



CANARA BANK EMPLOYEES' UNION (Regd.)

(Affiliated to All India Bank Employees' Association)

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Circular No.: 07/2025

Index : X(OGC)/CO

April 21, 2025

Dear Comrades,

MAY DAY

May Day, or International Workers' Day, is observed on May 1st every year to honour the struggles and achievements of the working class. It is a reminder of the sacrifices of the working class across the globe. It is not merely a date on the calendar, it represents a struggle for dignity, a celebration of our past and a call to protect and advance the hard-earned rights of workers.

The significance of May Day dates back to 1886, when the Federation of Organised Trades and Labour Unions of the United States and Canada passed a historic resolution: the legal workday shall be limited to eight hours. This revolutionary demand, emerging from the industrial heartland of Chicago, was not granted easily, it was achieved through mass mobilisation, strikes and ultimately, through martyrdom.

Before this movement, workers toiled from dawn till dusk, subjected to exploitation by the capitalist class. On May 1, 1886, thousands of workers in Chicago laid down their tools, demanding dignity through an 8-hour workday.

The events reached a turning point with the Haymarket Affair on May 4, 1886, where a peaceful protest against police violence turned tragic after a bomb was thrown, killing several people. In retaliation, four worker leaders were unjustly sentenced to death. These martyrs became global symbols of courage and sacrifice.

Even today, the Haymarket square memorial, is preserved in the heart of the city of Chicago, symbolising the sacrifice of the then fighters to give the world defined working hours per day.

Today, as we commemorate May Day, let us keep in mind that the regulated working hours, safe working conditions and job security were not given to us in a golden platter, they were achieved through relentless struggle. Presently, the corporate captains in our country are clamoring for 90 hours work a week.

The significance of this day is more important now than before. The working class is once again facing enormous challenges, be it economic, political and social. Across the banking industry, we are witnessing increased work pressure on the employees due to inadequate and depleted staff strength, aggressive privatisation moves, outsourcing and contractualization of permanent and perennial jobs and attempts to dilute labour rights. The threat of privatisation of Public Sector Banks looms large.

Let us not become silent inheritors of a legacy built through sacrifice.

We must continue to uphold the sanctity of regulated working hours, not just as a right but as a duty to future generations and also to justify the sacrifices made by past leaders.

Let us be more vigilant, proactive and united. We owe it to ourselves and to those who came before us to protect, preserve and advance what has been achieved through collective strength.

Comrades,

The responsibility lies with us, to remember, to protect and to build. Let every branch, every member carry this torch forward.

Let May Day be not just a mere ritual and a celebration. Let us rededicate ourselves to uphold the values and be united in our workplace.

Let us march forward with more cohesiveness, courage and conviction.

With May Day greetings



(B RAMPRAKASH)
GENERAL SECRETARY

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