



OFFICERS' CAUSE

APRIL - 2025



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COMRADE P M BALACHANDRA, PRESIDENT, AIBOC DEMITS OFFICE

Comrade P M Balachandra, President AIBOC, has demitted office on his attaining superannuation from Union Bank of India today i.e. on 31st March, 2025 after more than 39 years of illustrious and immaculate service career.

Com P M Balachandra, popularly known as "Bala" was born on 10th March, 1965, in Mangalore, a coastal city located between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats Mountain range of Karnataka, India.



"Being unique is better than being perfect" was a quote that inspired him the most in maintaining an individuality. During his academic journey he developed a passion for sports. He developed a knack for games and athletics and he focused on powerlifting and weightlifting arena, and the journey of a successful sportsman was flagged off.

A sportsman of extraordinary caliber, Com P.M. Balachandra has brought immense pride to the nation through his achievements in powerlifting. He was crowned Junior National Champion with a national record and went on to dominate the sport, becoming a nine-time Senior National Champion, a five-time South India Champion, and a three-time All India Champion. His remarkable prowess earning him the coveted title of National Champion further sharpened and glittered in brilliance at the International Level as well and earned him a Silver Medal at the Asian Championship. His participation in the World Championships held in Johannesburg, South Africa, where he secured 7th place, and his selection for the Junior World Championships stand as testaments to his exceptional talent and dedication. His sporting excellence extended into

the banking sector, where he was a champion in the Bank Olympiad and the Bank Sports Board from 1993 to 2008 and reigned as Master Champion from 2005 to 2009. In recognition of his extraordinary sporting achievements, he was granted an out-of-turn promotion to officer in 1994, a rare honour bestowed only upon the most distinguished athletes.

Beginning his banking career in 1986 as a sports recruit, Com P.M. Balachandra displayed the same level of commitment and excellence in his professional journey. Rising through the ranks with sheer dedication, he was promoted to Scale 1 in 1994, Scale 2 in 2001, and Scale 3 in 2008. His leadership and banking acumen led him to serve as Branch Head for over a decade, steering key branches such as Shivamogga, ULP Malleshwaram, Rajajinagar, RT Nagar, and the Service Branch, apart from making significant contributions in the Audit Department.

Beyond his professional achievements, Com P.M. Balachandra emerged as a pillar of strength for the trade union movement, championing the rights and welfare of bank officers. His journey in the Union Bank Officers Association, Karnataka (UBIOA-Karnataka) saw him ascend through various leadership roles, from Office Bearer in 2009 to Joint General Secretary, then Vice President, and eventually General Secretary. His influence further expanded in the All-India Union Bank Officers' Federation (AIUBOF), where he progressed from a Central Committee Member to Joint General Secretary, then Vice President, then President and

finally from January, 2020 he became the General Secretary. His leadership was instrumental in stabilizing the federation during the turbulent times of bank mergers, ensuring that AIUBOF not only survived but flourished, standing stronger than ever before.

His legacy reached new heights when he assumed the role of All India President of the All-India Bank Officers Confederation (AIBOC) from 1st October, 2022, the apex trade union body representing lakhs of bank officers. Under his stewardship, AIBOC has grown in strength, relentlessly advocating for the dignity, security, and rights of bank officers. As a member of team AIBOC, he played a pivotal role in the successful signing of the 9th Joint Note for officers in March, 2024, a landmark agreement that secured significant benefits for officers across the industry.

The bonding between the undersigned and Com Balachandra has grown stronger by every passage of day. His calm demeanour and reassuring presence have instilled confidence in me making me stronger to face with antagonised situations. Few of the glaring moments had been during several meetings with IBA and CLC(C). His invaluable inputs had all along given new dimensions to our presentation of views. The undersigned places on record his deepest gratitude to Com Bala for the unflinching support that he had extended during his entire tenure as the President of our mighty confederation.

As he demits his office today, Com P.M. Balachandra leaves behind a legacy that will be cherished for generations to come. A non-controversial, yet non compromising, soft-spoken but strong in resolute, calm demeanour, yet rock solid determination, he has always been a unifying force in the trade union movement, navigating challenges with wisdom, patience, and an untiring commitment to justice. His contributions to sports, banking, and trade unionism are immeasurable, and his journey serves as an inspiration to countless officers and young leaders and shall continue to do so.

