

CANARA BANK SYNDICATE PENSIONERS & RETIREES ASSOCIATION (REGD)

(Formerly: SYNDICATE BANK PENSIONERS & RETIREES ASSOCIATION)



(Affiliated to AIBPARC)

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GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT PRESENTED AT FOURTH GENERAL BODY MEETING HELD ONLINE (ZOOM VC) ON 6th FEB 2022

Comrade Chairman, Comrade President, and my dear comrades,

I am very happy to extend a warm welcome to all of you who are participating from different parts of the country in this historic all India 4th General Body Meeting of Canara Bank Syndicate Pensioners and Retirees Association (CBSpra) (Formerly SBpra) being held online through Zoom VC. I am confident that the deliberations at this conference will enhance the prestige and further strengthen the organization to achieve the demands and fulfil the aspirations of the Bank Retirees.

2. We are meeting for the fourth time after formation/ launching of the Association. In fact, it is our 6th General Body Meeting if we reckon the two Special General Body Meetings which we held recently. Our third General Body Meeting was held on 27th Nov 2019. Since then, several important events and developments have taken place in the international and national arena, more so in the Indian banking sector, having a long-term impact on bank employees as well as on bank retirees in the country. Every change in these sectors affects the pensioners and retirees in one way or the other. While those events have posed many challenges to the retirees' movement, they have also brought forth some opportunities to solve them. We must keep reviewing them continuously to find solutions to our demands. Let me browse them briefly.

3. HOMAGE

Before proceeding further it's our duty to remember and stand up for a while in reverence of those departed souls who contributed immensely for the wellbeing of fellow citizens. The years 2020 and 2021 have seen a lot of death and loss. As the pandemic dragged its feet, claiming lives and pushing us behind closed doors, there was hardly a household left untouched by dark clouds. We lost people whom we loved or knew, colleagues we hadn't seen for a while, or friends we didn't get a chance to say goodbye to. As a retiree community, too, we suffered immeasurable losses. The

list of notable public figures and celebrities, eminent trade union leaders who had made immense contributions to our culture, literature and impacted our lives and departed from us, is longer this time, which interalia includes the following:

1. Shri Pranab Mukherji, former President of India.
2. General Bipin Rawat, the first Chief of Defense Staff of the country, his wife and 12 other highly placed army officials who met with tragic death in the helicopter crash near Coonoor, Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu.
3. Prince Philip, Queen Elizabeth's husband who helped the queen to steer the British monarchy through its various phases of crisis and ushering it into a new era and offering stability to the British monarchy through turbulent times.
4. Com Shantha Raju: A doyen of officers' Trade Union Movement and Former General Secretary AIBOC and AISBOF.
5. Com S K Bose, Most popular & fiery former leader of SBOA and AIBOC.
6. Com Anil Kumar Jena: Former President of AIBOC.
7. Com M.M. Mathew: Founder President of Federal Bank Officers' Association and doyen of AIBPARC Kerala State.
8. Com. Shashidhara Shetty: Jt GS of AIBOC and President, SBOA.
9. Com. P K Agarwal: Vice President, CBSPRA (SBPRA).
10. Com. Santosh Shetty: Advisor, CBSPRA (SBPRA).
11. Com. K R Ramappa, Zonal Secretary, CBSPRA(SBPRA); and
12. Other prominent personalities include - Nightingale of India, Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar; Pandit Birju Maharaj, dancer, composer, singer and exponent of the Lucknow "Kalka-Binda din" Gharana of Kathak dance in India; Pandit Jasraj, legendary classical vocalist; Sunanda Patnaik, classical singer; Sundar Lal Bahuguna, leader of Chipko Movement; Larry King, a legendary interviewer and one of the most iconic faces of American television; World renowned write Kuldeep Nayyar; Urdu poet Rahat Indori; Telugu Poet, writer, and composer C Narayana Reddy; Milkha Singh, the Flying Sikh, Gold Medal winning sprinter; Football legend Diego Maradona; Playback singer S P Balasubramanian; film personalities like Dilip Kumar; Puneet Rajkumar; Sridevi; Shashi Kapoor; Rishi Kapoor; Vinod Khanna; Jayanthi, Sushant Singh Rajput, Irfan Khan, Saroj Khan etc.
13. We also lost more than 370 members of CBSPRA, apart from hundreds of our bank retiree comrades during the period. We deeply mourn and dip our banner in respectful homage to all the departed souls.

4. NOTABLE HAPPENINGS AROUND THE WORLD

1. The COVID-19 Pandemic has changed life. More than 5 million people globally, 800,000 in American and 500,000 in India alone have so far died of the pandemic. Many countries had to implement lockdowns to stop the disease's spread. The global economy is shattered, hitting the supply chain the hardest. Some countries handled the pandemic well, limiting infections while sustaining economic growth. But many countries, most notably the United

States, bungled their response and saw soaring caseloads and death rates. Arguments will persist for years over as to why the crisis was mishandled. Vaccines were approved in record time and distributed them widely. More than 7.4 billion vaccine doses were administered in 184 countries in the first eleven months of 2021, with seventy countries making donations. Unfortunately, too many people who could have been vaccinated chose not to, and too many people who wanted to get vaccinated couldn't. This has led to emergence of delta and later omicron variants which are more deadly. As we meet here in our General Body, it is not yet clear whether Omicron presented a greater threat or would send the global economy into another tailspin once again.

2. Joe Biden Wins the Presidency in an election with voter turnout of 67%, the highest in America in a century. Trump refused to concede, but none of his challenges paid off. It is a question of wait and watch to assess whether Biden's multilateral approach will produce better results than Trump's America First. With the passage of time and Biden's bungled Afghanistan withdrawal, the clumsy AUKUS rollout, and the slow pace of announcing ambassadors etc also raised doubts about the Biden administration's competence, which had been presumed to be its strength. With Biden's approval rating sinking at home and the odds improving that Republicans will retake one or both houses of Congress in the 2022 midterm elections, U.S. allies have to entertain the thought that Trump and America First might return to the White House in 2025. If it happens, we may be witnessing a different world order altogether.
3. China continues to its attempts to dominate world politics. China threw its weight around across the globe bullying and attacking countries. Its troops-initiated clashes that killed twenty Indian soldiers, imposed a new national security law on Hong Kong designed to crush the pro-democracy movement, imposed trade war on Australia and was aggressive in its dealings with Taiwan calling it traitor province. China also continued its repression of Uighur Muslim minorities with surveillance, imprisonment, and murder.
4. Racism has exhibited its ugly face in America once again with killing of George Floyd. This triggered protests across United States and generated protests and conversations about justice and equality far beyond America's borders. Everyone now accepts that racism is real. It's not only in the United States, but it's also in most other countries, including those like China and Iran that tried to heckle US on Floyd's death as evidence of U.S. hypocrisy on human rights issues. INJUSTICE & INEQUALITY REMAIN A GLOBAL CHALLENGE.
5. Talibans' Return to Power in Afghanistan. With the withdrawal of troops by America and collapse of Afghan national army, Taliban overran the country. Kabul fell. Biden called the withdrawal an "extraordinary success." Most Americans disagreed. His public approval ratings hit new lows. Allies called the withdrawal "imbecilic" and a "debacle". The United States spent more than \$2.3 trillion on Afghanistan over two decades. More than 2,500 U.S. service members and 4,000 U.S. civilian contractors died. The number of Afghans who lost their lives was over 170,000. Despite claiming to be different, the new Taliban government so far has looked and acted just like the one that horrified

