

State Bank of Hyderabad Retired Employees' Association

(Reg. No. 1051 of 1986)

Behind Gym, S.B.I. Local Head Office, Amaravati,

Gunfoundry, Hyderabad – 500 001

Website: www.sbhrea.org

eMail: sbhrea@gmail.com

GENERAL SECRETARY REPORT

Dear President, Co leaders, Members and Ladies and Gentlemen

I welcome you all, most sincerely and cordially to this General Body Meeting of our Association. It is now my privilege to place before you this report on behalf of Managing Committee for deliberations and adoption.

I record with deep sorrow, remembrance of countless members leaving this world, since the last General Body Meeting. Covid and other ailments took many lives of our members and their families. 2020 and 2021 were the worst 2 years, never ever experienced earlier. World came to a standstill position for quite some time.

Amongst many eminent leaders and elected representatives of SBHREA, who have left us, are our beloved Sri K. Shyamsunder Kulkarni Garu, former President of SBH Staff Association and Advisor of SBHREA and Sri Hanuman Sagar of Raichur and Sri Linga Murthy of Warangal. We lost another stalwart Sri. P. Laxmi Narayana. Known as Warangal Seth. I bow my head in memory of all of them.

Legendary singer Padma Bhushan Sri S.P.Balasubrahmanyam was one amongst many who succumbed to Covid despite getting best of best treatment for Covid. Col. Santosh Babu, sacrificed his life to save our country borders is son of our retiree Sri. Upendar Bikumalla. We pray God to rest their souls in peace and express our deepest condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS:

India has proved a strong nation by producing Covid vaccination and administering vaccination to whole country, much ahead of developed countries. Exemplary work was done in Pharma line and as a country India could help other nations to deal with the pandemic crisis by supplying vaccine. Whole world was surprised to see the core strength of our nation in facing this global crisis efficiently.

PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS MERGERS:

Mergers helped strengthen the capital buffers of banks, but it is difficult to isolate the impact of mergers from other forces acting concomitantly. Referring to the mega consolidation among public sector banks (PSBs) where 10 merged into four, the RBI said that factors like government ownership, similar pay structure for staff and common core banking solutions made the merger process simple. Noting that the government has pumped in ₹2.9 lakh crore in the last five years into public sector banks, the RBI said this has helped the PSBs improve their capital adequacy ratio to 14.3% in December 2021 from 11.8% in March 2016.

However study reports of RBI says that merged Public Sector Banks are more risky than unmerged ones and also systemic risk posed by Public Sector Banks are higher than Private Banks. RBI analysis also point out that the risk generated by the category of merged Public Sector Banks are higher than the unmerged PSBs

WAGE REVISION:

Unions represented by UFBU have been negotiating the residual issues. The charter of demands includes two major demands such as Pension Updation and Group Medical Insurance Premium to be met by Banks. Both the benefits are yet to come to a logical end. Retirees Federations AIBPARC, AIBREA, SBRA are independently reaching the Finance Minister, DFS, MP's and IBA on all the following retirees issues.

- 1) Medical Insurance Premium for Retirees to be paid by Banks.
- 2) Periodical pension updation along with wage revision
- 3) 100% D.A Neutralization to Pre-2002 Retirees.
- 4) To Reckon the Special Allowance component for superannuation benefits.

ALL INDIA RETIREE ORGANISATIONS:

The Apex Retirees Organisations at national level have decided to work in unison and speak in one voice to achieve justifiable demands of retirees. Several Dharna programs and demonstrations were held in all major cities including Hyderabad. On 26th September 2022, a massive dharna was organised by AIBPARC at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi with a demand for early Settlement of all pending retirees issues. This dharna was attended by several hundreds of bank pensioners and retirees of AIBPARC and other retiree Organisations. SBHREA members in Delhi participated in the dharna. The participation exhibited the enthusiasm of the members to fight for our long pending legitimate demands.

FAMILY PENSION ACHIEVED:

Revision of Family pension, long pending issue got resolved.

The quantum of family pension paid to the spouses of the deceased retirees was only a meager 15% of the pay. On the contrary, the Central / State Government paying 30% of pay as Family Pension is a clear discrimination against Bank pensioners.