We will be failing in our duty if we do not place on record the unstinted cooperation and support extended by the family members of Com Bala. His spouse Mrs. Sreeja Balachandra, who is an HR head in a corporate house in Jordon and son Mr. Pranav Balachandra, who is a pilot in Spice Jet, had borne the brunt of isolation throughout their lives as Com Bala had devoted his entire time for his extended family.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of AIBOC and all the members of the Confederation, we express our deepest gratitude for his invaluable service, steadfast leadership, and extraordinary contributions to UBIOA (Karnataka), AIUBOF and above all, the AIBOC. May Com P M Balachandra enjoy a healthy, active, contented, and serene retired life■

COMRADE SEKARAN R TAKES OVER AS PRESIDENT OF AIBOC

During the course of the 103rd Executive Committee Meeting of AIBOC held at Bengaluru on 29th and 30th of March 2025, the house unanimously co-opted Com Sekaran Ramanujam, the Secretary General of All India Indian Bank Officers' Association as the President of All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC). His journey to the coveted position thus starts from the 1st day of April, 2025, following the superannuation of Com P M Balachandra, demitting his office on 31st March, 2025.



Sekaran did Master degree in Science. He joined Indian Bank as a clerk in May 1992. Since his student life he has been associated with student movement and it became a natural alibi for him to get associated with the Banking Sector Trade Union Movement. He became a General Council Member in the Bank's Award Staff Association in 2000 and an Executive Committee Member in 2003. In his career pursuit he got promoted to the supervising cadre during the year 2004 and was promoted to Scale II in 2009.

Born on 27th April, 1968 in Chennai Comrade

Since his call into the officers' cadre, he became a

staunch activist of the officers' association. He was elected as Assistant Secretary of Indian Bank Officers' Association (IBOA), Eastern Zone in 2006, and since then, he never looked back. In the year 2009 he was elected as Secretary of IBOA (TN & Pondy), in 2013 he became the Deputy General Secretary of IBOA (TN & Pondy) and during the year 2014, Comrade Sekaran was adorned as the General Secretary of IBOA (TN & Pondy). Following the superannuation of Comrade K Rajendran, he was elected to covet the prestigious position of the Secretary General of AIBOA in February 2020.

Comrade Sekaran was elected as State Secretary of AIBOC Tamilnadu state unit in February, 2016 which resulted in his induction in the Executive Committee of AIBOC. He was elevated to Sr. Vice President in January, 2021 during the 12th Triennial Conference held in Kolkata. His devotion, dedication towards the cause of officers' fraternity in particular and working class in general and experience had been the hallmark that fetched him his elevation to the position of the Working President of AIBOC in April, 2023 and now we are elated to announce his coronation as the

President of our mighty confederation who will assume office from 1st April, 2025. On this auspicious occasion I, on behalf of the entire fraternity of AIBOC, congratulate Com Sekaran and extend a hearty welcome to the dynamic leader with a hope that the Confederation will find new zeal and Com. Sekaran will add dynamics to it.

We, from the confederation seek wholehearted cooperation of each one of you in strengthening our organization further and make it more resonating and vibrating as ever. The pressing priority of the moment is to evince harmony and accord, arming ourselves to thrive ahead amidst the challenge evoked by the sinister schemes and ill-conceived ideologies of the government to annihilate the trade union movement from the banking industry. We are confident that Com Sekaran shall add fuel to our propelling chariot and carry forward the legacy of our Confederation as we brace ourselves to lodge a decisive battle against back door privatisation in the banking industry, micromanagement by the DFS by interfering in the individual bank issues and upheld the dignity of the officers' fraternity. ■

DISCUSSIONS WITH IBA ON RESIDUAL ISSUES

Text of AIBOC Circular No. 2025/12, dated 13.03.2025, reproduced the text of UFBU Circular No. 2025/03 dated 13.03.2025.

There was a round of discussions between IBA and UFBU on the pending residual issues.

New Chief Executive of IBA : Mr. A K Goel, former MD of PNB has taken charge as Chief Executive of IBA. We extended our warm welcome to him and expressed the hope that he would take initiatives to resolve the important pending issues like 5 Days Banking and also ensure that there is adequate recruitment in the Banks. Mr. Goel assured that it would be his endeavour to find solutions to the problems raised by the Unions as employees' welfare is the key to achieve business improvement.

Discussions on the issues: IBA team was led by Mr. Gopal Murli Bhagat, Dy. Chief Executive of IBA along with Mr. Brajeshwar Sharma, Sr. Advisor, HR&IR, IBA and a team of HR Heads from SBI, BOI, BOB, UBI and CBI. UFBU was represented by our constituent Unions.

Some of the important issues discussed today are as under:

Recruitments: We demanded adequate recruitment of staff in the Branches due to lack of which the workload in the branches on the employees is very heavy. We pointed out how the number of clerical and substaff in the Banks have come down drastically over the years. We further pointed out that due to such shortage of staff, the officers are compelled to sit in counters to undertake clerical work which are otherwise not part of their duties and which in turns affects proper discharge of their own duties.

Further we pointed out that there are oral instructions not to go for recruitment of substaff and housekeepers because of which large number of persons are being engaged on temporary and casual basis which is not a healthy and desirable practice. We informed that all the existing vacancies should be filled up and preference should be given to the eligible temporary employees while

SUCCESS AWAITS AT THE DOOR WHERE DILIGENCE IS

undertaking the process.