the world twenty years ago and a massive HUMANITARIAN CRISIS is looming at large.

6. Supply chains i.e. outsourcing of production was the key to success of late. Production was reduced due to fall in demand owing to pandemic but when conditions improved the production is not catching up with demand due to shortages. The shortage that got the most attention was in computer chips used in manufacturing automobiles and other industries. Other goods in short supply in 2021 included daily necessities. Its effect is going to last for many years. Container ship Ever Given getting stuck in the Suez Canal, blocking one of the world's major waterways for a week, added fuel to the fire. The supply chain disruptions caused by pandemic have contributed to surge in inflation.
7. Russia-Ukraine border Crisis is going to be an acid test for European security. This also highlights the importance of a country's sovereignty. Global stability now depends on whether the United States and European Union can reaffirm and defend the importance of sovereignty of country viz. Ukraine against a Russian attempt to dismiss it. Ukraine situation is a clear manifestation of Russia's actions as a threat to world order. Ukraine is entitled to absolute right to determine its own policies. The troops building on both sides of borders looks as though it may end up in a long-drawn war too.

All such developments are disturbing trends which may unsettle the peace on the globe.

5. NATIONAL EVENTS

1. It was Covid pandemic all the way influencing the lives worldwide especially in India. A 21-day lockdown throughout India from midnight of 25 March to 14 April and further extended to prevent the spread of COVID-19 was imposed. All the decisions be it social, political, economic, or administrative were influenced by the pandemic.
2. Farmers who have been on agitational path in northern and western India specially at Delhi border demanding remunerative price for their produce and other related demands have succeeded in their fight. The Govt has finally withdrawn three contentious Farm Laws. It can be termed as a landmark event in recent times signifying the power of united fight in any field.
3. While our General Body online meeting in progress, hectic election campaign is going on for Legislative Assembly in five states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Punjab, and Manipur. The ruling party at the centre is using all forces at its disposal to form Govt in all these states. Politico economic decisions in the days to come will depend on these elections. We are keen spectators.
4. Cyclones cause disruption life in various parts of the country intermittently has become a regular and accepted phenomenon. Cyclone Amphan, hit the eastern part of India and lead to flood like situation in many South-eastern

states; Cyclone Nisarga, hit the western coast of India, causing damage in the state of Maharashtra; Very Severe Cyclonic Storm Yaas, affected Odisha and West Bengal; Cyclone Tauktae, hits resulting in at least 90 deaths; Flash floods and landslides caused by heavy rains in High Range area of Kerala resulting in 42 deaths and loss of property worth over ₹200 crores again; Heavy rains and landslides along Kumaon division of Uttarakhand claims at least 64 lives; Uttarakhand flood, also known as the Chamoli disaster in the environs of the Nanda Devi National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the outer Garhwal Himalayas in Uttarakhand. Most of these disasters are manmade. Proper planning is lacking in solving the problem and preventing loss of lives and property.

5. India has maintained its pivotal position in producing vaccines for mass consumption at affordable price. Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, a totally indigenous vaccine and the Oxford/AstraZeneca Covishield made with collaboration were mass produced and a massive vaccination drive of administering over 130 crore doses of vaccines, highest in the world was successfully conducted by India.

Other events of significance:

- Lok Sabha passes the 127th Constitutional amendment bill, which restores states power to make their own Other Backward Class lists and reverses Supreme Court of India's May 5, 2021 verdict on Maratha quota.
- The court acquitted all the 32 accused of the Demolition of the Babri Masjid including L. K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Uma Bharti, Vinay Katiyar and several others in the case on account of inconclusive evidence.
- The Uttar Pradesh state cabinet cleared the ordinance of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Religious Conversion Ordinance which followed by Madhya Pradesh.
- In a televised address to the nation, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi apologized to the farmers and announces repealing of three Farm Bills following a yearlong farmers' protest in borders of Delhi.
- An Agreement was signed between the Government of India, the Assam Government and the Bodo groups to redraw and rename the Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD) in Assam.
- Amar Jawan Jyoti which was continuously burning since last fifty years at India Gate in commemoration of Indo-Pakistani War of 1971 was extinguished and transferred to National War Memorial as part of ongoing Central Vista Redevelopment Project.
- The Supreme Court of India orders to constitute an independent panel to make a comprehensive probe into Pegasus (spyware) snooping scandal.
- Delhi High Court dismissed a lawsuit filed by Juhi Chawla against setting up of 5G Cellular network in India and imposed a Rs. 20 Lakh fine for

abusing the process of law.

- As many as 118 Chinese apps including PUBG Video Game app were banned in India.
- India is the only country which observed Janata Curfew (voluntary embargo) a 14-hour lockdown to prevent the spread of the Covid pandemic. But it had lost its deserving credit because of people coming out in groups and ringing bells and beating the dining plates in the streets which proved to be an anti-climax.
- Tableau's of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Odisha (Non-BJP ruling states) were rejected from taking part in Republic Day parade sparking controversy.
- Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award was renamed as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.
- Bhoomi Puja and laid the foundation stone of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya by PM Narendra Modi.
- The Motera cricket stadium in Ahmedabad was renamed as Narendra Modi Stadium. It is the world largest cricket stadium with a seating capacity of 132,000.
- Ramappa Temple in Telangana gets UNESCO World Heritage Site tag.
- The statue of Jagatguru Adi Shankaracharya, which was previously destroyed in 2013 flash floods, was unveiled in a temple of Shiva, Kedarnath, Uttarakhand by The PM.
- In a first of its kind Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi's convoy got stuck on a flyover in Firozpur district following security breach and protests by farmers.
- Indian model Harnaaz Sandhu wins Miss Universe.

