

UNITED FORUM OF BANK UNIONS

C/o. State Bank of India, LHO, Plot No.1, Sector-17A, Chandigarh - 160 017

Phone (Office) : 0172-4567142, 4567042, 2702518 Fax – 0172-2721716

Mobile – 09417032548 e-Mail – ufbu.chd@gmail.com

SANJEEV K. BANDLISH

Convenor

CIRCULAR No. UFBU/2021/15

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TO ALL CONSTITUENT UNIONS/MEMBERS

Dear Comrades,

OUR CAMPAIGN AND OPPOSITION TO PRIVATISATION OF BANKS

All our Unions and members are aware that all of us in the UFBU are committed to oppose the moves of the Government to privatise the public sector banks. Immediately after the announcement in the Budget that 2 banks would be privatised, we held our meeting and gave the call for 2 days strike on 15th and 16th March, 2021. This strike action was a massive success with impressive involvement of the rank and file. Our strike also received wide support from the spectrum of political parties. Ofcourse, we received support from various trade unions and all Central Trade Unions.

To continue this struggle, UFBU met in Kolkata on 22-3-2021 and chalked out a detailed campaign programme. It was also decided to mobilise about 5 crores of signatures from the general public in the Mass Petition to Prime Minister. However, due to the revival of covid infection and second wave of pandemic situation, we could not implement these programmes as planned and envisaged.

It was also decided that if the Government would take any further move during the monsoon session of the Parliament, we shall decide for further strike actions at short notice. But all of us are aware that during the recent Parliament session, no specific bills relating to bank privatisation came up.

In this background, our meeting of the UFBU was held in Mumbai on 25-8-2021 to review the situation and decide appropriate programmes. After detailed deliberations, the following decisions have been taken.

Looking to the various measures initiated by the Government like disinvestment in LIC, passage of the Bill on privatisation in GIC, etc, the agenda of the Government continues to be in favour of privatisation of banks.

From every angle, privatisation of public sector banks which deal with huge public savings, is undesirable and retrograde.

While no legislative measures were afoot during the recent session of the Parliament, there are reports that Niti Aayog has already processed some proposal for recommendation to the Finance Ministry.

The averments by the Government that there is no proposal of privatisation of banks 'at present' explains that the agenda is active but timing is yet to be decided by them.

In view of the above, the meeting reiterated its decision taken in our last meeting held at Kolkata to continue and intensify the public campaign.

The meeting further reiterated that in the event of Government taking any concrete steps on privatisation of Banks, immediate decision would be taken for strikes at short notice.

Collection of Signatures from people in the Petition to Prime Minister/Speaker of Lok Sabha: It has been decided to collect signatures in the Petition to Prime Minister/Speaker of Lok Sabha. The draft of the Petition has already been provided to unions.

Our Unions should plan and work out their own methods to collect signatures from the general public, customers, public personalities, etc. While doing so, covid protocol guidelines are to be kept in mind.

These petitions are expected to be submitted to the Prime Minister/Lok Sabha Speaker during the Winter Session of the Parliament in November/December 2021. Hence all our unions should undertake the collection of signatures during the ensuing months. Involvement of our members at all levels is imperative to complete this task successfully.

Campaign meetings – Membership contact: In order to prepare our rank and file membership for implementing the public campaign, signature collection drive, as well as for prolonged strike actions, membership contact programmes are to be undertaken by all our Unions during the month of September and October, 2021. Where physical meetings are not possible, meetings should be held virtual.

Seminars/Webinars/Workshops, etc. in all the States in October and November, 2021: In addition to meetings of members and mass-contact programmes, in each State programmes like seminars, webinars, workshops, etc. are to be undertaken.

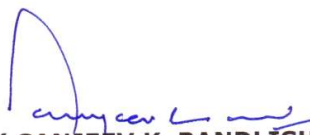
In our earlier circular we have suggested various campaign activities that may be undertaken by our unions looking to local situations. State-level UFBUs should meet for the purpose and chalk out these programmes according to local convenience.

As and when the pandemic situation eases and normal conditions are restored, we shall give further programmes of campaign activities.

Nationwide Strikes, intermittent strike strikes, prolonged strikes as may be warranted looking to developments: Strike call at short notice, will be given, if Government announces any decision on privatisation of banks.

With greetings,

Yours comradely,


(SANJEEV K. BANDLISH)
CONVENOR