We also explained to them as to how the inadequate staff in the branches is resulting in increasing instances of customers and banking public getting irritated over inadequacies in customer service and turning their wrath on the branch staff.

IBA in response stated that individual banks have their manpower policy according to which recruitments are made and hence the views of the Unions would be informed to the member Banks. We pointed out that Government as the major stakeholder has to urgently and effectively intervene in this critical issue to advice the Banks to provide adequate staff in all the Banks.

Leave Bank system: IBA had agreed in principle to introduce Leave Bank system by which employees can donate/contribute their leave to a common pool and which can be utilized towards sanction of leave to employees/officers who have exhausted their leave and who are undergoing treatment for very major ailments. The modalities were discussed and it was decided to further discuss the issue to finalise the scheme at the earliest.

Group Medical Insurance Scheme: To our demand for the Banks to bear the premium for the retirees, IBA informed that it needs further discussion to assess the cost aspect, etc. Regarding improvement in the Scheme like higher coverage, etc, it was decided to continue the discussions at the time of renewal of the current Policy.

Updation of Pension, Improvement in Ex-gratia : IBA informed that the issue is still subjudice. To our demand for improvement in the Ex-gratia, IBA suggested that the same could be discussed after the current financial year is over. We have requested the IBA to once again send a communication to the private sector Banks which have not implemented Ex Gratia payment to pensioners. To our demand for including Special Allowance for superannuation benefits, IBA informed that the same is subjudice due to legal cases pending in Courts.

Improvement in Pension: We have suggested that the present pension scheme is to be improved

upon like full pension after 20 years' service, calculation of basic pension based on last month's Pay or last 10 months average whichever is beneficial, additional pension for pensioners above 70, 80 and 90 years, minimum pension at ₹ 10,000, etc. and IBA requested us to provide a Note on the same for examination and perusal.

Changes in Disciplinary Action Procedure:

We informed IBA that the existing procedure for workmen to be modified based on the discussions finalised in the Sub-Committee. IBA agreed to follow up the matter with the Negotiating Committee. Regarding officers, it was agreed to discuss the issue further in a Small Committee.

Uniform DA formula for all Pensioners: We demanded that the DA formula applicable to pensioners post-12th BPS/9th Joint Note be extended to all previous pensioners. IBA indicated that they are open to discuss the issue if the modification will be cost-neutral and without any additional cost to the Banks. Unions have been requested to submit a Note to IBA on this issue.

Compassionate ground appointments scheme: We requested that the present cap of 5% be calculated based on vacancies available instead of actual recruitment so that eligible pending cases can be considered. We also suggested upward revision of the Ex-gratia lumpsum amount being paid as an option in lieu of appointment. It has been agreed to discuss these issues further.

Monetisation of LFC for officers: IBA informed that the issue will be discussed further with the officers organisations.

Conciliation meeting by CLC on 18-3-2025:

Since the IBA had arranged the meeting to discuss pending residual issues, our important agitational issues like introduction of 5 Days' Banking per week, Option to switch over to OPS from NPS, etc. were not taken up. In view of our Strike Notice, the Chief Labour Commissioner has called for a conciliation meeting at Delhi on 18-3-2025 when all these issues will be taken up for discussion. Outcome of this conciliation meeting will be informed to members in due course. ■

CONCILIATION MEETING WITH CHIEF LABOUR COMMISSIONER (CENTRAL) ALL INDIA BANK STRIKE DATED 24TH & 25TH MARCH, 2025 POSTPONED

Text of AIBOC Circular No. 2025/14, dated 23.03.2025, Reproduce the text of UFBU Circular no. 2025/05 dated 23.03.2025.

OUR CALL FOR STRIKE ON 24TH AND 25TH MARCH, 2025 POSTPONED.

In the midst of our agitational programme, as informed in our earlier message on 18-3-2025, there was conciliation meeting on that day between IBA/Bank managements and UFBU as arranged by the Chief Labour Commissioner. Since no understanding could be reached on our demands, the conciliation meeting was adjourned to 21st March and accordingly one more round of conciliation meeting took place in CLC office, New Delhi on that day.

Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), Shri K. Shekar himself conducted the conciliation proceedings along with Dy. CLC, RLC (HQ) and ALC (IR). Representatives of DFS from the Ministry of Finance, IBA and all Bank managements were present. All our constituent Unions were present.

Detailed discussions were held on all our demands raised in our Strike Notice.

