

UNILATERAL INSTRUCTIONS OF RBI ON UNIFORM HOLIDAYS UNDER GRID BASED CTS

Holidays are declared by the State Governments under NI Act taking into account the local festivals and the religious sentiments of the population of the state concerned. These holidays cannot be unilaterally annulled by any other Authority under the pretext of affording uninterrupted services. Reverting to the issue under reference, we wish to reiterate that leave and holidays are part of the service conditions of the bank employees covered by the bilateral settlements in the Banks as well as declared under the N I Act by the Government in the States and hence should not be altered or modified administratively or unilaterally.

But RBI, Chennai has advised all Banks that the Chennai based Southern Grid CTS will remain closed only for 9 days for the year 2012 and on all other days, the same would be operational. 15th October, 2012 was a declared holiday under NI Act in the state of Karnataka for Mahalaya Amavasya but Banks had informed the employees and officers that the clearing departments would function and hence employees and officers should attend office on that holiday. This goes against the fundamental right of a citizen in celebrating his religious festivals.

AIBOC has written a strong letter to The Governor, Reserve Bank of India under copy to The Secretary, (Banking), Ministry of Finance, National Payment Corporation of India, Chief Executive Officer, Indian Banks Association.

Some important points covered in the letter is given below:

1. In the name of improving the cheque clearance system, such transgression into the rightful leave and holiday entitlements of the staff is unacceptable. To make the employee of a Bank work on his holiday on account of religious festival only because some of the States under the Grid do not celebrate the particular festival is highly objectionable and tantamount to infringing upon the rights of the citizen.

2. Denial of legitimate holidays to the officers/employees can never be compromised. Unilateral decisions cannot be taken by RBI or IBA or any bank management on issues relating to service conditions. Leave and Holidays are part of the service conditions of the bank employees under the bilateral settlements. Any change can be done

by proper and mutual discussions. Bipartite settlement does provide for contingencies when employees can be asked to work on Sundays or holidays with payment of overtime wages but does not provide for cancellation of holidays as declared by the State Governments under NI Act.

3. It is a paradox that in RBI, 5 Day banking has been introduced but RBI wants reduction of existing holidays of employees and officers in other Banks! The RBI after tactfully withdrawing itself from clearing house operations and handing it over to a private company viz. National Payment Corporation, RBI is today trying to interfere with the holiday entitlement of the bank employees and officers. Since the issue involves certain facility to the customers, the AIBOC desired to take up the matter with RBI to sort out the same amicably. Before we take any action in this regard, we once again wish to bring this problem to your kind attention with the expectation to resolve the issue bilaterally.

AIBOC requested the RBI to withdraw its order of restricting the holidays for the Grid Based CTS and restore normalcy immediately.