6. INDIAN ECONOMY

COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in global economic downturn, the most severe one since the Global Financial Crisis in 2008. The lockdowns and social distancing norms brought the already slowing global economy to a standstill. Rebound was led by low base and continued normalization in economic activities as the rollout of Covid-19 vaccines gathered momentum. Government consumption and net exports cushioned the growth from diving further down, whereas investment and private consumption pulled it down. The economy recovery is expected to be powered by government consumption. India expected to have a Current Account Surplus of a historic high after 17 years. Agriculture remained the silver lining while services, manufacturing, construction were hit hardest, but recovering steadily. India remained a preferred investment destination with FDI pouring in. India was the only country among emerging markets to receive equity FII inflows during this period. Forex reserves increased to a level to cover imports. Full recovery is estimated to be underway, as demonstrated by a sustained resurgence in high frequency indicators such as power demand, e-way bills, GST collection, steel consumption,

etc. India became the fastest country to roll-out 10 lakh vaccines in 6 days and emerged as a leading supplier of the vaccine to neighboring countries and Brazil. Economy's homecoming to normalcy brought closer by the initiation of a mega vaccination drive. Hopes of a robust recovery in services sector, consumption, and investment have been rekindled. India's economic policy is claimed to be a model for democracies with developing economies. The Economy of the country which slowed down due to Covid pandemic with Growth rate dwindled is bouncing back with an estimated growth to be around 9.5%. But country needs to deal with unemployment and low per capita income and ponder over equal distribution of benefits of economic development to sustain as a democracy.

A tidbit: Recently the prices of Tomatoes breached Rs.100 /kg mark in many Indian states. But the farmers producing tomatoes did not even get production cost. They continue to be in a pitiable condition.

7. BANKING INDUSTRY

It is a universally accepted fact that Banks are the backbone of every economy. They play a vital role in achieving and sustaining economic growth of the country. If the banks are not financially strong, it will result in financial crisis of the country as it has happened in the past all over the world. The same applies to India which is still a developing country. However, India's banks face different kinds of problems, which have affected their profitability and financial stability. The biggest risk to India's banks is the rise in bad loans which ultimately end up as losses to the institution. Public-sector banks are seeing more employees retire these days. Younger and new employees are replacing the elder and more-experienced employees. This is resulting in absence of middle management which used to play a critical role in translating the Govt. and top management's policy into actions. Further, bank's chief executives have a short tenure, during which time they want to post higher net profits by window-dressing and cheer the Govt. CEOs would come and go but the institutions are perpetual. Rural branches and lending to priority sector is mandatory for PSBs. It adds to work pressure and potential NPAs. As far as deposit mobilization is concerned Commercial Banks have been facing stiff challenges from non-banking financial institutions offering higher rates of interest. Another problem faced by the commercial banks is bureaucratization of the banking system. The smooth functioning of banks has been hampered by long delays and lack of initiative. The smooth working of PSBs has also been hampered by growing political pressures and interference in grant of loans to parties without considering their creditworthiness and putting obstacles in recovery process. Despite all odds the banks in India, especially the PSBs have been functioning well. As per latest trends almost all banks are out of the red and in fact have posted substantial profits. We are eager to see to what extent the gains in the banking industry are going to be shared with the retirees by way of conceding the long pending demands such as pension Updation and improving the welfare schemes in the individual banks.

SNIPPETS:

- i. The Reserve Bank of India to transfer ₹99,122 crore as surplus to the Central government. The decision to transfer the surplus to the Central government was taken at the meeting of the Central Board of Directors of RBI after a review of the current economic situation, global and domestic challenges and recent policy measures taken by the Reserve Bank to mitigate the adverse impact of the second wave of COVID-19 on the economy.
- ii. Swiss National Bank reported that, funds parked by Indian individuals and firms in Swiss banks rose to a 13 year high of 2.55 billion Swiss franc (over Rs 20,700 crore INR) in 2020. Bringing back black money parked in Swiss banks appears to be an illusion.
- iii. Enforcement Directorate transferred assets worth Rs.8,441.50 crore to public sector banks. The banks suffered losses to the tune of Rs.22,585.83 crore due to frauds committed by Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi. Thus, the total assets transferred to the bank worth Rs 9,041.5 crore, representing 40% of the total loss to the banks. The total attachments and assets seized by Enforcement Directorate amounts to Rs 18,170.02 crore which included assets of Rs.969 crore located in foreign countries. This brings some cheer to the banking industry.

8. MERGERS AND PRIVATISATION

In the recent years the government went on a spree of merging the Public Sector banks in the name of consolidation to create bigger and stronger banks of international standards and improving economies of scale. Associate Banks were merged with SBI; Vijaya and Dena Banks with BOB; Syndicate Bank with Canara Bank, Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank with Union Bank of India; United Bank and Oriental Bank of Commerce with PNB; and Allahabad Bank with Indian Bank. There was no rationale whatsoever for the merger of Syndicate Bank leaving aside other smaller banks within Public Sector. The often publicized and projected benefits to the economy or to the people of the country by undertaking such massive mergers of PSB is yet to be seen. As far as the retirees are concerned merger have affected their benefits. The anchor banks have conveniently given a go bye to the existing welfare measures despite Govt's clear notification that the retired employees of "transferor bank shall be entitled to receive same benefits, rights or privileges from the transferee" bank.

Now on the heels of bank mergers the Govt is planning to privatize PSBs. The related legislative bills are not yet introduced in the parliament but as seen from Govt's posture the bills are sure to be brought up. Though the proposal was touted to be a step to improve efficiency, competition and cut losses, everybody knows that the move will only benefit the big industrial houses. It will pose problems to the country as a whole and put the interests of the small depositors in jeopardy. The employees' interests will also be affected. Retirees will face a major uncertainty in the matter of pension disbursement and other benefits. UFBU is on agitation path

opposing the privatization move. Latest news is that all the central Trade Unions in the country have jointly launched a massive anti-privatization movement. AIBPARC has already directed all its cadres to extend full support to the call given by UFBU and other trade unions. In this context the General Secretary of AIBPARC has said that “The proposed changes in the Bank-related laws which aim at privatization in the winter session of the Parliament has given rise to serious anxiety about the future of the industry. The remarkable role of the industry for more than 5 decades in the building of the nation is at present at stake. We can safely say that it is a disastrous decision, and the countrymen will be the ultimate sufferers. All the serving unions/associations are in the midst of protest agitation. AIBPARC has called upon all its members, leaders, activists and veterans to associate themselves to the extent possible because the cause is more important to us”. So, let us all join the movement in protest against Privatization of PSBs.

9. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN BANKS

The industrial relations situation in the banking industry continues to be precarious. The merger of major bank has resulted in disappearance or disintegration of strong unions that existed in the merged banks, be it officers’ associations or award staff unions. The unions in the anchor banks are not able to come to terms with the changed atmosphere with the additional number of employees who are reluctant to fully integrate. It will take time to consolidate their position and win over the confidence of the incoming bank employees/officers. In the process naturally the unions in that bank also get weakened. Secondly, it’s a forgotten proposition to get Employee/ Officer Representative Director positions on the boards of the banks filled. Whatever voice the employees or officers used to have in the board and thereby in the staff administration service conditions has been missing. During this period 11th Bipartite was signed. The employees and officers are bitter about the meagre increase in the emoluments. Continuation of Special Allowance and reduction in weightage to Basic Pay have caused displeasure. The retirees in the revision bracket were the worst hit. There was virtually no increase in their Pension. To the contrary there was recovery for those who had taken commutation. Due to such factors severe damage was caused to the UFBU constituents, more particularly the Officers unions. When all such happenings are viewed in retrospect there appears to be a conscious and concerted effort by an invisible hand to weaken the trade union movement in the banking industry. It is time for the leadership to put their heads together and prepare a long-term strategy. Labor Law reforms will also have impact. Over and above all this development, now the Govt is proposing to privatize a few of the PSBs. Such move will certainly curtail the rights of unions, particularly of the officers. All these developments will have cascading effect on Trade Union Movement in the Banking industry. Further, all is not well within UFBU. BEFI was kept out of wage negotiations. AIBOC is weakened by Canara Bank Officers Association coming out of the confederation. Therefore UFBU constituents must come together for the sake of a larger cause of safeguarding hard-earned rights. In the present-day scenario with all the new generation employees staffing the branches, waging any concerted and long drawn struggles to achieve demands may not

be possible for the unions unless massive sensitization programmes for the youngsters are taken up. A united movement of bank workers cutting across cadres is the only safeguard, and rather a panacea for all the ills in the banking industry today. We in AIBPARC believe that their strength is our strength. They must represent retirees too. They should bear in mind 'today's employee is tomorrow's retiree'. we hope and wish that all the leaders will sit together and ponder over the matters before it is too late.

Coming to the situation in Canara Bank, the industrial relations appear to be cordial. We are yet to gauge the ground level realities. The award staff unions from both banks are maintaining independent entities while remaining under single banner of affiliation of AIBEA. Officers' associations SBOA and CBOA were very friendly in the initial days but later they were divided. After announcement of merger of SBOA with CBOA problems started. Just before legal formalities were completed SBOA has decided to come out of CBOA. The name of SBOA has been changed to CBOF with the restoration of affiliation of AIBOC. Meanwhile the checkoff mandates of SBOA, which were merged with CBOA subject to completion of legal formalities were continued to remain with CBOA. As a result, now CBOF is finding it difficult to retain the original membership. Most of the new generation younger officers who have no knowledge of the past or idea about future course of trade union actions have preferred to stay back in CBOA, which is now outside AIBOC. In this scenario CBOF (formerly SBOA, our beloved organisation) has to fight hard for revival of its past strength and glory. We wish them all the best! However, in this process AIBOC has been weakened. We hope leaders will set right the situation before long. As already said, we have not come across any escalation of issues or deterioration of industrial relations situation in the bank. We are yet to get fully acquainted with IR management. As of now all is well in the bank and we hope everything will be good in the days to come.

10. BANK RETIREES' MOVEMENT

At the time of signing Pension settlement in 1993; framing Pension Regulations in 1995; and introduction of the scheme in banks the Government and IBA maintained that Pension Scheme would be on the lines of Government Employees Pension Scheme and RBI pension scheme. But, the implementation of Pension Scheme in Banking Industry was far from what was expected. The applicable clauses are twisted to the disadvantage of retirees. Most of the benefits interalia Pension Updation, Up Gradation, Higher Family Pension, Uniform DA, Higher commutation, Medical Benefits etc. that the Central Govt. and RBI employees get are denied to Bank Retirees. There is no proper forum or platform for retirees to represent their case. There is no grievance redressal system at all India level and there is nobody to hear the issues. IBA is playing hide and seek, and at times ridiculously. It has the audacity to declare itself as an advisory body without any authority. Govt is apathetic. Bank Managements are either too busy to look into the issues or passing on the buck to IBA. Even courts decisions are not implemented properly. As a result, Bank Retirees are forced to organise themselves and fight for justice. The Bank Retirees are getting older. Their aging factor is causing a lot of anxiety. Justified demands are not settled despite

their knocking the doors of IBA and other Government authorities repeatedly for a long time. This has forced the Bank Pensioners to come on to the streets and hold Dharnas and Demonstrations. During the struggle AIBPARC and CBPRO have emerged.

11. AIBPARC

All India Bank Pensioners and Retirees Confederation (AIBPARC) was launched in the year 2012. It has travelled a long and arduous way and covered significant distance and is a strong and vibrant organisation today. The icon of Bank Trade Union Movement legendary leader Late Com. S.R. Sengupta, the founder General Secretary (Former President and General Secretary of AIBOC) was instrumental in launching of the Confederation. He guided the bank retirees' movement in the country until his last breath. It was only after formation of AIBPARC the hopes and aspirations of retirees in the country got a fillip and new direction. Having more than one lakh members AIBPARC is a strong force today with 24 affiliates in nationalised banks, private sector banks and in one RRB. The retirees throughout the country have taken AIBPARC as a credible platform. AIBPARC has embarked on several organisational programmes in its pursuit of bank retirees cause. The Charter of Demands of Retirees was prepared by AIBPARC and submitted to all the constituents of UFBU before every wage revision negotiation in the banking industry. From time to time it was followed up with UFBU. Retirees have been utterly disappointed at the time of Tenth and Eleventh Wage Revisions. The leadership of AIBPARC led by Com. K V Acharya, President and Com Suprita Sarkar, General Secretary have met officials in DFS in finance dept of Govt. of India and IBA repeatedly. Several agitational programmes including Dharnas and Demonstrations were organised under the banner. They have also taken initiative to form a united forum of bank retirees' at apex level including SBI pensioners and as result, Coordination of Bank Pensioners and Retirees organisations (CBPRO) has come into existence. Given the organisational ability and resolve of AIBPARC we are sure it will not be too long to achieve all pending demands of the bank retirees.