1. 5 Days Banking per week: There was elaborate discussion on introduction of 5 Day Banking per week. We pointed out that even though our Bipartite Settlement/Joint Note was signed one year ago in March, 2024, the issue still remains pending with the Government to whom the IBA has recommended. We explained that keeping the issue pending for such a long time amounts to ignoring the sanctity of the bilateral settlement arrived between the IBA and UFBU. We also pointed out that in the present scenario where employees and officers/Managers in the Banks work under a lot of stress and strain, many times, working beyond normal working hours, the demand for 2 days of weekly off has become a necessity.

IBA replied that as per the Settlement/Joint Note, they have recommended the matter to the Government and they are awaiting their approval. When pointed out by CLC that IBA should follow up the matter with Government, they assured that they would pursue

the matter with Government for getting their due approval. DFS representative stated that the issue is under consideration but cannot commit any timeline. Hence there was virtual stalemate on this issue.

Hence, the Chief Labour Commissioner wanted some senior officials from the DFS to participate in the conciliation meeting to know the stand of the Government to end the stalemate. Even though all the top officials of the DFS were busy with the proceedings of the ongoing Parliament Session, a senior Joint Secretary of the DFS participated in the meeting via video conference and clarified that the matter is receiving the serious attention of the Government including by the Finance Minister.

We conveyed our disappointment over the undue delay in the matter and wanted the Government to expedite the process. He assured that the matter is already receiving the serious attention of the Government including at the level of Finance Minister and hence requested the UFBU to reconsider our call for strike so that customers are not put to any inconvenience. We informed him that UFBU leaders will meet and take a decision looking to his assurances.

2. Adequate Recruitment in all Cadres :

We pointed out that year after year the number of clerical and substaff is getting reduced even though business has swelled hugely. We explained how the shortage of staff is resulting in undue workload on the existing staff, staff not able to complete their work within office hours, compelling officer staff to undertake clerical, cashier and even watchman duties, customers getting irritated over delay in services and picking up quarrel with staff including physical assaults, etc. We also drew their attention that even out of the clerical staff recruited, the attrition is high and net intake is much lesser. We pointed out that in many branches, there is not a single substaff or watchman or Armed Guard or even part time sweepers. We explained that in the absence of recruitment of permanent substaff in these vacancies, large number of temporary employees have been employed by branches continuously for a long period of years and hence

are expecting their regularisation. Hence we emphasised our demand for adequate recruitment of staff in all cadres.

After discussions, the IBA agreed to take up with the member banks and with the recent changes in the enhanced duties of clerical employees in public sector banks as per the 12th Bipartite Settlement, IBA was hopeful of positive development in recruitment in all the Public Sector Banks.

IBA also assured discussions with the UFBU on a periodic basis on this issue by involving all the Banks including discussing manpower planning mechanism in the Banks. The issue of recruitment of Substaff shall also be discussed and it was decided to take up the issue with a positive frame of mind.

Regarding high incidence of attrition in Banks, IBA informed that efforts are afoot to re-arrange the sequence of recruitment in Banks like POs followed by clerical staff and like SBI, PSB, RRB, etc. which is expected to reduce the rate of attrition to some good extent.

3. Outsourcing Permanent Jobs in Banks: The IBA informed that as agreed before the CLC, they are ready to discuss the issue with the UFBU in the background of the guidelines of the RBI and having regard to the judgement of the Supreme Court. IBA also informed that they have sought for the suggestions and views of the Unions in this regard in the earlier round of discussions. The CLC advised the parties to discuss this issue bilaterally.

4. Review of directive on PLI issued by DFS : We pointed out that the recent Guidelines from the DFS on revised PLI for Scale IV officers and above is a violation of the mutually agreed/signed Joint Note and is also highly discriminatory and unfair. After discussion IBA agreed to refer the matter to DFS for re-examination and reconsideration of this new scheme sent to the Public Sector Banks.

5. Government guidelines on review of efficiency of employees and officers at the age of 55/57/58: We conveyed our strong protest against the recent instructions from the DFS to Banks that managements should review the efficiency of the officers and employees of the Banks on reaching the age of 55/57/58 years and submit the Report to

them every month. DFS representative clarified that it was a routine communication sent to the Banks based on the guidelines from DOPT and there was no malafide in that. We conveyed to DFS that Government should not ask for such information from the Banks as the same are intimidatory.

6. Safety of Employees and Officers in Branches against assault by unruly elements and customers: We pointed out that instances are on the increase where unruly customers and outside elements are attacking and assaulting the bank employees, officers and Managers and the safety of the staff has become a question mark. IBA fully shared our concerns and informed that they are fully seized of the issue and it is being discussed at the IBA level with Bank managements to prevent such occurrences and to ensure safety of the bank staff. We suggested that permanent Armed Guards should be appointed in the Branches which will be a deterrent against attacks on staff.