All are aware that improvement of Family Pension was agreed upon and documented in the MOU signed on 22nd July, 2020 and it was reiterated in the Bipartite settlement/Joint note signed on 11-11-2020. Chairman IBA has also confirmed on 23-01-2021 that they are awaiting clearance from Govt. We are glad that after a period of one year from signing MOU, Finance minister has announced the decision for revision of family Pension. We are very glad that our Bank has implemented the revision of family pension with arrears. The revised Family Pension, which was almost double of what they were getting earlier, with arrears was released. This is a great solace to thousands of family pensioners who were getting a meager family pension which was not at all sufficient to have a decent living in their old age coupled with the ill-fate of pre deceased earning spouse.

We take this opportunity to put on record our gratefulness to AIBPARC for the effective follow up done for the cause.

SBHREA ACHIEVEMENTS

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE:

The Newly elected team in March 2019 has taken up massive membership drive in April and May 2019. This program was taken up earnestly by all elected representatives spread Pan India. New Membership poured in, increasing the Association membership from 4892 to 6222 adding 1330 members. This is the first feather in our cap.

IBA GROUP MEDICAL INSURANCE:

In October 2019 around 2300 retirees of E-SBH have opted for IBA Policy. Our team has helped the retirees and the PPG Department in collecting the Applications, arranging submission in shortest time of 10 days. Association helped the department and retirees in unison in liaison and administrative work and to reach the left over retirees and family pensioners.

SBI HEALTH ASSIST:

On 25th December 2019, we got call from SBI Management about introduction of New Group Medical Insurance policy being offered to Retirees. This scheme was far superior to IBA Policy. In 20 days SBHREA had to educate Membership about the new policy and advantages of opting for it. SBHREA has done every possible help to see the end result of good number of retirees joining the scheme.

Herculean task was done with total commitment by our whole team. Past 3 years, Association became a gateway to take guidance in applying for group medical insurance, avail cashless treatment, submission of claims, settlement of bills and coordinating with TPA etc. We educated and helped members to complain to ombudsman when sanction of claims were not to their satisfaction. After complaining, SBHREA reached IRDAI CEO for Redressal. We could take help of CEO, IRDAI through a retiree, who is family of CEO, for making good efforts to get refund of IBA Premium paid by members. Considerable monetary benefit was clinched on behalf of members in settling high amounts of hospital bills with this contact of SBHREA. This is an extra mile service rendered in pandemic. I profusely thank Sri. Vijay Kumar Kudikulla, our member, who is family of CEO, IRDAI. But for his constant help we could not have reached the dignitary and clinched monetary benefit vide full claim settlements from TPA.

COVID CRISIS:

The toughest times for SBHREA was during the time of pandemic. Covid crisis has affected many members and their families. We gave a helping hand from searching hospital beds to cashless treatment to bill settlements. The upper limit for sanction of Covid bills was being revised time to time by IRDAI and in SBHREMs scheme. Lot of confusion and panic was spread everywhere. Certain costs for Covid treatment were disallowed by hospitals without concurrence to the guidelines given by IRDAI. We have maintained liaison with CEO, IRDAI and lodged complaints and all such cases were taken to a logical conclusion by getting full eligible amounts as sanctions from TPA. Considerable monetary benefit was clinched on behalf of members by settling big amounts of hospital bills and this certainly is biggest achievement of SBHREA. This is an extra mile service rendered to members in pandemic.

Our team has slogged hard to give moral and physical help. We brought cheers in many homes with our extensive help. Our numbers became like emergency squad numbers and families noted our numbers permanently. Kudos to the team of SBHREA for standing Unitedly in crisis times.

LEGAL FUND:

From October 2019 to February 2020 onwards several meetings were organised. Such as Hyderabad, Aurangabad, Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai, Gulbarga, Bidar, Raichur, Mahbubnagar and Nanded. An appeal was made to members contribute for Legal Fund corpus. The fund was to strengthen the Association financially, to enable participation in legal battles for all retirees pending issues.

Dr. A.Anantakrishna Rao, President, SBRA and Sri V. Sombabu, DGS, SBRA and Smt. K. Rohini Rao, General Secretary addressed the meetings and explained the need to have a corpus built. All leaders emphasised the need for legal battles to achieve the benefits from Court of Law.

The benefit of Regulation 37, which provides higher DA to all e-Associate Bank retirees was explained in detail by Sri C.N.Prasad, General Secretary, SBRA in Hyderabad meeting held on 16/10/2019. The call was well received and in 5 months around 3296 members voluntarily contributed to Legal Fund. This fund is earmarked to meet legal expenses, for W.Ps to be filed by SBHREA and SBRA for common benefits of SBH retirees and eAB retirees. These contributions are deposited separately in the form of Term Deposits. These amounts are distinctly held from the general corpus of SBHREA, since this fund is contributed only by a section of members. In total 3296 members contributed and they are earmarked for a specific purpose.