AIBPARC MEETINGS/CONFERENCES

AIBPARC has been regularly conducting Central conferences, Governing Council meetings, meetings of General Secretaries of Affiliates to deliberate on all issues of bank retirees and to explore all avenues of expediting clinching of long pending issues. In the course of pursuit of the issues dharnas and other action programs were also undertaken and implemented, details about which are provided in the following paras. Due to Covid conditions the next General Body meeting which was due to be held in the month of March 2022 has been postponed. All the Governing council meetings of AIBPARC during the interregnum were held online. We are happy to inform our members that we, CBSPRA, have organized/ hosted all the Governing council meetings of AIBPARC held so far. CBSPRA is a strong constituent of AIBPARC and has played a pivotal role in all the programs of AIBPARC. The present team of office bearers in Governing Council of AIBPARC, elected at the General Body and updated subsequently is listed here.

Sl NO	Designation	Name	Place
1	WORKING PRESIDENT	COM. C GANGADHAR YADAV	HYDERABAD
2	SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT	COM. R K SHARMA	DELHI
3	VICE PRESIDENT	COM. N RAJKUMAR	TRIVANDRUM
4	VICE PRESIDENT	COM. P S AGRAWAL	AKOLA (M. R.)
5	JOINT GENERAL SECRETARY	COM PRAKASH KAROTYA	DELHI
6	DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY	COM. K SURESH BABU	HYDERABAD
7	DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY	COM. A VENKATESAN	CHENNAI
8	DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY	COM. S B SAIPRAKASH	BENGALURU
9	DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY	COM. R B DAS	BHUBANESWAR
10	DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY	COM H V DAVE	AHMEDABAD
11	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER	COM. MADHAV KAMATH	MANGALORE
12	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER	COM RAKESH DUA	NOIDA (UP)

12. CBPRO

A United Forum of Retirees came into existence with the formation of Coordination of Bank Pensioners' and Retirees Organisations (CBPRO), which consists of SBI Pensioners Federation (SBI PA), All India Bank Pensioners and Retirees Confederation (AIBPARC), Retired Bank Officers' National Confederation (RBONC) and All India Retired Bank Employees Association (AIRBEA). It is representing all most all the Bank Retirees in the country. The total membership is over three lakhs. Historical emergence of CBPRO and its well-coordinated functioning with AIBPARC has been one of the most notable happenings of the period under review. It is a matter of great pleasure that the name of CBPRO is today known to be a meaningful body which is relentlessly striving for resolving the issues of the retirees. Com. K.V. Acharya, President of AIBPARC, is the Joint Convenor of CBPRO along with Com. Ramesh Babu, General Secretary, SBIPA. Ever since its formation CBPRO has launched a relentless crusade against injustice meted to the bank retirees. It has knocked the doors of IBA and Govt. Dharnas and Demonstrations were held at several

centres particularly New Delhi and Mumbai. The programs attracted attention of the Govt. and impact could be felt by way of cordial reception of CBPRO and AIBPARC teams when they visited the DFS officials on many occasions.

13. ACTIVITIES OF AIBPARC/CBPRO

The AIBPARC/CBPRO leadership has made a lot of efforts to prevail over authorities concerned about the retirees issues Viz. i) representation has been submitted to the Hon'ble Prime Minister and also to PMO ii) the representatives have personally met Union Finance Minister on two occasions and submitted memorandum iii) leaders have visited the office of Union Labour Minister and requested him to take care of the issues of retirees iv) on a regular basis our President along with other leaders has been meeting the Finance Secretary, Additional Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Under Secretary in the DOFS . All out efforts have been made to drive home the basic point that certain grave injustice has been done to the retirees v) on three occasions, a full delegation of CBPRO/ AIBPARC have met the officials of IBA - at the time of submission of charter of demands, at the time of submission of memorandum addressed to PM after holding the Dharna at Mumbai. During the teams visit Ministers receive them with courtesy and promise to look into the demands but no tangible action has been taken. The bureaucrats have been sympathetic, but they point out to IBA as a professional body to take decisions. The officials of IBA very often argue that the decision-making lies with the managing committee of IBA which is constituted by the Chairm and CEO of different banks. But it is known to everybody that the CEO of any bank in the present day climate does not act in a proactive manner unless a nod comes from the Ministry of Financene. But our struggle will continue. It is we who have hit the roads in large numbers at different centres and state capitals and displayed massive show of strength. We are sure that government, media, concerned agencies and society at large have taken note of. We are hopeful of clinching our issues under the banner of AIBPARC/CBPRO.

14. FAMILY PENSION IMPROVEMENT CLINCHED

We are extremely happy to note that our relentless efforts have yielded result and the demand of Improvement in Family Pension has been achieved. This is a proud moment for all of us to recall what kind of efforts had been employed by AIBPARC since inception of the organisation to achieve this long awaited demand. It is the first tangible achievement in respect of the major issues in hand and it will offer substantial financial relief to more than 1 lakh existing family pensioners and countless family pensioners in future. We thank IBA, UFBU, bureaucrats and the Union Finance Minister for their respective roles. Our bank has implemented the guidelines and released new updated pension to the eligible pensioners. Till date of report, most of the banks have implemented the guidelines of IBA in this regard and paid the revised pension with arrears from 1st April, 21. It is unfortunate that certain banks are very slow in their thoughts and actions. AIBPARC has written to IBA to expedite the process in all banks. RBI has allowed the banks to amortize the total

cost ie provision of additional fund required, reportedly estimated at Rs.21000 crore, for five years. We are disputing the calculation of cost of Family pension improvement. We shall be happy if our members can identify the beneficiaries and extend all help needed to the eligible family pensioners.

