

# ALL INDIA BANK OFFICERS' CONFEDERATION



(Registered under the Trade Unions Act 1926, Registration No.3427/Delhi)

State Bank of India Officers' Association

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To All Affiliates / State Units / Members

## **AIBOC BIDS ADIEU TO COM D.T FRANCO, GENERAL SECRETARY, ON HIS SUPERANNUATION FROM THE SERVICES OF STATE BANK OF INDIA**

Com D. T. Franco, who spearheaded the AIBOC movement as the leading light amongst the trade union movement in general and banking industry in particular, stepped down as the General Secretary on his superannuation from Bank's service on 30th June, 2018. During his stint as General Secretary of AIBOC, in a span of crucial 15 months, he worked at a frenetic pace addressing a plethora of issues, protesting anti-labour, anti-employee and anti-people policies of the Government and often spelling out counter narratives to Govt agenda. He had kept AIBOC constantly in the news due to his bold and incisive views on various contentious issues pertaining to Banking & Finance and became the most sought after trade union personality in the Print and Visual Media.

Dr. D Thomas Franco Rajendra Dev, popularly known as D.T. Franco, has been a born leader. His leadership qualities came to the fore when he was a student leader during his college days. He was imprisoned while espousing the cause of his college mates during an agitation. During those years, when communication and transport was challenging, he went to Nagaland as a Teacher. He then joined State Bank of India in 1980 and dared to strike work demanding the arrest of an offender who manhandled his colleague at the branch. Thus, he became popular amongst his colleagues and peers at State Bank of India.

On his transfer to his home state Tamil Nadu he was posted in his home district of Kanyakumari, the southernmost point of the country. He immediately shot into fame by spearheading the "Arivoli Iyakkam" (Total Literacy Campaign), a Government Initiative and was on deputation for more than one year at the instance of the District Collector. He went to establish more than 1000 Self Help Groups in the district under the aegis of "Malar", an NGO. He was involved in the Tamil Nadu Science Forum as its General Secretary for six years. Thus, his desire to reach out to the poles privileged and down trodden made him even popular and forayed into Officer's Association activities in Chennai Circle. Due to his organisational capability, he was elected as Zonal Secretary of the State Bank of India Officers' Association in Chennai Circle.

He became a Deputy General Secretary in SBIOA (CC) in the year 2008 and elevated to the post of General Secretary in the year 2012. He withstood the onslaught of the then Chairman of SBI on the Association. He challenged the Charge Sheet issued to the Circle President and him in the Madras High Court for conducting a demonstration and got the charge sheets quashed and more importantly upheld the right to hold peaceful demonstration. He also challenged the decision of the then Chairman of the State Bank of India to withdraw the check off facility and restored it as a right of AISBOF. He also filed a contempt of court case against the then Chairman in the check off case forcing the Chairman to appear in the Court. It restored the faith of ordinary members in the organisation and trade unions across the country hailed the success. He became the President of the All India State Bank Officers' Federation (AISBOF) in the year 2015. Working in tandem with Com Y. Sudarshan, General Secretary, AISBOF, they were able to achieve substantial benefits for the officers of State Bank of India during this period.

He was elected as General Secretary of AIBOC in March 2017 at a time the RBI identified Nine Public Sector Banks as 'sick'. Govt. of India in the pretext of turning around those 'sick' banks insisted upon the Unions and Associations to sign an MOU surrendering the monetary benefits of the Officers. He immediately sprang into action by preparing an alternative 'Turn Around Plans' for these Banks. In his first EC meeting at Mumbai, he boldly asked the respective General Secretaries of the banks, not to sign the memorandum and offered the alternative plans to all the banks by conducting 2 days workshop on the subject to empower the leaders. The Government had to relent and made changes in the MOU removing/modifying clauses affecting the employees and the officers.

Thus began his enterprising saga as General Secretary of AIBOC. He followed it up with various programmes such as formation of District Level Units, activating State Level Units, conducting training programmes, National Youth Convention, All India Women's Convention etc. and revitalized the movement.

When the IBA commenced the current wage negotiations, he was instrumental in preparing a 'Charter of Demands' on behalf of the Officers' Associations incorporating the modalities of the VIIth Pay Commission while retaining the unique nature of Bi-partite negotiations. When some of the member banks of IBA gave a fractured mandate, he boldly announced that negotiations will not progress further without full mandate i.e. right of negotiation up to Scale VII. He pursued it with meetings and representations to the Minister of State for Finance, Finance Minister and the CEOs of the respective Banks which started yielding result. Recently he had presented a memorandum detailing the benefits of Five Day week before the IBA.

He floated innovative ideas like signature campaigns and cartoon campaigns as part of organizational protest actions. He was the first to voice his protest on any issue affecting the bankers viz. RBI and Government's move to privatize the banks, Demonetization decision, Prompt Corrective Action, FRDI Bill, Provisioning norms et al. He even went to the extent of demanding the resignation of the Governor of RBI over the demonetisation issue. Likewise, he also wrote to the Chief Justice of the honourable Supreme Court to avoid conducting Lok Adalats on Holidays.

He took on the Government's anti-people policies with sheer grit, gumption and conviction and played a pivotal role in stalling the draconian FRDI Bill. He presented before the Joint Parliamentary Committee a detailed report along with a power point presentation on the FRDI Bill. He initiated Peoples' Parliament for Unity and Development movement for social upliftment.

He brought all the officers trade unions in other public sector to one platform and created All India Public Sector and Central Government Officers' Confederation (AIPCOC), an umbrella organisation and was elected its Secretary General.

He initiated publication of books on topics relevant to the banking industry by eminent personalities in the field of Economics and Finance. He personally compiled a number of books challenging the wrong policies of RBI and Government with supporting data. He believed in educating the members and public in general as it would enable them to fight for the cause with conviction.

The towering leader has left an indelible mark and has propelled AIBOC into national prominence. His retirement at this juncture will be profoundly felt. He will be remembered by all for his peerless leadership and the colossal saga of selfless sacrifice for the cause of our members. However, it is the responsibility of all of us to carry forward the movement to pay a befitting tribute to the iconic figure. Let us strive hard in right earnest to keep the AIBOC flag flying high.

We know that Com Franco will not quit the battlefield to fight for the common man. A plethora of issues and battles are beckoning him. We would be seeking his guidance to carry forward the movement with renewed zeal and determination as larger battles loom ahead.

We, in our individual capacity and on behalf all members of AIBOC convey our sincere appreciation for his colossal contribution and urge upon him to intensify his fight to safeguard the rights of common man and also assist the banking unions in particular. We also wish him an active and healthy life in the years to come.

With revolutionary greetings



**Dilip Saha**  
President



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