UCO BANK EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

(Registration No.795 & Registered under Indian Trade Union's Act)
[Affiliated to Bank Employees Federation of India]
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Circular No.01/2025 02.01.2025

To All Members

Dear Comrades,

New Year 2025 – A new beginning and task ahead

With ushering of a new year we are to determine our task ahead. The year, ended day before yesterday, was witnessed to many historic events.

While expressing our greetings to all, we have to accept that for every Indian, the New Year has brought crucial challenges. In our bank as well as in the banking industry working employees are in front of attacks of Government of India as a whole and from the Bank authorities in particular. During the past year, the country witnessed intensified large scale attacks on democratic rights and civil liberties. Increasing inequalities, creation of ethnic disturbances, communal polarization is continuing unabated to divide the people. The expressions of dissent are ruthlessly suppressed with support of the central agencies.

The last year has also seen growing resistance of the people against price rise & unemployment, demanding better living conditions, opposing move of privatization of the public sector with massive involvement of all sections of people including employees and workers, peasants, students, youth and women. The year also has seen strengthening of joint struggles of Worker – Peasant alliance against the neoliberal policies.

We witnessed that GoI is working as agent of crony corporate. The banking sector, including PSBs, PVBs, RRBs, RBI, Nabard, Co-operative Banks, is subjected to serious crisis due to policies pursued by the government. These sectors are badly suffering due to acute shortage of manpower as well as increased outsourcing and contractorisation/casualisation. Looting of bank's money by the big corporates and utilization of bank personnel for narrow political interest of the ruling party have become order of the day. The situation demands serious movement against the policies.

In the last year we witnessed many historic and memorable events throughout our journey within the organisation, within the bank, banking industry and of course in the national and international arena. During the last year our organisation acted diligently and sincerely for the causes of the employees as well as the development of the Bank. All of you have tried your level best to participate in the programme/movement called by our fold at any level independently and jointly. CEC, our State Committees, our leaders were active and vigil for successful implementation the call of Central Executive Committee as a team with tremendous bonding of comradeship. You will certainly agree with us that we have to do many more things this year for continuation of activities of our organisation, in the backdrop of our glorious legacy of 79 years, for our members, bank, and customers and for all working communities. **This year we will touch a glorious milestone on 13th August 2025, the 80th Foundation Day of our beloved organisation UCO Bank Employees' Association.** We are confident that you will be vigilant and active, as you were, for doing needful to keep our flag high. This year also we have more tasks ahead and we have to keep ourselves ready and vigil to combat the attacks of government-management combine.

We reproduce hereunder the full text of Circular No.01/2025 dated 01.01.2025, issued by General Secretary, Bank Employees Federation of India, for your information.

With warm greetings,

Comradely yours,

(Prakash Chandra Ray)
General Secretary

Full text of BEFI Circular No.01/2025 dated 01.01.2025

Quote

We have entered into a new year – 2025, greetings to all. This is an occasion to have an assessment of the outcome of the year just ended and to set new goals to achieve.

The International situation throughout the year was dominated by the two conflicts going on -Israel's genocidal war on Gaza killing more than 50000 people and the Russia-Ukraine war which is undergoing steady escalation.

[P.T.O.]

In the 2024 European elections, in several countries far-right parties gained considerable ground reflecting growing polarization within the EU. With victory of Donald Trump in the US Presidential election, the right wing forces will be in a position to consolidate further. On the other side, there had been significant victories of the left wing forces in different countries in Latin America. In Brazil, Honduras, Chile, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Guatemala, Columbia – Leftist leaders are at the helm. Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo, Leftist leader has been elected as President in Mexico while Yamandu Orsi, another Leftist has become the President of Uruguay. In our neighbouring country Sri Lanka, as a historic development Anura Dissanayake, a left leader has become the executive head of the State for the first time.

The exploitation of the workers around the world has increased and can be seen in the continuation of decline of the labour income share since past two decades. Inflation and rising living costs continue to hit the common people with every passing day. Workers in various countries have organised significant protests, reflecting a widespread dissatisfaction with governments' handling of economic crises, social inequality and political corruption. These protests led by the working class demanded fair wages, improved working conditions and greater economic justice.

In our country, with continuation of neo liberal economic policy, the lives and livelihoods of common people continue to be miserable. As of September 2024, unemployment rate stands at approximately 9.2%, according to the CMIE data. Rural unemployment increased to 9.3% while urban areas show rate of 8.9%. Female unemployment remains significantly higher at 18.5%.

Rising inequality is a common feature throughout the globe, but in India inequality is rising exponentially. In recent years the number of billionaires is surging very fast in our country. For every five days, India added one billionaire in 2025 taking the tally to 185 which is the third highest in the world.

We are deeply concerned with continuation of ethnic violence in Manipur over 16 months now, disturbing normal situation.

The three new criminal laws came into force from 1 July, 2024. These laws are draconian in nature and were passed in a blatantly anti-democratic manner. The government is moving ahead for notification of the three labour codes. It is putting pressure on the state governments to frame the relevant rules under these laws. In the mean time, we observed that some of the State governments have issued notifications for extending the working hours limit to 12 hours. Already the workload and long working hours in many sectors, including banking, are causing great stress and taking a toll on the employees.

The traditional banking sector, comprising of public sector banks, private sector banks, Regional Rural Banks, Reserve Bank of India, NABARD, Co-operative Banks are under sustained attacks in various manner by the government steadily escalating since 2014. The banking institutions are suffering from various inherent problems like shortage of permanent workforce; growing outsourcing and casualisation; increasing loot and plunder of bank's money; blatant exploitation of unemployed youth; deterioration of customer service due to apathy of apex management.

Our country is fast expanding in digital space which is encroaching into the lives of every common person in different ways and means. Digital world and related Artificial Intelligence (AI) are creeping into our lives and executing a transformation in the characteristics of labour. Digitization in the banking industry have already been initiated in a big way. Introduction of AI in various services are being implemented gradually in day-to-day banking. This is going to pose a big challenge to the trade union as well as bank employees movement.

The working class of our country including the peasantry are doggedly fighting the ever growing offensives of the ruling classes as well as the hostile governments, both central and states. The height of the fights was observed by the workers of Samsung plant in Kancheepuram, Tamilnadu who went on strike for 38 days with demand that they should be allowed to form a Union of their choice. The struggle of the Samsung workers was significant as it pertains to the basic rights of the workers. Now, every section of the working people must intensify their sectoral struggles. It has to be linked to the broader struggles of the working class as a whole.

We are concerned to come across the attack on the democratic rights enshrined in the Constitution during the year 2024. The election results of June 2024 have clearly expressed the people's verdict that they wish to arrest the country's rapid slide towards autocracy. Numerous civil society initiatives all over the country continued to strongly critique the government for straying from the democratic path guaranteed by the Constitution. While continuing our fight for our industry and its stake holders, particularly the employees, ex-employees, customers; we must not stay away from the fight to save the nation and its democratic values.

SAVE DEMOCRACY – SAVE NATION

Unquote