7. Filling up of Post of Workmen / Officers Directors in PSBs: We pointed out that the posts of Workman Director and Officer Directors based on the panel of names submitted by the majority Unions remain unfilled for the past nearly 10 years. The representatives of DFS informed that 14 names from various Banks have already been processed and sent for consideration and approval by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet and the remaining cases are under correspondence and examination.

8. Resolution of Residual Issues pending with IBA: IBA informed that two round of discussions have already taken place on 26.8.2024 and 13.3.2025 and that further discussions will continue to find amicable solutions.

To our demand for reverting to Old Pension Scheme for NPS covered employees, IBA informed that this issue is part of the residual issues and that they are open for discussions on the same in the further round of discussions.

9. Increase in Gratuity ceiling: The DFS representative informed that it requires legal formalities which involves Ministry of Labour. DFS has already taken it up with the Ministry of Labour

and is following up the same. The UFBU requested to expedite the process.

10. Income Tax on Perquisites: The DFS informed that levy of Income Tax on Perquisites is as per the Income Tax Act. Banks may take their own decision in absorbing the Tax burden.

11. Maintaining 51% of Capital in IDBI Bank: The representative of DFS and IBA informed that this is a policy matter announced by the Government and hence cannot comment on the same.

12. Unfair Labour Practice in Banking Industry: The UFBU brought to the attention of the CLC that even though all employees and officers have a right to join the Union/Association of their choice as provided in the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926 and also as per the Article 19-1-C of the Constitution of our country, some of the Banks are preventing SMGS-IV and above officials to be members of the Association/Union in which other officers are members. The IBA informed that they will discuss the issue further. The Unions requested the intervention of the CLC(C) in this regard. Responding to the issue of Unfair Labour Practice, The CLC(c) advised to file a complaint for violation of Section 25(T) of ID Act, 1947 so that the matter be investigated with legal application of mind and appropriate action may be initiated, if required.

Looking to the entire detailed discussion as above, the Chief Labour Commissioner requested the UFBU to consider withdrawal of the proposed Strike on 24th and 25th March, 2025. We informed him that the undue delay so far by the Government in according its approval to 5 Days Banking has made us sceptical and going merely by assurances would be difficult for UFBU and hence cannot withdraw the strike call. CLC informed us that UFBU should keep in mind the assurances given by the senior official of the DFS through video conference and that the matter is receiving the attention of the Finance Minister also.

He further said that he will also follow up the issue with the DFS since 5 day banking is part of the Settlement/Joint Note which implies that both IBA and the UFBU have come to the agreement on that

issue. The CLC also assured that he will directly monitor the development at periodical interval so that matter may be resolved at an early date.

In the view of the above developments, the leaders of constituent unions of UFBU met among themselves for mutual consultations and having regard to the entire proceedings of the conciliation, the response of the IBA on the various issues raised by us in the strike notice and the response of the DFS representatives including by the Joint Secretary of the Dept. of Financial Services, the initiatives taken by the CLC to follow up and monitor the issue of 5 Day Banking with the DFS, felt that the proposed strike action and agitational programmes can be deferred and postponed by about two months. It was decided that if there is no satisfactory development, UFBU will again revive the agitation and strike call. Accordingly, this decision was conveyed to the CLC and IBA by UFBU to postpone our strike call.

In view of this, the CLC adjourned the proceedings to 22-4-2025 for further discussions.

Comrades, it can be observed that all the issues listed in the strike notice have been taken up during the discussions and attempts are being made to take it forward for amicable solutions. On the important issue of 5 Days Banking, the assurances of the IBA, DFS and CLC have opened the way for an amicable solution at the earliest. We hope that things will move in the positive direction.

We thank all our Unions and members all over the country for their enthusiastic response and participation in the agitational programmes which manifested our unity and determination to pursue our demands. This has paved the way for fruitful discussions and positive approach to resolve the issues.

We are aware that due to high expectations, there is some resentment about not achieving 5 day banking immediately. Our agitational programmes and strike call have sufficiently highlighted the importance of our demand and we are hopeful that the Government would attend to the same seriously. We assure all our members that this issue is being specially attended to and will be followed up to the logical conclusion at the earliest.

UFBU WRITES TO IBA FOR ISSUING ADVISORY TO THE MEMBER BANKS TO HOLD/ DEFER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED PLI SCHEME OF DFS

Text of AIBOC Circular No. 2025/15, dated 26.03.2025, reproduced the text of UFBU letter dated 26.03.2025 addressed to IBA requesting them to issue advisory to member banks to hold/ defer the proposed PLI scheme by DFS for Scale IV and above officials in various banks. Copy of the letter has also been sent to the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central).

PLI SCHEME FOR SMGS-IV AND ABOVE OFFICIALS REQUEST FOR ADVISORY TO DEFER/ HOLD IMPLEMENTATION

We wish to bring to your kind attention that during the conciliation meetings held in the office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) on 18th and 21st March 2025, following the strike notice served by UFBU on 5th March 2025, certain understandings were reached between the parties involved, i.e., IBA, DFS, and UFBU. The minutes of these meetings were subsequently shared.

