



**STATE BANK OF INDIA OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION**

**CHANDIGARH CIRCLE**

C/O State Bank of India, Local Head Office, Sector 17, Chandigarh

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**Circular No. 2018/112**

**Date: 20.10.2018**

**TO ALL OUR MEMBERS:**

**WORK-LIFE BALANCE**  
**CALLING ON SUNDAYS/HOLIDAYS**

We have sent a communication to the Circle Management on the captioned subject. A copy of the same is enclosed for the information of members.

2. We note to advise our members further developments in due course.

With greetings,

Comradely yours,

(Deepak K Sharma)  
General Secretary

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2018/09/87

20-10-2018

The Chief General Manager,  
State Bank of India,  
Chandigarh L.H.O.

Dear Sir,

**WORK-LIFE BALANCE**  
**CALLING ON SUNDAYS/HOLIDAYS**

We are pained to bring it in your kind notice the "What's New" announcement dated 18.10.2018 wherein the decision of Circle Management has been conveyed to observe 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 as "Bank Adalat" day by all the branches across the Circle. One of the most important and popular festival of North India "Karva Chauth" falls on that day, in which married women and those reaching the marriageable age pray for the safety and longevity of their husbands, fiancées or desired husbands by observing rigorous fasting without even drinking a glass of water from sunrise to moonrise. The significance of this festival may be observed from the fact that Himachal Pradesh Government every year declares it as holiday under NI Act for women employees. It is after a gap of many years that the festival has fallen on a fourth Saturday, giving an opportunity to our officers posted in rural/far flung areas to visit their families and celebrate the festival, but being marred by this announcement.

2. We also invite your kind attention to the regular instances of forcing the officers to sit late and conducting of meetings in the late hours. It has already been brought to the kind notice of Circle Management in Circle Negotiating Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2018 at Chandigarh and also during our personal visit to your goodself on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 that the officers are being forced to sit late and work on Holidays, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays, Sundays, festival days on a regular basis citing one reason or another. This is not a one-time affair, but almost a 'round the year' routine for Janadhan, Mudra, De-duplication, Demonetization, NPA recovery, Bank Adalats, Cross Selling, Home Loans, Auto Loans, quarter/half year/year end work, audit, RFIA, cash loading for ATMs etc. including meetings with Joint Ventures and Controllers.

3. We are all aware that a 'Work Life' balance is important to maintain a healthy balance between work roles, personal responsibilities and family life. The officers also need time to spend with their family to cater to their social commitments and have a work life balance as it rejuvenates their health and increases their productivity or else they may burnout. The encroachment on personal/family time is resulting in a conflict between personal and work commitments. Today almost 40% of the officers are the youth who look for a good salary, perquisites and quality of life. But due to prevailing working environment, the attrition rate is increasing day by day, officers are submitting resignations in large number (more than 50 till date in this year) and frustration in all cadres is at highest level. Without ensuring work life balance, it will be impossible to retain good talent and a satisfied work force. There is an urgent need to step into the shoes of such officers who are deprived of any social life, understand their problems and come up with a permanent solution for this issue.

4. Another factor which is contributing greatly to the difficulty in achieving a healthy work life balance is a perceptual conception of some controllers to behave like slave owners who treat the officer employees as slaves (24x7) or specialized robots or replaceable machine components which can be fitted anywhere as per their choice. They are so focused on profits, targets, other efficiency parameters, personal goals, incentives or the rat race for being the number one that they behave inhumanely thus contributing in workplace stress and ignoring the genuine requirements of juniors. The advancement in the way people access information, communicate with one another and complete tasks have encroached the personal/family time of officers. If the boss sends a text at late night, does the employee has to answer it? When should a person shutdown his laptop or switch off the mobile and spend time with his friends and family? What is the limit of extended working hours? These are some of the questions to which everyone is searching an answer for. The comparative charts and instructions on WhatsApp from multiple controllers and executives of joint ventures is further putting unsustainable workload on officers. It would not be out of place to mention here that the worst affected group of employees due to work-life imbalance in our beloved organisation is the lady officers and there is an urgent need to show gender-sensitivity towards the women employees and recognise that they have multiple responsibilities in addition to their professional commitments.

5. Sir, we were able to get 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday as Holiday after a prolonged struggle and to achieve this we had to sacrifice half-holiday of other Saturdays. The prime objective of the additional holidays was to enable the officers to have a healthy work life balance, which is conducive not only to the mental health of the officers but also for better output in their professional domain. The regular pressure to sit late and work on Holidays is putting the stress on officers to the level of burn out, increasing stress related health problems, spreading frustration in all cadres, adversely affecting their performance resulting in lower productivity at work, demoralizing the officers' community and tarnishing the image of our beloved Organisation.

6. Sir, Bank's top management has also realized the importance of work life balance and issued a Circular dated 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 2017, emphasizing the need to have a comprehensive approach towards the "Employee Welfare". The circular categorically reinforces the fact that a good and healthy work environment, mutual respect and empathy in work place, a good work-life balance etc., are essential to achieve a healthy and happy workforce. Working longer hours or working on holidays should not be the mode to achieving productivity. Employees should also have adequate time to devote to their personal and family needs in addition to remain healthy. However, regrettably, it is pointed-out that some senior functionaries are neither paying heed to the concerns of the staff nor to the directions of top management, which are aimed for achieving more organizational productivity.

8. It would not be out of place to mention here that operational risk management due to alarming rise in frauds (including fraud in Local Head Office), is one of the biggest concern our circle is facing today. Regular late sitting, working on Sundays/Holidays, acute staff shortage, shifting of focus due to micromanagement, multiple campaigns, multiple controllers, overburdened & overstretched staff, lack of effective governance; all are associated with operational risk. In view of sensitivity of issue, we request that the instructions of not calling officers on holidays and sitting late should be conveyed down the line for strict compliance. A confirmation from controllers with regard to verification of ADS login/logoff reports with reasons in respect of employees who have been sitting late on

regular basis to be obtained on monthly basis so that the instances of operational risk due to late sitting are minimised.

7. It is an established fact that employee's satisfaction in their personal life and their ability to meet personal commitment greatly affects their professional success as a banker. Helping them to achieve a good work life balance will increase work satisfaction and commitment/loyalty toward organization and result in better productivity, retention of staff and reduction in associated costs.

In view of above, we solicit your immediate intervention in withdrawing the instructions to observe 27<sup>th</sup> October as "Bank Adalat" day and request your goodself to suitably counsel the authorities down the line to follow the laid down instructions of the Bank on 'Work Life Balance' in letter and spirit, to achieve our aim of making our bank a better work place for all of us. We also request to identify exceptional circumstances for calling officers to work on Sundays/Holidays and issue operational guidelines in consultation with Circle Association.

Yours faithfully,

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(Deepak Kumar Sharma)  
General Secretary