



# 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**

Beloved Comrades,

### **WHY WAGE NEGOTIATION UPTO SCALE VII?**

### **WHY ITS IMPORTANT TO JOIN THE STRIKE?**

### **WHY SENIORS SHOULD STAND UP?**

Let us revisit the pages of history before we ponder over the pertinent questions that have assumed profound importance for the ensuing Wage Revision talks. The plight of the officers' community was pitiable before the formation of the Officers Associations in various Banks. Firstly, there was no uniform scale of Pay, no Casual Leave, no fixed working Hours, no transfer Policy, no promotion policy, no Loans on Concessional Rate, no leased accommodation facility, no LFC, no Conveyance allowance, no Officers Service Conditions at all. The details have been highlighted in the book 'Glimpses of the Historic Indefinite Strike 1969' published by AISBOF. There was glaring inequality of salary. There was overtime for award staff but no overtime for Officers. So the clerical staff were earning more income than the officers on account of overtime while Officers were under mercy of the superiors for any pay related issue.

It is pertinent to note that for Central Gov't Officers, Pay Commission covers up to the rank of Cabinet Secretary. Hence, Pillai Committee recommended introduction of four bands and seven scales of pay in 1974 for Bank Officers. There were protests and strong opposition against it by All India Confederation of Bank Officers Organisations (AICOBOO). Thereafter, it was discussed, amended and approved by the Gov't and IBA and was implemented in 1979. Till date, the seven scales continue and Officers organizations negotiate the Wage Revision with the IBA. In the last 5 settlements, there were concerted efforts to take away these rights. The Gov't and IBA combine had tried to divide the Associations and Unions. However, we had stood firm against all allurements and provocations. It was because of the Unity of UFBU these efforts were scuttled and I am confident this time too we will succeed to negotiate up to Scale VII.

### **What will happen if it is restricted to Scale III?**

It is a deliberate attempt of the Gov't and IBA to drive a wedge between the Officers community by alluring the Scale IV to VII Officers with a tantalising carrot of higher pay scales. However, the Senior Management Grade officers will be left to the mercy of the Individual Bank Managements as was the scenario prior to formation of Officers Associations. It is a certainty that Performance based salary will be introduced for them. Uniformity and parity will disappear. The Officers will be under pressure to perform beyond their capabilities. There would be Cut throat competition. Perform or Perish will be

the rule. Survival of the fittest will be the Mantra. Non performers will be isolated and paid less. They would be transferred, denied promotion and even forced to resign. Remember, that this Gov't has terminated even IAS Officers who were branded as non-performers. Choice posting will go to favourites who will appease the bosses. Women Officers will be terrorized. The working hours will become unlimited. Holidays will be gone.

This has happened in many industries. It is happening in IT Industry even today. That's why IT sector employees and Officers have started coming together to form platforms and join Trade Unions.

While interacting with a Ola driver, I came to know that he was in IT sector earning Rs.1 lakh a month. One evening the HR Dept gave him an envelope. It had a letter stating that his performance was not up to the mark and he is not needed any more. With Rs.40 lakh Housing Loan, Rs.8 Lakh Car Loan and 2 kids in Schools he was forced to become a Taxi Driver. There are thousands like this man. That's why even now people are leaving companies like CTS, Wipro, Infosys and joining Public Sector banks. I have interacted with hundreds of young Officers who have joined the Bank for job security. Without Association there won't be any job security. This will not happen overnight. Once we are divided, we are weakened. Then slowly the process would set in.

Today our top bosses in Banks and Finance Ministry are called to Davos and other exotic locations, to attend conclaves where they are tutored by foreign consultants and HR agencies that competition is important. On the other hand Niti Ayog, Fin Techs, Nandan Nilkenis etc. want brick and mortar Banks to disappear to enable the Fintechs to take over. They don't want Unions and Associations to come in the way. They want Privatisation of Public Sector Banks. They want access to the huge data of Banks to make them richer and richer.

So they are building a big web of deceit. The beginning is the effort to divide us and show that Senior Officers are not in strike. So there will be no wage negotiation for them. They will divide Scale IV & V, then they will divide Scale VI & VII. Once this is done, the CGMs and above will also be affected. Their Scale of pay also will become less as they would be forced to accept the version that the Banks are not doing well, so they have to sacrifice. Nobody will be safe without the watchdogs – Associations and Unions.

Remember the story of Four Bulls and the Lion. Remember the story of the Father and sons and a bundle of wood.

Some may ask "Why Individual letters are issued? Why Association can't stop it?"

They will continue to issue this letter. It is statutory. In 1969, Shri R.K. Talwar, then Chairman,SBO, a towering personality issued similar letters to individual Officers. In 1997, Finance Ministry asked Banks to advice that Scale IV and above should not be in the Association. But we have our fundamental rights enshrined in our Constitution. We have Trade Union rights. For a collective action of a Trade Union individual members cannot be punished. So there are General Managers in our Associations and there are

AGMs who are Association Leaders. We have benevolent funds, housing societies / schemes, Educational Trust, Co-operatives, sports wing, Youth Wing, Guest Houses etc. for Officers irrespective of scale. Our service conditions are up to Scale VII. It is the Association which defends all Officers when unfortunate situations arise. Let us stand united. Unity is our only strength. Let me end with a story.

There was a competition for wood cutters. One old man and one young man reached the finals. They were allotted different areas in the jungle. They had to cut trees. From morning they were cutting. In between, almost every one hour the young man used to notice that there was no sound of cutting from the old man's side. So he was happy. "Old man is resting due to age" he used to think and continued cutting without rest. At the end of the day the judges announced that the old man is the winner. The young man asked the old man, "Every one hour you were taking rest. How you could cut more?". The old man said, "My dear young man, I was not only taking rest to recuperate myself but I was also sharpening the Axe. That's why I could win"

Beloved comrades, the Association is like the old man, who possesses Wisdom, Experience, and who can visualize the future. So stand by the Association. Stand United. We are not only fighting for our Wage Revision; we are fighting to safeguard the hard earned rights, service conditions and the social responsibility of the Banks.

**March on to 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> Strike.**

The woods are lovely dark and deep  
But I have promises to keep  
And Miles to go before I sleep  
And Miles to go before I sleep.

-Robert Frost

**No Deputations, No taking over,  
No Clearing House Operations  
during the Strike**

With Revolutionary Greetings,



**[D T FRANCO]  
GENERAL SECRETARY**