This is in light of the consensus reached during the 21st March 2025 meeting before the CLC (C), where it was mutually agreed that the IBA would gather inputs from its member banks and submit recommendations to the DFS for a review of the proposed scheme.

It is noteworthy that some banks, such as SBI, Canara Bank, and PNB, have already issued circulars in line with DFS guidelines for the implementation of performance appraisal and PLI schemes for Scale IV and above officials.

It is also pertinent to highlight that performance appraisals conducted at the close of the current financial year based on the guidelines of the DFS will have significant implications on the career progression of around 40000 officers in the industry. Implementation of appraisal mechanisms based on the DFS guidelines, without broader consensus, could also adversely affect promotional prospects both presently and in the future.

In view of the above and considering the urgency of the issue, we kindly request you to issue an advisory to member banks to temporarily defer/ hold the implementation of the appraisal and PLI policy as per DFS guidelines till DFS is able to review their guidelines.

Additionally, we would also like to urge you to initiate the process in consultation with the member banks and recommend to DFS for a review of the proposed scheme, in line with the understanding reached on 21st March 2025. ■

AIBOC EXTENDS ITS ABSOLUTE SUPPORT IN SOLIDARITY WITH AIUCBOF ON THEIR AGITATION PROGRAMME INCLUDING TWO DAYS STRIKE IN UCO BANK ON 21.04.2025 & 22.04.2025

Text of AIBOC Circular No. 2025/18, dated 04.04. With reference to the above, we have sent a communication to the General Secretary, All India UCO Bank Officers' Federation, extending our full and unflinching support to their struggle including two days' nationwide strike in UCO Bank on 21st and 22nd April, 2025. We once again urge all affiliates and state units of AIBOC to extend their solidarity and active presence in their agitational programmes to make it a grand success.

Text of Letter No. AIBOC/2025/06 dated 04.04.2025

**The General Secretary
All India UCO Bank Officers' Federation**

Dear Comrade,

AIBOC EXTENDS ITS ABSOLUTE SUPPORT IN SOLIDARITY WITH AIUCBOF ON THEIR AGITATION PROGRAMME INCLUDING TWO DAYS STRIKE IN UCO BANK ON 21.04.2025 & 22.04.2025

On behalf of the All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), we extend our solidarity

and unflinching support to the All India UCO Bank Officers' Federation (AIUCBOF), an affiliate of AIBOC in their rightful and just cause for the welfare of the officers of UCO Bank.

We are fully aware of the challenges and grievances that have led to the decision to call for a "Two Days' Strike" on 21st & 22nd April, 2025, as detailed in the strike notice and supported by the Statement of Case and Action Programs. It is regrettable that despite persistent efforts by AIUCBOF through various communications and personal visit to the Top Executives of the Bank including the MD & CEO to address the issues through dialogue and negotiation, the management has not taken the necessary steps to resolve them. The refusal of the management to engage the Federation constructively, leaves no other option but to resort to organisational action.

The demands raised by your federation are legitimate and crucial for maintaining a harmonious industrial environment with positive motivation of workforce and ensuring the continued growth and success of the Bank. Issues such as utilisation of bipartite forums to take any decision

regarding review and framing of transfer policy, improvement in the service conditions of officers and introduce fair HR practices are essential for the well-being of the workforce and the Bank's operational efficiency.

AIBOC stands firmly with AIUCBOF in their pursuit of justice and fairness. We recognize the significance of the proposed action programs, including the strike on 21st & 22nd April, 2025 and acknowledge the necessity of these steps to bring attention to the unresolved issues affecting the entire officers' community of UCO Bank.

We, through this communication, call upon the management of UCO Bank also to take immediate and sincere steps to resolve the demands raised by AIUCBOF to prevent further disruption and unrest within the Bank. We also urge all affiliates and state units of AIBOC to extend full support to our comrades in AIUCBOF and join their struggle enmasse.

Together, we stand united in solidarity for justice, fair treatment, and the rights of all employees and officers. ■

[2023 (176) FLR 774]

(SUPREME COURT)

M.R. SHAH and M.M. SUNDRESH, JJ.

Civil Appeal No. 8031 of 2022

November 10, 2022

Between

MAHATMA GANDHI UNIVERSITY and others

and

RINCYMOL MATHEW

Constitution of India, 1950—Articles 136 and 141—Denial of past service benefit—Denial was on the ground that earlier appointment was not to a post duly sanctioned by University—Learned Single Judge allowed the writ petition of respondent—Appeal filed against was dismissed—Hence, the instant appeal—Held, initial appointment of lecturer was on probation duly approved by Director, School of Medical Education—Her appointment was continued—The post was initially temporary but her appointment was sanctioned by Director as well as Vice-Chancellor—Her services for the period 3.10.1998 to 21.10.2011 would be counted for the purpose of grant of benefit of CAS—Appeal dismissed. [Paras 6 and 7]

Applications were invited from qualified candidates and thereafter the respondent was appointed as Lecturer in the regular pay-scale, initially on probation. The said appointment was after obtaining appropriate approval from Director, School of Medical Education. The sanction was accorded by the Vice-Chancellor.

