

ALL INDIA BANK OFFICERS' CONFEDERATION



(Registered under the Trade Unions Act 1926, Registration No.3427/Delhi)
6th Floor, E-Block, Samriddhi Bhavan, 1, Strand Road, Kolkata -700 001
c/o State Bank of India Officers' Association (Bengal Circle)
Phone: 2210-1234, Fax: (033) 2210-2210



e-mail: aiboc.sectt@gmail.com
soumyadatta.aiboc@gmail.com
website: www.aiboc.org

Circular No. 2018/52

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To All Affiliates (Please Circulate)

Dear Comrade,

Terrorist Attack on Qaimoh Branch, State Bank of India Jammu & Kashmir

We reproduce hereunder our letter No. AIBOC/2018/60 dated 02.08.2018 addressed to the Hon'ble Union Minister for Home Affairs, Government of India on the captioned subject for your information.

With greetings,

(Soumya Datta)
General Secretary

Text of AIBOC Letter No.2018/60 dated 02.08.2018

Shri Rajnath Singh
Hon'ble Union Minister for Home Affairs
Government of India
North Block
New Delhi- 110 0031

Respected Sir,

Terrorist Attack on Qaimoh Branch of State Bank of India Jammu & Kashmir

I extend my sincere regards to your good office and convey hearty greetings from All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), the largest apex organization of Bank Officers' representing over 3,20,000 members.

Sir, we wish to bring your kind attention to the incident of terrorist attack on the Qaimoh Branch of State Bank of India, District Kulgam, South Kashmir. It is reported that 6-8 masked terrorists armed with sophisticated weapons including AK-47 rifles had barged into the Qaimoh Branch of SBI on Wednesday (01.08.2018), in broad daylight, threatened the Manager, staff and customers and looted cash from the Bank. The Manager and Staff have shown exemplary courage and presence of mind and did not hand over the keys of cash vault to the terrorists despite their firing of few rounds to terrorise the bank employees. The terrorists finally decamped after looting the cash available in the counters. The life of the Branch Manager, who was beaten mercilessly by terrorists, is reported to have fortunately been saved only due to the timely intervention of some local customers. This ghastly episode has sent shockwaves across the Banking fraternity in the valley.

02. Sir, there have been stray incidents of Bank dacoity across the country; however, we feel that this particular incident in the otherwise chaotic and tumultuous political upheaval in the Valley should be viewed in a different perspective altogether. Following the Government's crackdown on money laundering, we feel that Banks could become targets for the terrorists as potential source of raising financial resources. We apprehend that this could trigger off a spate of similar attacks on Bank Branches across the valley as Bank branches are soft targets being operated with limited and inadequate security arrangements.

03. Sir, you are well aware that branches of Public Sector Banks have been opened in every nook and corner of the country to facilitate access to banking to all the citizenry who have hitherto been deprived of such opportunities. Bank branches have been functioning in places, which are not only situated in the remotest part of the country and in difficult terrains but also are infested by terrorists and extremists. All the employees of the Bank have been serving the nation rising more often than not to the demands of trade, local environment and to fulfill the national priorities and usually without ever making any clamour even when the minimum standards of requirement of physical safety and security are compromised in prevailing threatening situations. While we do not deny our responsibility and contribution to the cause of economic development, social upliftment and overall service to the citizenry, we hope you would surely appreciate that many of our colleagues are facing enormous challenges of different kinds while rendering their service and they particularly become very soft targets for anti-social and anti-national elements in places infected by tumult, upheaval and lawlessness. Such dastardly attacks on our colleagues are undoubtedly going to inject them with fear psychosis and as a result would erode their confidence and bring down their morale. This, if not addressed immediately and effectively will definitely have a discouraging and telling effect on the quality, intensity, extensiveness and priority of all Bank employees. Any unbridled act of such nature will eventually force closure of Bank branches in all such areas which are vulnerable to terrorist attacks and continuous and prolonged law and order problem. This will only deprive our citizenry of all the facilities of service through various banking channels for which we are assiduously striving for.

03. Sir, with a deep sense of anguish, we, All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), being the largest representative Organization of Bank Officers in the country, condemn this heinous, cowardly attack and urge upon your good office to bring the culprits to book without any loss of time.

04. We, with angst and with strong feeling of distress, share that there is an urgent and emergent need to look into the safety and security aspects of the bank branches in Kashmir

and urge upon your good office to initiate measures to deploy army personnel to all the Bank branches operating in the valley. We also request you to issue suitable direction to the State Administration to ensure adequate and effective armed protection to bank branches to guard against any possible attack and to avoid loss of precious human lives and public property. We apprehend that any lacuna in urgently restoring an environment of safety and security at the bank branches may lead to closure of some more vulnerable branches or may force banks to resort to cashless transaction mode of operation. In that eventuality, the local populace and the Government will suffer the most.

05. We request your good office to meet a small delegation of our Confederation at your earliest convenience to discuss on this issue.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

Soumya Datta

General Secretary

Mob no. 9830044737