15. RETIREES PENDING ISSUES

1.PENSION UPDATION

In the case of Government Employees whenever Pay Revision takes place the pension of the Retired Employees is automatically upwardly revised. This is done to avoid disparity in pension drawn among similarly placed employees/ retirees and to provide for continued decent standard of living to the retirees. But this does not happen in the case of Bank retirees. As a result, disparity and discrimination take place. Pension was introduced and Pension Regulation came into existence during 1995-96. Regulation 35(1) of Bank Employees Pension Regulations originally provided for updation of Basic & Additional Pension as under. The retired employees who retired between 1.1.1986 & 31.10.1987 were given the benefit of Updation of their basic and additional pension at the time of implementation of pension scheme in 1995-96. In the year 2003 Regulations 35(1) was amended and it was made open ended to make pension Updation along with every wage revision. Updation of Pension as provided in Bank Pension Regulation 35(1) is a statutory liability. But for unknown reasons till date the benefit of Updation is not extended to retirees in banking industry despite lapse of more than 15 years. There appears to be a wrong notion that Pension Liability is required to be allocated from the profits of the bank. Provision for pension is revenue expenditure. The annual provision on account of pension liability is required to be made banks keeping in view all the regulations after obtaining the Actuarial estimates for the same. Pension liability being statutory in nature, Updation cannot be withheld for cost. The Pensionary Liability of the govt in respect of Government Employee is treated as a revenue expenditure. It is also so in the case of Bank pensioners. In the Govt., the budgetary allocation is made on a Year-On-Year basis and the Banks also make pension provision after obtaining Actuaries Estimates every year. The only difference is that the Govt has not constituted any fund for its pensioners whereas Banks have constituted Pension Fund to make the scheme sustainable. That means bank retirees pension is sufficiently funded thereby doubly backed up. Presently the total fund is about Rs 3 lakh crores. The annual Contributions, by serving employees covered under the scheme, and Yield on the existing fund far exceeds the present Pension Liability. This is because the Bank pension is not updated. The reasons putout such as profit, loss, cost, affordability etc are illogical and arbitrary. The pensioners of RBI have been given the benefit of Updation of pension with effect from 1st March 2019. This has lent further credence and legitimacy to our demand for Updation of Pension. Cost of Updation of Pension in RBI was hardly 7.146% of their pension corpus. The same will be position of the pension corpus requirement of other Banks in case of Updation of pension.

In this backdrop CBPRO and AIBPARC have been pursuing with DFS: MF: GOI that a suitable direction be given to IBA to implement Pension Updation in all banks. All our efforts through UFBU, IBA and DFS appear to be yielding result. There is some movement in the matter. IBA has constituted an internal committee to assess the demand of pension Updation in bank and a report or at least an interim report is expected soon. We shall fight till we succeed in the matter.

COURT CASE:

While we strongly believe in resolution of the issues through organizational efforts. We do not think that legal recourse is the only option to resolve disputed/ pending issues as being perceived by some individuals and organisations. There are several cases in courts known and unknown. The following case pending in Supreme Court interalia is prominent:

SLP (C) 5561/2016; 8455/2016 and 22266/2016 filed by S/Shri *M.C. SINGLA AND others of PNB and P&S bank*

The Singla Case (as it is commonly called) where ARISE, an affiliate of AIBPARC, is an impleading party came for hearing in the Supreme Court on 20.1.2022. On the request of IBA, Supreme Court gave three months' time to submit appropriate report regarding the decision taken on the proposal.

2. 100% DA NEUTURILASATION

This is yet another issue arising out of an anomalous interpretation of the pension regulations. About 60,000 retirees approximately are affected. They are drawing a meagre amount of pension. Over a period many of them have left the world. Although the Pensioners in the Banking Industry are a homogenous lot, certain artificial barriers have been created in between them for payment of DA. The Retirees prior to 01.11.2002 get lesser quantum of compensation because 100% DA neutralization is not offered to them whereas the Retirees after 01.11.2002 get a better compensation because they are allowed to have 100% DA neutralisation. This unjustified artificial barrier is causing unnecessary financial hardships to a substantial chunk of Retirees. Depriving the pre November 2002 retirees' of full compensation benefit is extended to Government Employees and also to RBI employees there is no reason why it should be denied in the case of bank retirees. The number of such pensioners is very small and quite a few of them are in the advanced age of 85 plus or may have even unfortunately ceased to exist. Hence a special note of urgency should be made in respect of this issue. Despite losing the case in Supreme court we are hopeful that this demand will be conceded by IBA & Govt. before eventually conceding the pension Updation demand.

3. SPECIAL ALLOWANCE TO BE RECKONED FOR PENSION:

At the time of conclusion of 10th Bipartite Wage Settlement, a new pay roll item in the name of Special Allowance was created which was reckoned for DA but not for pension benefits, thereby causing reduction in consequential pension. It has been

continued in 11th Bipartite settlement too. There was a similar situation when in the past two allowances viz. PQA and FQA were not counted for pension. But later when the courts found fault the said allowances were renamed as PQP and FQP and pension was calculated thereon, and arrears were paid. It is important to note that in the recent settlement of LIC of India the special allowance component was treated at par with Government Employees grade pay component and the same has been reckoned for terminal benefit also. Therefore, pensionary benefit will have to be given on the special allowance. Denial of pension on Special Allowance portion of salary is not lawful. On this count even the Bipartite Agreement will not stand the test of law. Hence the matter deserves immediate reconsideration necessitating rectification of a major anomaly in the Wage Settlement.

Further, the Special Allowance was introduced as an integral component of monthly salary in the last Wage Revision settlement. The allowance was not assigned to any special duties or responsibilities to be performed by employees. In view of various Judicial pronouncements including Supreme court the exclusion of special allowance from calculation for Pension and Gratuity has been rendered as illegal. IBA has to reckon the special allowance for the purpose of computing Pension and Gratuity wef 1.11.2012. The demand is pending.

COURT CASE:

SBPRA had taken a decision to file a WP in this regard in Lucknow bench of Allahabad HC with a request to hear our petition along with other cases already pending on the file of the court. All arrangements were made. Meanwhile the Kerala High Court has given a favorable judgement in the matter. Due to Covid pandemic the matter was delayed. Kerala High Court has already started hearing cases off line. The Bank's advocate has already filed an application for hearing the appeal filed by the Bank along with new writ petitions filed by members. Let us wait for the outcome. We have now entrusted the matter to Com Vijayan Nair, our Zonal Secretary Ernakulam, who himself is a practicing lawyer to implead in the case.

