

UNITED FORUM OF BANK UNIONS

(AIBEA-AIBOC-NCBE-AIBOA-BEFI-INBEF-INBOC-NOBW-NOBO)

Date : 3-12-2025

To

Chief Labour Commissioner (Central),
Ministry of Labour,
Office of the CLC,
Shrameva Jayate Building,
Sector 10, Dwarka,
New Delhi 110075

Dear Sir,

Reg: Introduction of 5 Working Days per week and implementation of provisions of 12th Bipartite Settlement and 9th Joint Note dated 8-3-2024.

In 2015 : You are aware that from the United Forum of Bank Unions, we have been demanding the introduction of 5 working days per week in the banking sector. You are also aware that in the 10th bipartite settlement / 7th joint note signed in 2015, it was agreed by IBA and Government and accordingly, the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of every month are being declared as holidays while the other Saturdays are full working days instead of half a day working.

At that time, it was assured that our demand for declaring all the remaining Saturdays as holiday would be considered in due course.

In 2020 : In the negotiations for the 11th Bipartite Settlement/ 8th Joint Note signed in 2020, we pursued this demand for declaring the remaining Saturdays also as holidays. But it could not be materialized at that time, as our settlement was signed during the covid pandemic period when the people's priorities were different.

Call for Strike on 27-6-2022 : But since the issue was not being considered even after the pandemic was over, UFBU gave the call for strike on 27-6-2022. In the conciliation meeting held on 21-6-2022 and 23-6-2022, the DFS stated that the IBA and the UFBU should discuss this issue bilaterally and submit their recommendations to the DFS for their consideration.

Extract from the Minutes before CLC dated 21-6-2022: The representatives from DFS also submitted that both IBA and the union/ associations should have a bilateral discussions and the recommendations should be forwarded to DFS for taking further action in the matter and further the representative from DFS requested the unions/ association to not to go to the strike as the issues can be resolved through dialogue.

IBA also assured to discuss the issue with the UFBU. On the basis of this understanding between UFBU, IBA and DFS, the call for strike on 27-6-2022 was deferred.

Discussions with IBA on 1-7-2022 : As advised by the CLC, IBA called for negotiations on 1-7-2022. Shri. M.V. Rao (MD-CEO of Central Bank of India), the then Chairman of the IBA's Negotiating Committee represented IBA along with Shri Shanti Lal Jain (then MD-CEO, Indian Bank), Shri. Joydeep Dutta Roy (then ED, Bank of Baroda), Shri Debashish Mukherjee (then ED, Canara Bank), Shri. Lal Singh (then CGM-HR, Union Bank of India), Shri Ashok Kumar Pathak (then CGM-

HR, Bank of India), Shri. S K Rana (then CGM-HR, PNB), Shri. Manish Kumar, (then GM-HR, UCO Bank) and Shri. Md. Ayazuddin (then DGM-IR, SBI).

During this meeting, UFBU discussed the issue of 5 Days Banking. We explained and reiterated our demand for introduction of 5 days banking i.e. declaring the remaining Saturdays as Bank holidays. The impact of this introduction on cash transaction hours, banking hours and total working hours were discussed. After deliberations, IBA opined and felt that further justifications should be built up on the issue so that IBA can escalate the issue to the higher authorities and various stake-holders. The issue will be discussed further.

Discussions on 23-9-2022 : After this meeting, another round of negotiations between IBA and our Unions took place on 23-9-2022. IBA stated that if the customer service hours and working hours per day are properly compensated, re-distributed and re-adjusted due to declaring remaining Saturdays as holidays, they may be inclined to consider the demand. We informed that business hours and working hours may be revised by half an hour per day and accordingly the commencement of the working hours may be preponed. It was agreed to discuss the issue further.

Call for Strike on 30/31-1-2023 –Discussions on 24th and 31st January, 2023: Since there was no positive development in the issue, UFBU gave the call for 2 days strike on 30 and 31 January, 2023. Due to this strike notice, Dy.CLC, Mumbai held conciliation meeting on 24-1-2027 in which IBA agreed to hold a meeting on 27-1-2023.

During this meeting, on 5 Day Banking, IBA informed that the suggestion for extra working hours by 30 minutes as proposed by UFBU needs to be further discussed with UFBU before they can consider and proceed in the matter. After discussion, it was agreed that the mutually worked out modality/extra working hours will be processed within a month after taking the views of other stakeholders.

Again, another round of discussion was held on 31-1-2023. IBA was represented by Shri M.V. Rao, Chairman of the IBA's HR Committee along with ED/CGM/GMs of various Banks who are also members of the committee.

In this meeting, IBA proposed that the working hours be increased by 45 minutes per day for implementing 5 day work week. IBA requested us to submit our revised suggestions on working hours and business hours for cash and non-cash transactions.

Discussions with IBA on 28-2-2023 : Another round of bilateral discussions took place between our Unions and IBA on 28-02-2023 in Mumbai. During this meeting, after a lot of discussions, it emerged that the total working hours can be increased by 40 minutes per day with cash transactions from 10 am to 4 pm and non-cash transactions upto 4-30 pm. IBA assured that they would take up the matter with higher authorities and concerned stake-holders to take the issue further forward.