When she was appointed as Lecturer, the post was temporary but as observed hereinabove, on that temporary post, her appointment was sanctioned by the Director as well as Vice-Chancellor.

When the respondent worked continuously right from 1998 initially as Lecturer, thereafter her probation was confirmed; thereafter she was appointed / promoted as Assistant Professor and thereafter again promoted to the post of Associate Professor on regular basis and on regular pay-scale, therefore, the respondent shall be entitled to get her regular service counted for the period from 03.10.1998 to 21.10.2011 for the purpose of grant of the benefit of CAS.

JUDGMENT

M.R. SHAH, J. —Feeling aggrieved and dissatisfied with the impugned judgment and order passed by the Division Bench of the High Court of Kerala at Ernakulam in Writ Appeal No. 1355 of 2019 by which the Division Bench of the High Court has dismissed the said writ appeal preferred by the appellant and has confirmed the judgment and order passed by the learned Single Judge passed in Writ Petition No. 13265 of 2018 directing the appellant University to pass appropriate orders counting the past service of the respondent, who was working as Assistant Professor in the School of Behavioural Sciences under the University, for the purposes of computing the benefits due to her in accordance with the reer Advancement Scheme (hereinafter referred to as "CAS") under the UGC Regulations, the University has preferred the present appeal.

2. The respondent herein was initially appointed as a Lecturer in the School of Medical Education, a self-financing institution under the appellant University w.e.f. 03.10.1998. The said appointment was consequent to a selection process that was conducted pursuant to administrative sanction accorded by the Vice-Chancellor of the University after obtaining necessary approval from the Director, School of Medical Education. Initially, she was appointed on probation. Her probation in the post of Lecturer was thereafter declared on 03.10.1999 and she continued to work as Lecturer till 05.02.2001. That thereafter she was appointed as Assistant Professor in Nursing for the period between 06.02.2001 and 11.10.2004 as Associate Professor in Nursing between 04.10.2004 and

11.04.2005 and as Professor in Nursing between 12.04.2005 and 20.01.2011. That thereafter w.e.f. 21.01.2011, she was appointed as Assistant Professor in the School of Behavioural Sciences, department of the Mahatma Gandhi University.

2.1 The dispute arose with regard to the entitlement of the respondent to reckon her service in the School of Medical Education for the period between 03.10.1998 to 21.02.2011 for the purpose of the CAS envisaged under the UGC Regulations. Her request for extension of benefit of CAS was considered favourably by the University and by order dated 06.12.2013, the Syndicate of the University decided to grant her the benefits of promotion, pay fixation etc. by reckoning her service in the School of Medical Education for the said purpose. That thereafter, the Vice-Chancellor, in exercise of his powers under section 10(17) under Chapter III of the Mahatma Gandhi University Act, 1985 accepted the recommendation of the Syndicate Staff Sub-Committee and revoked the earlier resolution of the Syndicate that had granted the respondent the benefits of the CAS. The reason stated for revocation of the earlier Syndicate decision and the denial of the benefits of CAS to the respondent was that her initial appointment as Lecturer in the School of Medical Education was not to a post that was duly sanctioned in terms of the Mahatma Gandhi University Statutes.

2.2 The denial / revocation of the earlier Syndicate decision and the denial of the benefit of CAS were the subject-matter of writ petition before the learned Single Judge. The learned Single Judge allowed the writ petition by observing that the appointment of the respondent as Lecturer was after following selection procedure and that she was duly qualified. The learned Single Judge therefore directed to count the past services of the respondent in the School of Medical Education in accordance with the UGC Regulations and to grant the benefit of CAS. The appeal preferred by the appellant before the Division Bench of the High Court has been dismissed by the impugned judgment and order. Hence the University has preferred the present appeal.

3. Learned counsel appearing on behalf of the appellant University has taken us to Regulation 10.1 of the UGC Regulations. It is submitted that as per Regulation 10.1, only previous regular service as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor should be counted for direct recruitment and promotion under CAS. Therefore, it is submitted that as initially, the

appointment of the respondent as a Lecturer was on temporary post and was not made after following due procedure as required under the Mahatma Gandhi University Statutes, 1997, respondent shall not be entitled to past services rendered for CAS benefits.