SBHREA has filed 2 Writ Petitions in High Court of Telangana.

- 1) Revision of Pension to Old SBH Retirees covered under pension rules of 1942. WP was filed in February 2020, in High Court of Telangana and pending for listing.
- 2) Restoration of funeral expenses to E-SBH Retirees. WP was filed in October 2020, in High Court of Telangana and pending for listing.

Notices are served by Court to the Bank. For all the above filing, the advocate was paid fee of ₹ 2.00 lakh. Further developments in cases will be informed as and when they come up for hearing.

Legal notices have been served demanding structured committee meetings. We wanted to file a writ petition in respect of structured committee meetings in terms of Para 10 of Gazette Notification issued by Government of India at the time of Merger. We are holding it for some time as SBRA is planning to file a writ petition covering all Associate Banks Retirees. A writ petition will be filed at the earliest.

We wish to inform you all that we are spending Legal Fund very judiciously. For above two WPs and issue of notices we have paid the advocate around lacs despite hiring the best of best advocate. This clearly shows how stringently we are using the Legal Fund.

REFUND OF LEGAL FUND CONTRIBUTION:

Few members have spread false propaganda that Legal Fund is being diverted to other causes. On that SBHREA gave a circular on 22/03/2022 and explained that the rumors are wrong and gave time to seek refund, if not satisfied upto 31/03/2022. We received 315 applications before the cut off date and refund was made. As already 5 cases are filed, and few more in the pipeline, spending from started. We cannot further continue to oblige the refund of Legal Fund as cause for collection has started and provisioning for future is done.

STATE BANK RETIREES ASSOCIATION:

SBRA, a Registered Trade Union was formed in June 2020. Since then lot has been accomplished by SBRA despite Covid stalled the whole world.

We accord our Special Thanks to Dr. A. Anantakrishna Rao Garu, President and Sri C.N.Prasad, General Secretary and other team members of SBRA for the tremendous work done in past 2 years as given hereunder, despite pandemic hampering the office work, meetings and mobility of office bearers.

ISSUES UNDERTAKEN BY SBRA:

Issues are pursued by SBRA with State Bank Of India Management directly and in some cases through intervention of Court

- 1) Payment of Benefit under Regulation 29(5), Notional seniority to those who retired under VRS-2001 and Exit Policy 2005-2007 in some e-Abs.
- 2) Payment of differential Commutation in 1616-1684, pertaining to all eAB retirees.
- 3) Payment of arrears and differential Commutation to all those who have retired between 01-04-1998 and 30-04-2005 (included in contempt petition filed by All India Retired Bank Employees Asso. Some of affiliates of SBRA are also affiliates Of AIRBEA).
- 4) Extension of/continuation of benefits which were available in E-Abs Viz Shradhaanjali Scheme/ funeral expenses etc.
- 5) Inclusion of five new ailments included in the list of eligible ailments under Retired Employees Medical Benefit Scheme:
- 6) Another Option to join Retired Employees Benefit Scheme by those who did not join earlier.
- 7) Payment of pension to those who are compulsorily retired, removed from service or discharged from service (succeeded in respect Of compulsorily Retired Employees).
- 8) Payment of pension taking into account full length of service in respect of part-time employees
- 9) Differential Commutation for various sections of retirees retired under various settlements.
- 10) Improvements in IBA Medical Insurance Scheme (Through AIRBEA)

- 11) Sweet packets to staff pensioners/retirees, whenever it is given to Employees/officers of the Bank.
- 12) Filing cases for extending the benefit under Section 29(5) to those retirees under VRS in remaining Associate Banks etc.
- 13) SBRA demanded extension of critical illness facility to e-Associate Banks retirees also which is introduced after merger. In case the Bank fails to respond in our favour, SBRA is getting ready for filing writ petition.

The above list reveals the sincere efforts made by SBRA to improve the benefits to e-AB retirees and also to render justice through Courts, whenever there is infringement of our Statutory Rights.

SBHREA LEGAL BATTLES:

BENEFIT UNDER REGULATION 37.

