a separate Award given by Justice Divatia and the same was published in the Bombay Government Gazette dated 22nd April 1948.

- B B Singh Award - At about the same time as the enquiry in Bombay which resulted in the Divatia Award, the late Shri B.B.Singh was appointed adjudicator by the Government of United Provinces in respect of the disputes between forty specified banking companies and their workmen in all their establishments throughout that province. Shri B B Singh gave his award on 11th March 1947 with recommendations relating to grades of pay, minimum salary and dearness allowance to be brought into force with effect from 1st January, 1947 and the U.P. Government enforced the same by its order dated 15th March, 1947.

To be continued...

BE VIGILANT

PREMISES KEY

Staff kindly do not handle the premises keys. Note the following from the Vigilance Manual:

(a) For branches guarded round the clock, the original set of keys will be retained with the Senior/Head Guard/Guard on duty at all times. Duplicate keys will be retained with the Branch Manager or any other nominated supervising official.

(b) For branches which are guarded during working hours only, the original set of keys will be retained with the Bank Guard during office hours and thereafter keys deposited with the Branch Manager (Key should remain with the BM if the branch is guarded by police guards). The duplicate keys, will, however, be retained with the Branch Manager.

© For branches which do not have guards, the original set of keys will be retained with the Branch Manager or any other nominated supervising official. The duplicate keys, will, however, be retained with the Branch Manager.

SAFE DEPOSIT LOCKER KEY

When a locker is surrendered by the hirer, the key of the locker should be recovered from him. The lock of a surrendered locker must be interchanged with that of another vacant locker before being let out to another hirer and the safe deposit locker key register should be amended accordingly, the locker number and the new key number being entered in the appropriate columns below the last entry.

FEDERATION FOCUS - APEX LEVEL ADVOCACY

DISCREPANCY IN ACCOUNTING OF PRIVILEGE LEAVE

A Memorandum of Settlement dated 31.03.1967 was executed between the State Bank of India and All India State Bank of India Staff Federation on leave rules.

The accounting procedure for privilege leave falling in two Financial Years, where an employee is due to proceed on leave during the financial year and the leave to be availed of partly falls in the current year and partly in the next year, the leave account may be debited as on the date on which the leave will start.

A discrepancy is occurring in the HRMS portal regarding the accounting of privilege leave falling in two financial years. Specifically, when an employee avails privilege leave that extends to the next financial year (e.g., from 26.03.2024 to 04.04.2024), the leave should be debited to the leave balance of the financial year in which the leave starts. However, it is observed that the system is incorrectly debiting the leave balance in both financial years. This is not in tune with the leave rules and the aforementioned Memorandum of Settlement.

Considering the above, the Federation urged to immediately advise the concerned to rectify the discrepancy in the accounting of the privilege leave in the HRMS portal. Due to this discrepancy, employees are unfairly losing their hard-earned privilege leave from their leave balance.

HRMS PORTAL ISSUES

We refer to the issues concerning claims and reimbursements of Award Staff through the new HRMS portal.

a) FESTIVAL ADVANCE:

While applying for festival advance in our new HRMS portal, the following error is encountered "You are not eligible for Festival Advance. Assets and Liabilities not submitted for Current Financial Year." However, it is clear that it is not mandatory for Award Staff to submit the same. (Since rectified)

b) YEARLY LEAVE ENCASHMENT:

While applying for annual leave encashment of 5/7 days under the provisions of the XI Bipartite Settlement through the new HRMS portal, the following error message is displayed: "Error occurred. Column name or number of supplied values does not match table definition." (Since rectified)

c) PF ANNUAL STATEMENT:

Earlier, in the old HRMS portal, employees were able to download the Provident Fund statement for any period of their choice. However, in the new HRMS portal, only the Annual Statement (April to March) is available. Employees who wish to enhance their overdraft limit against a lien on their Provident Fund are required to submit the latest monthly PF statement to determine the eligible limit. Due to this change, employees are now unable to download the PF statement for the period between March and the following April, thus denied by the actual eligible amount of overdraft.

d) LFC ENCASHMENT:

For the purpose of medical facilities and for the purpose of LFC, the expression 'family' of an employee shall mean:

- The employee's spouse,
- Wholly dependent unmarried children (including stepchildren and legally adopted children)
- wholly dependent physically and mentally challenged brothers/sisters with 40% or more disability
- dependent widowed /divorced/separated daughters,
- sisters including unmarried/ divorced/ abandoned or separated from husband/ widowed sisters,
- Parents wholly dependent on the employee.

However, the employees while applying for LFC encashment in the new HRMS portal, are getting an error as "Only 4 members are allowed."

In light of the above, the Federation has requested the Corporate Center to rectify the above-mentioned discrepancies.

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