



ALL INDIA UCO BANK EMPLOYEES FEDERATION

(AFFILIATED TO AIBEA) REG. NO. 3489/CNI

10, BTM SARANI, 2nd Floor, KOLKATA - 700001

REGD OFFICE : CHENNAI(UCO Bank, 328, Thambu Chetty Street, Chennai-600001)

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Ref. No. MD&CEO/AIUCBEF/12/23-26

Date :28/08/2023

To,
The Managing Director and CEO
UCO Bank,
Head Office,
Kolkata.



Dear Sir,

Sub: Our concern over sharp depletion in the strength of clerical and sub staff vis-a-vis the requirement.

We are extremely disappointed to observe that the management has not taken any steps whatsoever towards mitigating the issues that have come up due to acute shortage of clerical and sub staff at several branches.

You may be aware by now that many of our branches are running with a huge deficit of subordinate staff to an extent that nearly half of our branches are running without a single permanent subordinate staff - House keeper cum peon. This huge deficit has rendered the Bank vulnerable to the ramifications of the unethical and illegal practices followed in the prolonged engagement of daily wagers / casual workers. Even the sensitive jobs are required to be handled by such daily wagers exposing the Bank to avoidable risk in vital areas of bank's functioning like record keeping, cash handling recovery, informal information, continuity etc. Thus, on one side Bank is dependent on casual workers and on the other side Bank is indulging in unfair labour practices denying justice to these Daily wagers that they deserve.

Bank is also running with a very huge deficit of clerical staff. In fact, we are anguished and disappointed to observe that Bank has not placed any indent for recruitment of clerical staff with IPBS for the ensuing term, reportedly fearing increase in staff cost. The available data shows that only in our Bank, the ratio between clerical and officers is as high as 1:2.2 while in many other banks it is less than 1:1.6. Thus, this exposes the fact that Bank in the past had more appetite in recruiting officers (including promotions from clerical cadre)-the high-cost manpower ignoring or brushing aside the need for recruitment of Clerical staff who are in the front line of service. It is an undeniable fact that in many branches the officers are required to look after entry level jobs which could have been avoided by placing cost effective clerical staff. Thus, Management should be prudent enough to economize the staff cost by proper distribution of clerks and officers.

In fact, it is over more than one decade that the Bank has been suffering from huge deficit of clerical staff. Instead of trying to address this deficit, policy pursued by the Bank, has resulted in further aggravating shortage of clerical staff.

Fall out of shortage of staff:

- Clerical staff are suffering from 'burnt out' feeling, on account of the huge burden of work and are forced to work beyond the prescribed working hours as a matter of routine. This is resulting in, creeping in the feeling of withdrawal and desperation. With continuation of and increasingly widening of the gap between the required and the available clerical staff, a feeling that the Bank has no care and concern for them, is taking root in the mindset of the employees. There are branches without even a single clerk. There are branches without head cashiers. There are many branches which are functioning with one clerical staff who has to sweat out his/her energy in meeting all the ends. It also has its bearing on, retaining the existing business, further augmenting business, meeting ever rising expectations of better customer service and the morale and motivation of frontline service providers of the Bank.
- Moreover, Clerical staff are deprived of getting their timely elevation as Head cashiers/ Special Assistants as many such functional allowance posts are not being filled in/ notified in time, fearing non availability of substitutes at the resultant end.
- A large number of employees, both male and female, are not able to join their families due to Bank's inability/unwillingness to consider their request

transfers, in spite of availability of vacancies, but again for want of replacements.

- Instances of non-sanctioning/curtailment of the leave applied for, particularly to clerical staff, due to acute shortage, are on the increase. There are instances of denial of even casual leave, much against the leave rules and purpose. There are instances of clerical staff being subjected to action including loss of pay when they avail casual leave in emergency.
- Systems and Procedures are becoming causality when people are to work with the stress and strain due to inadequate manpower.
- As far as our Bank is concerned, the thrust area of the business segments are CASA, Recovery and Retail Business-SME besides cross selling of other products. These are the business segments, which require more manpower to achieve the target and serve the customers as compared to other segments of the business. Bank cannot remain static and all of us are conscious that the growth should not only be consistent but also faster. But it is our experience that branches are not enthusiastic to tap new business fearing their inability to service the accounts with continuous decline in the strength of Clerical staff. Field level officers and executives are restrained from expressing/ raising such issues in any forum.
- The overall composition of staff in term of cadre is at variance with the one conducive for addressing the business need of the branches. The work environment where the clerical staff suffer prolonged periods of disproportionate workload has distorted balance equilibrium and harmony in the branches and casualty is the team spirit.
- Venturing without meaning/intending to cause any offence to the officer cadre, we are putting forth our observation that the officers are more immersed in in-house jobs in preference to focusing on business development. Thus, better-paid workforce remains underutilized in the absence of sufficient front-line staff- clerical.

It may not be out of place to bring to your notice that Bank, recognizing the above concerns, initiated discussions with our Federation to arrive at a parameter to identify minimum requirement of Clerical staff and when the discussions reached near to conclusion in July '22, HRM abruptly withdrew itself without arriving at an understanding. In the said discussions it was identified that the gap between the minimum requirement and availability stood at close to 3000 even as per the proposal placed by HRM.

In the recently concluded National conference of our Federation Shortage of manpower in Clerical and sub staff was in the main focus and we conveyed the sense of the house to the Management through a Resolution adopted in the conference. We are again enclosing a copy of the resolution for your perusal and action. We are sure that you will treat this as the one necessary for the Bank than brushing aside it simply as a demand of the union.

We are confident that while you will appreciate our anxiety and the spirit behind this communication, we also would like to convey that there is growing resentment among the workforce which needs to be addressed with a sense of urgency before it further adversely affects the morale of the staff.

Thanking you,
Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Partha Chanda', written over a horizontal line.

Partha Chanda
General Secretary

Copy to: **General Manager (HRM, PSD, Training & OL)** – For your information and doing the needful