Since 2019 our main focus is to secure the benefit under Regulation 37 of our pension Regulations 1995. Unlike in other cases this case provides substantial benefit to all retirees irrespective of their date of retirement. This case, being a conspicuous violation of our pension regulations is considered to be a befitting case to be taken up to secure the benefits at any cost. So far no case in the history of any legal battle in the banking industry was lost by us where there is a blatant violation of pension regulations as in the instant case. Expert advice from Legal Luminaries was taken by SBRA before embarking legal battle in this case and the experts opined that there is no diverse opinion in winning the case. To put it differently, the benefit is more than the benefit what we expect under updation.

SBRA on behalf of eABs has so far filed a Contempt Petition covering Reg 37 benefit, Pension updation and other residual issues in SC in 2020. The contempt petition is reeling through listing. Any day arguments may start.

Regarding Notional seniority and 100% DA neutralisation for retirees prior to 2002 are filed in High Court of Karnataka and High Court of Maharashtra (Aurangabad). Legal expenses met initially by SBM Retirees Commune, to be apportioned later amongst other Associations proportionate to their petitioner members.

LEGAL EXPENSES SPENT:

SBHREA so far paid legal expenses as their share of expenses for SBRA already filed cases. ₹10 lakhs was paid towards legal expenses in 2021/2022 to SBRA. In total we spent around ₹12 lacs. This clearly shows that SBHREA legal fund is intact and spent very stringently. We, the present team got many messages in 2020, from our own members to appoint our own legal committee and spend on their advices. Proposal was to file cases from SBHREA instead of joining SBRA. If we would have implemented this, it would have led to spending big amounts as legal expenses on account SBHREA footing total bills for all cases. This would have lead to leakages from within. Hence we have discussed threadbare and negated this proposal which came from our own members. Since then those members had eyes on this fund and planning to have control on it. This greed has led to lots of

mudslinging on our leaders, by joining hands with SBIPA and belittling our Advisors and spreading total false messages. From last year these members have systematically executed false propaganda on this issue to attain footing in the Association. Such members are questioning our integrity now. We take privilege by saying that we have acted like PROTECTORS OF LEGAL FUND. For that we take full credit and say Legal Fund was in safe hands of SBHREA. Though some suggestions have emanated for better utilisation of Legal Fund, the Managing Committee discussed threadbare in 2 MC meetings and subsequently it was resolved unanimously to utilise funds for Legal Expenses only. The funds are deposited as TDRs in SBI, Gunfoundry branch.

SBRA has not taken up legal battle on special allowance and gratuity issues. Reasons being, waiting for disposal of already filed W.Ps in various courts. Once any Writ petition is decided either favourable or otherwise, further litigation will be taken up by SBRA.

1616-1684 DA DIFFERENCE ARREARS PAYMENT:

With constant follow up SBHREA could convince Sri Hussain Chetty, CM, PPG department and obtain the list of Family Pensioners who have not claimed the arrears. There were 664 family pensioners in the list. We have circulated this list amongst our team and searched for these family pensioners with all possible sources and reached them. Guided the family pensioners to apply and get the arrears. 376 family pensioners took arrears. Still 288 are on record unclaimed. This was a very big exercise taken up seriously by all the team members. Few activists of SBHREA also could come to help in locating the family pensioners. This is another achievement of SBHREA team.

REVISED FAMILY PENSIONS SANCTIONED:

SBHREA has been following with department until all Family pensions are revised. In total 2857 SBH family pensioners got revised family pension.

FELICITATIONS TO 75 YEARS OLD RETIREES

The revised decision of conducting felicitation functions at different places to enable large participation was a big success. This was very well received by the retirees as their families and friends could view the celebrations. The felicitation meetings were organised in 2019 before pandemic and in 2022 under the revised system Of honouring at different centres. We congratulate the Local Welfare Committee leaders for making this a big success. Aurangabad has made a mark in all such activities. Our special appreciations to Aurangabad Welfare Forum is being recorded in the history of SBHREA. We thank profusely Sri Anant D Acharya, our Advisor for being a source of strength in carrying all our action programs in Aurangabad with a big success and 100% participation. Our special appreciations to Central Office leaders, who have been helping illiterate members sitting in Parwana Hall in Covid times, when entry into Amaravati circle was blocked.

100% DA NEUTRALISATION CASE:

Regarding Notional seniority and 100% DA neutralisation for retirees prior to 2002, WPs are filed in High Court of Karnataka and High Court of Maharashtra (Aurangabad). Legal expenses met initially by SBM Retirees Commune, to be apportioned later amongst other Associations proportionate to their petitioner members.