4. While opposing the present appeal, Shri Gaurav Agrawal, learned counsel appearing on behalf of the respondent has taken us to the appointment orders appointing the respondent initially as a Lecturer and thereafter as Assistant Professor and thereafter as Associate Professor. It is submitted that the initial appointment of the respondent - original writ petitioner was after following due procedure and on probation and her probation came to be confirmed subsequently thereafter by order dated 21.10.2000. It is submitted that thereafter by order dated 03.02.2001 on the approval of the Director, School of Medical Education, respondent - original writ petitioner was appointed as Assistant Professor w.e.f. 06.02.2001 in the regular pay-scale. It is submitted that thereafter her probation as Assistant Professor was confirmed. It is submitted that thereafter by order dated 12.10.2004, she was promoted to the post of Associate professor in the regular pay-scale of ' 14300--450-19250. It is submitted that in that view of the matter neither the learned Single Judge nor the Division Bench have committed any error in directing the University to count the period during which the respondent worked as Lecturer / Assistant Professor / Associate Professor for the purpose of granting the benefit under the CAS.

5. We have heard the learned counsel for the respective parties at length.

6. We have considered the initial appointment order of the respondent as Lecturer. Applications were invited from qualified candidates and thereafter the respondent was appointed as Lecturer in the regular pay-scale, initially on probation. The said appointment was after obtaining appropriate approval from Director, School of Medical Education. The sanction was accorded by the Vice-Chancellor. That thereafter by order dated 21.10.2000, her probation was declared w.e.f. 03.10.1999. That thereafter, she was appointed as Assistant Professor and thereafter as Associate Professor continuously in the regular pay- scale.

6.1 It may be true that at the relevant time when she was appointed as Lecturer, the post was temporary but as observed hereinabove, on that temporary post, her appointment was sanctioned by the Director as well as Vice-Chancellor. As observed hereinabove, she has continuously worked right from 1998 (03.10.1998) till she continued to work as Associate Professor. At this stage, the Regulation 10.1 with respect to the grant of CAS is required to be considered, which reads as under:—

"10.1. Previous regular service, whether national or international as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor or equivalent in a University, College, National Laboratories or other scientific/ professional Organizations such as the CSIR, ICAR, DRDO, UGC, ICSSR, ICHR, ICMR, DBT, etc., should be counted for direct recruitment and promotion under CAS of a teacher as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor or any other nomenclature these posts are described as per Appendix III-Table No. II provided that:

- (a) The essential qualifications of the post held were not lower than the qualifications prescribed by the UGC for Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor as the case may be.
- (b) The post is/was in an equivalent grade or of the pre- revised scale of pay as the post of Assistant Professor (Lecturer) Associate Professor (Reader) and Professor.
- (c) The candidate for direct recruitment has applied through proper channel only.
- (d) The concerned Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor should possess the same minimum qualifications as prescribed by the UGC for appointment to the post of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor, as the case may be.
- (e) The post was filled in accordance with the prescribed selection procedure as laid down in the Regulations of University/State Government/Central Government/ Concerned Institutions, for such appointments.
- (f) The previous appointment was not as guest

lecturer for any duration, or an ad hoc or in a leave vacancy of less than one year duration. Ad hoc or temporary service of more than one year duration can be counted provided that:

(i) the period of service was of more than one year duration;

(ii) the incumbent was appointed on the recommendation of duly constituted Selection Committee; and

(iii) the incumbent was selected to the permanent post in continuation to the ad hoc or temporary service, without any break.

- (g) No distinction should be made with reference to the nature of management of the institution where previous service was rendered (private/local body/Government), was considered for counting past services under this clause."

6.2. Regulation 10.1 is required to be read as a whole. As per clause 10.1(f), the previous appointment as ad hoc or temporary service of more than one year duration can be counted provided that : (i) the period of service was of more than one year duration; (ii) the incumbent was appointed on the recommendation of duly constituted Selection

Committee; and (iii) the incumbent was selected to the permanent post in continuation to the ad hoc or temporary service, without any break.

6.3. In that view of the matter, when the respondent worked continuously right from 1998 initially as Lecturer, thereafter her probation was confirmed; thereafter she was appointed / promoted as Assistant Professor and thereafter again promoted to the post of Associate Professor on regular basis and on regular pay-scale, therefore, the respondent shall be entitled to get her regular service counted for the period from 03.10.1998 to 21.10.2011 for the purpose of grant of the benefit of CAS.

7. In view of the above and for the reasons stated above, no error has been committed by the learned Single Judge and/or the Division Bench of the High Court in allowing the writ petition / writ appeal and directing the University to grant the benefit of CAS after counting her earlier service rendered from 03.10.1998. We are in complete agreement with the view taken by the High Court. No interference of this Court is called for.

Under the circumstances, present appeal fails and deserves to be dismissed and is accordingly dismissed.■

Appeal Dismissed.

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