Discussions with IBA on 21-6-2023 : In this round of discussion with IBA, UFBU informed the IBA there seems to be no development with regard to our demand for introduction of 5 banking days per week after the mutual discussions held on 28-2-2023 and there is growing anxiety amongst the rank and file over the delay in resolving this important issue. IBA assured that the matter is receiving their best attention and the same is very much in process. We

conveyed our dissatisfaction over the delay and that it is difficult to keep further patience in this regard.

Discussions with IBA on 19-7-2023 : In this round of discussions, we further emphasized our demand to which IBA informed that the issue is under active consideration of the various stake-holders and the same is being pursued.

Discussions with IBA on 31-8-2023 : UFBU took up the issue of introduction of 5 Banking Days per week during the discussions and IBA informed that the issue is under serious consideration of higher authorities and stake-holders. We insisted upon the IBA to follow up the issue and expedite the same.

Discussions with IBA on 29-9-2023 : In this discussion also, UFBU reminded IBA to expedite the issue and IBA informed that the issue is under serious consideration.

Discussions with IBA on 9-11-2023 : During this round of discussions we again took up with IBA, the issue of introduction of 5 Day's Banking per week and its early implementation. IBA informed that they are fully seized of the matter and assured to follow up the matter with the concerned authorities.

MOU signed on 7-12-2023: After a lot of discussion, broad understandings were reached with the IBA and an MOU was signed. IBA agreed as under in the MOU.

- Regarding introduction of 5 Day Banking, while **IBA has already recommended the same to the Government**, IBA agreed to pursue the matter with the Government so that the same is cleared without further delay. We have emphasized and urged that in any case it should be introduced before our final settlement.

Settlement dated 8-3-2024 : In the final settlement/Joint Note signed on 8-3-2024, the following clause was agreed upon and provided:

- **Weekly off :** In terms of understanding dated 7th December, 2023, reached between IBA and Workmen Unions for declaration of all Saturdays as holidays under Negotiable Instrument Act for Banking industry, IBA has accordingly recommended to the Government. The due changes in the working hours, will be effective after approval by the Government of India and necessary clearances from Government / Reserve Bank of India.

Call for strike on 24 & 25-3-2025: Despite the unambiguous understanding and recommendation by the IBA to the Government, since there was no response from the Government, UFBU gave the call for 2 days' strike on 24th and 25th March, 2025.

Conciliation meeting on 21-3-2025: In the conciliation meeting held by the CLC on 21-3-2025, IBA replied that as per the Settlement / Joint Note, they have already recommended the matter to the Government and they are awaiting their 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. 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.

We conveyed our disappointment over the undue delay in the matter and wanted the Government to expedite the process.

He assured that the matter was 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.

In the fact and circumstances mentioned above, The Chief Labour Commissioner(C) requested us to consider the request of withdrawal of strike.

It was also assured by the CLC(C) that if the strike is withdrawn by the Unions, he shall take up with the IBA and DFS to consider 5 day working as agreed in the 12th Bipartite Settlement/ 9th Joint Note.

The CLC(C) also assured that he would monitor the development at periodical intervals so that matter may be resolved at an early date.

On the basis of the above clear assurances of the DFS and CLC, the proposed strike in March, 2025 was deferred.

But in the last more than six months, the assurance given during the conciliation meeting remains only an assurance but with no positive result or outcome.

Thus, the issue has been recommended to the Government for approval as per the understanding reached between IBA and UFBU. Government is also aware that this is one of the important demands of the UFBU.

Government is equally aware that due to multiple reasons, bank staff are working under undue physical and mental stress. Due to inadequate staff, employees, officers and Managers are working under extreme pressure of work.

Hence our demand for declaring the remaining Saturdays as holidays is most reasonable and justified.

In the financial sector, already in RBI, LIC and GIC, this has been implemented. Hence bank employees and officers are aggrieved that they are being discriminated while it is stressful to work in the Banks.

Hence in our last UFBU meeting it was decided to manifest our protest against this undue delay in considering our demand despite the IBA's recommendation of the understandings as reached in the Settlement in March, 2024.

It was decided to undertake agitational programmes including strike action. Hence, after careful consideration, UFBU has decided upon the following agitational programmes:

01-12-2025	UFBU letter to IBA informing them about the agitation
03-12-2025	UFBU letter to CLC informing them about the agitation
05-12-2025	UFBU letter to DFS informing them about the agitation
08-12-2025	UFBU letter to all MDs informing them about the agitation
09-12-2025	Mass Memorandum by all members from all Branches to IBA
12-12-2025	Mass Memorandum by all members from all Branches to FM
16-12-2025	Badge Wearing
23-12-2025	Demonstrations in all State Capitals
30-12-2025	Demonstration in all centres, towns and Districts
04-01-2026	Twitter campaign

05-01-2026	Dharna in all State Capitals – Announcing the date of Strike
13-01-2026	Press meet/ press release
3rd week of Jan. 2026	All India Strike

It has always been our earnest desire to have congenial and cordial industrial relations atmosphere in the banking sector but the undue delay in considering our genuine demand has compelled us resort to agitation programme.

We urge upon your office to take due note of the same and take efforts to resolve this important issue without delay keeping in mind the assurance of the CLC and DFS.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

AIBEA

AIBOC

NCBE

AIBOA

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NOBW

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Copy to:

Chairman,
Indian Banks' Association
Mumbai