



ALL INDIA STATE BANK OFFICERS' FEDERATION



(Registered under the Trade Unions Act 1926, Registration No: 727/MDS)

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TO ALL OUR AFFILIATES

CELEBRATING THE MAY DAY – 2026

The Legacy Beckons!

We reproduce below the text of AIBOC Circular No. 2026/31, dated 1.05.2026, contents of which are self-explanatory for the information of the members.

With Greetings,

Yours Comradely,

(Rupam Roy)
General Secretary

Dear Comrades,

CELEBRATING THE MAY DAY – 2026

The Legacy Beckons!

On this auspicious Day, we pause to honour the calloused hands that built the citadels of modern industry and the resilient spirits that refused to be mere cogs in a heartless machine but at times even dared to challenge it. We celebrate not just an international holiday, but a hard-won legacy that has etched permanently in the annals of time and shall remain fresh in the minds of entire working class for the generations to come.

The story of May Day is that of a Tragedy that transformed to Triumph, written in the blood and grit of the Haymarket Affair of 1886 that shook the entire world, demand for regulated working hour sprouted and the much-needed work-life balance got its resonance. In Chicago, labourers stood shoulder-to-shoulder, demanding a simple, human standard, eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, and eight hours for what we will. What began as a peaceful assembly turned into a flashpoint of history when a dynamite bomb transformed a reflexive protest into a massacre. Since then, the Echo of May Day knocks our conscience with perpetual essence of rejuvenation and we celebrate the day as victory rather than a tragedy to honour the valiant spirit of Hay market martyrs.

The spark of revolution was not confined to the city of Chicago alone, but flew across the oceans, igniting the Trade Union movement globally and in India it traversed through the formation of the Bombay Mill Hands Association (MHA), Madras Labour Union (MLU), Banking Sector Trade Union Organisations, AITUC, to the rise of collective bargaining. The lesson was clear; a single stick is easily broken, but a bundle is impossible to snap. In the blood-stained pages of history proclaiming workers' right, while John William Henry showed us the strength of an individual that could challenge the might of a machine, the legendary Paul Robeson taught us that our "deep river" of struggle only flows toward freedom when we sing in harmony.

When we honour the May Day martyrs, as we pay homage to the indomitable souls, we vouch to carry forward the legacy and co-join the spirits of the indomitable souls, the martyrs whose silence became more powerful than the voices the protagonists wanted to strangle. This incident was the defining moment that stimulated the global trade union movement, shifting the paradigm from feudal exploitation to collective bargaining. It proved that whether in the organized industries or the unorganized street, the worker's plight is universal and ubiquitous.

The trade union movement has never been a "walk in the park"; it has been a relentless uphill climb against the "fat cats" of industry. From the formation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to the birth of the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1920, the movement gave a bullhorn to the voiceless. In India, the struggle was even more trying, fighting both colonial oppression and capitalist greed. Pioneers like Narayan Meghaji Lokhande, B.P Wadia, ensured that the Indian workers are no longer a "lone wolf" but part of a formidable pack.

Today, the battlefield has shifted from the floor of the mill to the glowing screens of the Banking and Financial sectors. The modern banker faces a crisis of a different hue, though the impact remains as pernicious. Stifling performance targets, the erosion of work-life balance and the looming shadow of privatization where persistent ploy to divide and rule has been prominently galloping and atrociously infectious. The digital revolution, while a boon, has turned the workplace into a "panopticon", as the pressure to deliver and augment more and more profit often comes at the cost of mental well-being, at times clubbed with human dignity. The struggles of our predecessors, fighting for self-esteem and job security are echoed in today's fight against precarious contracts and the creeping uncertainty that takes us back to the formative stage, replacing men with machine the looming threat of dehumanization of service through Artificial Intelligence seems once again shall test our perseverance.

For the Gig Workers, in the unorganized sector, the "platform economy" has created a new kind of invisible worker. Without the safety net of traditional unions, delivery partners and freelancers are the new pioneers of the working class, fighting for basic rights in a world that often treats them as

"independent" only when it's time to avoid paying benefits. Whether workers of today wear a tie in an office room or a helmet on a scooter, the struggle for a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, a dignified job, their crave for poise remains the same. The banking professional, considered the aristocracy of labour, somehow still maintaining the spree navigating the choppy waters of corporate restructuring on the one side and the agnostic stand of the law makers on the other. We are all "steel-driving" like Mr. John Henry in our own way, struggling to stay ahead of a system that often values profit over people and our fight continues.

As we look toward the horizon, the clouds of war gather over the Middle East threatening to set the global economy ablaze. In any war, it is the working class world-wide that bears the burnt regardless of who prevails. We the Indian workforce are poised once again to withstand factory shutdowns, retrenchment, wage slash and walk miles, at times in bare foot, at times on the wheel of a suitcase to meet our destiny.

As the specter of a financial downturn looms, the spirit of May Day becomes more relevant than ever. We must remain vigilant, for the gains of the past can be lost in the blink of an eye. In union there is strength, and in our shared history, we find the "silver lining" to persevere against the gathering storm.

Let us on this auspicious day reclaim our girth and tighten our girdles, as the legacy of Haymarket is not mere a memory; it is our mandate, mandate to snatch the legitimate otherwise denied.

With revolutionary greetings,

Comradely Yours,

Sd/-
Rupam Roy
General Secretary

At the Service of Members for more than 6 Decades

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