The case went against retirees in Supreme Court for not implementing the judgement in letter and spirit. A major component in the petition is for implementation of DA as per pension Regulation 37, Appendix ii(2) which gives better DA benefit than 100% DA Neutralisation and we wish that it will be clinched soon.

DENIAL OF FUNERAL EXPENSES

The Gazette Notification issued by Government of India pronouncing the terms of merger categorically conferred all the existing benefits , rights and privileges has to be continued by the transferee Bank i.e SBI. Thus all these benefits accrued statutory rights and bank cannot be whimsical and deny the funeral expenses benefit.

We have already filed a writ petition in this regard and we suggest to our members to keep the death certificates and other necessary papers to be kept with them wherever the pensioners died so that the claims can be made on the bank as soon as the writ petition is decided. Alternatively, they may also file a copy of the necessary application for funeral expenses along with death certificate with SBHREA to take necessary action at the appropriate time by SBHREA.

GRATUITY ISSUE:

We have referred the matter to AIBPARC to whom we are affiliates at Industry level and also to SBRA. We have not heard anything from AIBPARC so far. But SBRA assured us to implead in the case whenever it reaches the Apex Court. The recent judgement was disappointing, but we promise to our members that we will not give up and shall challenge it, when appropriate time and leads come up.

STAGNATION INCREMENT:

The Stagnation increment:

X Bi-partite settlement added one more stagnation increment to all the cadres from award staff to MMGS - III in addition to the existing stagnation increments. One stagnation increment for SMGS - IV Officers was sanctioned from 01/05/2015. The management's of all the banks have misinterpreted this provision and stated that those who are on the rolls on the date of agreement are only eligible for the stagnation increment. Thus retired employees between 01-11-2012 and 01/05/2015 were denied saying that they are not entitled for this additional stagnation increment.

The All India Bank Pensioners and Retirees Confederation - AIBPARC and Confederation of Bank Pensioners and Retirees Organisation - CBPRO have represented the Case to the IBA. After a prolonged struggle, the IBA has given a clarification in this regard saying that the employees retired between the intermittent period are also eligible for the additional stagnation increment. There was a lot of confusion for sanction of this increment.

In this period SBHREA has been contacting constantly PPG department, Amaravati circle and updating through WhatsApp groups, website. Circle sought clarification from Corporate Office with regard to the payment of stagnation increment to the SMGS - IV. This was informed to effected members, who approached us by office bearers of SBHREA. Our apex

organisation SBRA has also made a representation to the Corporate Office to resolve the issue.

The efforts of SBHREA, AIBPARC and SBRA have finally yielded results and the bank has agreed to sanction the additional stagnation increment to all the eligible employees basing on the data available in HRMS. As on date except SMGS - IV all the eligible employees and officers were paid arrears and pension is being increased accordingly. The arrears on account of the additional stagnation increment for SMGS - IV will be paid along with October, 2022 pension.

The efforts of SBHREA are noted by many beneficiaries. But few dissident members propagated that SBHREA is not taking up the issue. They tried to take help of SBIPA. Their false propaganda was at peak showing pictures of meeting TE's. We never venture to tell our efforts out. We bring results and then inform the membership at large.

CONCLUSION:

We thank our membership for being with us at all times in general and in Covid crisis in particular. Although we have explained in the foregoing Para of the report that we have extended lot of help/ service in various forms to our members, I am sure that there will be many shortcomings from SBHREA. I am also eager to have a meaningful deliberations on this report so that useful revelations of our shortcomings be made so that it will be of great help for the next body to improve the performance.

I profusely thank wholeheartedly my President, Vice President, all Office bearers and MC members for their sustained cooperation extended me to make this 3 years time vibrant and meaningful. I shall fail in my duty if we don't mention that our core strength to do our best was from our group of Advisors. We wholeheartedly thank them for guiding us through this inadvertent turmoil's created by nature and also turbulent situations created by adversaries. I render special thanks to Sri Arige Krishna Murthy, Retd AGM, PPG and Sri A. Mohan Rao, Retd CM of PPG, in guiding us on all retirees benefits and limitations. Their guidance has given us edge in debating with department and clinch our issues.

We take pride in attaining the name of SBHREA to greater heights. We have elevated the image of SBHREA and branded it as a working organisation.

Long live SBHREA



K. Rohini Rao
General Secretary
SBHREA

Date: 16/10/22