4. ADDITIONAL STAGNATION INCREMENT:

The Bipartite Settlement and Joint Note dated 25.5.2015 provided for grant of last/additional increment on completion of two years or more after getting the previous stagnation increment with stipulation that the increment which fell due after completion of two years from the date of grant of previous stagnation increment will be given wef 1.5.2015. It left those officers who were due for additional stagnation increment between 1.11.2012 and 30.4.2015 after having completed two years from the date of previous stagnation increment. This has also adversely affected those officers who retired between 1.5.2015 and 29.2.2016 in terms of reduced Basic Pension and complete loss of arrears on this count. This is an anomaly and needs rectification retrospectively. Despite IBA giving clear guidelines banks are not extending the benefit to some of the eligible pensioners on one pretext or other. AIBPARC is seized

of the matter. We shall pursue it further.

5. MEDICAL INSURANCE TO RETIREES:

The senior citizens of banking industries deserve a free medical treatment or the premium of the Group insurance policy should be borne by the bank. When banks had taken a Group Medclaim policy for its serving employees in all fairness the same should have been extended to the retirees by meeting the cost of insurance policy on the lines of serving employees. Government of India vide its letter no:14/7/92-IR(Volume II) dt 24.2.2012 advised IBA to formulate a Medical Insurance scheme both for serving and Retired employees. The said letter did not advise the IBA/Banks to discriminate between serving and retired employees with regard to the Premium. However, the retirees are made to bear the premium, while for serving employees the Banks are bearing the cost. There is urgent need to remove such anomaly more so when the premium for retirees is being increased every year enormously. AIBPARC is also pursuing the matter of waiver of GST on insurance premium. with IBA and DFS. There is a need to assess the benefit vs cost of the scheme to the retirees. In this connection some views are expressed in favor of banks taking over, as in the past, the responsibility of reimbursing the hospitalization bills which can save a lot of burden by eliminating TPA commission, GST and Insurance company's revenue. A suitable scheme may be worked out to extend the benefit to retirees with a subsidy. The matter will be taken up at the next Governing Council meeting of AIBPARC.

As regards premium burden, hitherto while in Syndicate Bank we were getting a reimbursement of premium up to Rs2500, which is denied now in Canara Bank. The reason quoted is that Staff Welfare Fund is not adequate. We have come across other peer banks coming out with liberal financial help to the retirees of their banks. We shall fight the injustice in our bank till the premium reimbursement is restored.

6. PENSION TO RESIGNEES.

Pension to the left- out retiree comrades such as resignees' is a long pending demand. Denial of pension to those resigned but had put in pensionable number of years of service is unjust. Here again the number of such retirees is very small. AIBPARC has approached IBA and Govt. several times in the past. Different genuine grounds under which some of our colleagues in the Industry could not exercise their option were narrated. In the light of RBI Circular dated 14.09.20 inviting options from all its eligible persons including Retirees and Family Pensioners and as our Pension Regulations are based on RBI pattern, AIBPARC has once again represented to IBA to take immediate steps to extend justice to the left out candidates of the Industry in line with RBI. It is now a subject matter in court cases. A number of writ petitions seeking 2nd option of pension for those resigned with qualifying service are pending disposal before different High Courts, especially in Karnataka (Bangalore) and Delhi High Court. IBA has called for data from member banks on the Number of resignees (during the period 25-09-1995 - 27-04-2010) with qualifying pensionable service for

assessing the cost factor as well as provision requirement as per the actuarial calculation and for putting up the same to the Management Committee for deliberation and further course of action. We shall pursue the matter.

7. TEMPORARY SERVICE OF ATTENDERS TO BE RECKONED FOR PENSION

Most of the sub-staff in our bank who have been absorbed in the regular service have been denied the benefit of reckoning the service rendered as temporary Attenders for the purpose of calculating pension and gratuity. Some who have not completed 10 of service in regular service have even been denied pension and some are getting a meagre portion of last drawn pay as pension as their service would be far lesser than 33 years required to get full pension. SBPRA has taken a decision to file a WP in HC of Madras to fight for the cause of our Attender comrades. We have entrusted the case to Com A Venkatesan, Vice President and already paid some advance amount towards lawyer fee. The case was filed in Madras High Court. The case is pending in court and delayed due to Covid pandemic.

8. EX-GRATIA TO PRE-1986 RETIREES

The number of such retirees or surviving spouses is hardly 200 in each Bank and giving a very low Ex-Gratia payment to such retirees is hitting the conscience of everyone including the Bank Managements. Even the youngest surviving Retiree/ spouse among this group is about ninety years of age. The ex-gratia amount must be substantially increased to a respectable level to retain the dignity of the retirees at the fag-end of their lives. We shall pursue the matter.

9. ADDITION OF 5 YEARS NOTIONAL SERVICE TO SPECIALIST OFFICERS

Some officers with specialized knowledge and experience joined the banks with age limit relaxation at the time of recruitment. Most of them did not have sufficient number of years in the bank to be eligible for full pension. On one plea or other, bank did not give the benefit as was due in terms of Reg 26 of Pension Regulations. Supreme Court by its order clearly told that the benefits of Reg 26 should not be denied to eligible persons. Our bank has given the benefit to all the eligible retirees as and when approached.

But the benefit of addition of notional service is given to only superannuation retirees from among such specialist officer recruits. Those who took VRS among the eligible cases are denied of the benefits. This needs to be taken up.

16. ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

Canara Bank Syndicate Pensioners and Retirees Association (CBSPRA) was originally founded as Syndicate Bank Pensioners and Retirees Association (SBPRA). Consequent

to amalgamation of Syndicate Bank with Canara Bank it was necessary to make a change in the nomenclature of SBPRA as CBSPRA. It is a matter of great pride that CBSPRA which made a humble beginning at Hyderabad as SBPRA in the year 2012 has grown into a massive organisation. With the tremendous response pouring in from all parts of the country CBSPRA has emerged as a formidable force within no time and has been fighting for the cause of the retirees of the bank. CBSPRA is strong constituent of AIBPARC and working relentlessly to consolidate the movement in the banking industry.

1. MEMBERSHIP ENROLMENT CROSSES 12500 MARK

It is nostalgic to recollect the days when the undersigned gathered a few of our bank retiree comrades in Hyderabad on 1st May 2012 with an idea to organise an association for pensioners and retirees of the bank and eventually launched the Association on 24 of June 2012, it was beyond imagination that such an Association would one day become a gigantic entity called CBSPRA. We are overwhelmed with joy to place on record that membership enrolment of CBSPRA has now crossed 12500-mark. Despite Covid pandemic our membership enrolment drive has progressed unhindered. We congratulate all our office-bearers, activists, members, and well-wishers on crossing this prestigious milestone in our journey of organising and consolidating all the pensioners and retirees of Syndicate Bank and Canara Bank under the banner of CBSPRA. Comrades, our membership records, registers and books of accounts maintained at our central office are unassailable and transparent. We are proud to say that CBSPRA is a mainstream organisation of Pensioners and Retirees of the bank.

2. CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During the period under review seven meetings of Central committee of SBPRA were held. Due to Covid pandemic all the meetings were conducted online through Zoom VC. The meetings were hosted by the undersigned with the backup of Com K Suresh Babu, Secretary. The Central Committee has discussed and taken decisions on all organisational matters as deemed necessary to strengthen and consolidate bank retirees movement from time to time; implementation of action programmes given by AIBPARC and CBPRO in pursuit of retirees issues; to establish liaison with management and to get into the mainstream administration of retirees grievances in the bank and such other matters of importance and for the cause of the retirees.

3. PERIODICAL MEETINGS HELD AT VARIOUS CENTRES

All our zones have conducted zonal committee meetings online. Our teams of office bearers have also been holding meetings at City, Regional and other centers. This has helped in keeping live contact with our grass root level members, updating them on latest developments and in guiding them in many aspects. There is a need to hold regional level meetings at regular intervals to bridge the communication gaps, if any, and to establish a permanent platform for dissemination of information and to

implement organizational programmes Promptly and systematically.

4. SPECIAL GENERAL BODY MEETINGS

As already touched upon, pursuant to the situation arising out of amalgamation of Syndicate Bank with Canara Bank and as called for by the management of Canara Bank it was necessary to convene two Special General Body Meetings of the Association, 1st on 25th April 2021 and 2nd on 6th June 2021, for the purpose of seeking certain amendments to the byelaws of the Association, inter alia, change of nomenclature of the Association, to reflect the nature and purpose of the Association. As the amendment to the purpose i.e. aims and objectives of the association was involved, holding of 2nd Special General Body Meeting was necessitated as per law. We are happy to note that both the Special General Body meetings were successfully conducted online and the legal formalities were completed. After completing the legal formalities we have duly informed the management of the bank. As a result of which today we are officially called to participate the grievance redressal meetings held by the bank.

5. SPECIAL ZONAL LEVEL MEETINGS

We have conducted massive online meetings at zonal level in all the Ten Zones of our Association viz in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Delhi, Trivandrum, Lucknow, Kolkata, Udupi and Ahmedabad. The meetings were very well attended. These zonal level meetings were convened immediately upon completion of Two All India Special General Body Meetings held online on 25th April 2021 and 6th June 2021, which approved amendment of byelaws including change of nomenclature of SBPRA as “Canara Bank Syndicate Pensioners and Retirees Association (CBSPRA)”. While efforts were going on to get the amendments registered so as to give effect to the changed nomenclature, we proposed to hold the instant Zonal level meetings to involve all the general members with an agenda of apprising them on latest organisational developments, retirees issues and also to prepare the organisation for onward journey under the new name, CBSPRA. Now with the successful completion of all the meetings, we are happy to note that the agenda and the purpose of holding the meetings were well served. All the meetings were held on Zoom VC platform organised and hosted by Central Office Hyderabad. The decisions and message of All India Spl General Body Meetings were clearly and loudly conveyed to the rank and file, particularly a vast majority of eager and enlightened members, of our Association. Most importantly the members have well received the proposed changes to the byelaws including change of nomenclature. It’s heartening to note that despite short notice and other problems the meetings were well attended. Total participation in all the meetings was nearly 2000. The meetings provided a great scope for our direct interface with multitude of members from nook and corner of the county. It has also gone a long way in creating awareness among our members on what’s happening in and around. We have accomplished yet another first-of-its-kind organisational task and a mile stone despite the Covid pandemic situation.

6. NOW SBPRA IS CBSPRA

The change of nomenclature of our Association from Syndicate Bank Pensioners and Retirees Association (SBPRA) to Canara Bank Syndicate Pensioners and Retirees Association (CBSPRA) was necessitated in the circumstances viz amalgamation of Syndicate Bank with Canara Bank; consequent need to reflect the nature and purpose of the association; and also to fulfil the request of the management of the bank in order to enable our participation in the retirees grievance redressal process.

In fact the management of the bank had requested us either to merge with existing associations in the bank or to prefix 'Canara Bank' to the name of our association. While we have always been in favour of unity of all retiree organisations in the bank through merger, the process required for merger was likely to take considerable time due to certain hurdles i.e. differences in organisational structure, type of admission and subscription of members etc. Ours is an all-cadre (CGM retiree to Sub-staff Retiree) association and we collect a nominal amount of Rs30/- (Rupees thirty only) monthly subscription unlike others which are cadre-wise and collecting lumpsum amount. Moreover, we are the largest association of retirees in the bank today. And we were already having recognition and status as sole representatives of retirees in the erstwhile Syndicate Bank. Our members have a lot of expectations on us. We cannot afford to be in a predicament for long, howsoever good our intensions and yearning may be. That is why we have preferred the other option of changing the name of association by prefixing 'Canara Bank' and continuing our journey in pursuit of our goals. However we shall continue our sincere efforts to forge unity among all retiree organisation through merger, coordination or other ways.

Please note that CBSPRA will be a continuing entity of SBPRA in every aspect. Nevertheless, the change will undoubtedly usher in a new era, new beginning, new hope and new opportunities. It will surely enable us to represent the retirees at the bank and industry level more effectively. Let us continue our fight with rejuvenated enthusiasm to clinch our demands.

17. DIGITAL LIFE CERTIFICATE CAMPAIGN

Submission of annual life certificate by all the pensioners of the bank for current period was due from November 2021. Bank had provided guidelines for submission of Life Certificate vide Cir No. 686 dt18.10.2021. Pensioners could submit it either at the branches or online via Jeevan Pramaan, etc. Despite such facility some of our senior/ elderly comrades were still finding it difficult to submit the life certificate by any of these methods mainly due to ill health and restricted mobility. CBSPRA had decided to step in to provide assistance to such comrades by reaching

out to them either in their residential areas or at our offices in major centres. A detailed program was chalked out, formed teams of our office bearers/ activists with IT experience willing to volunteer the job of obtaining Digital Life Certificates (DLC) and decided to carry out the task as a campaign. We had also authorised purchase of necessary Biometric devices for use at various centres. The program was monitored from Central Office of the Association, by an IT team stationed at Hyderabad. Com K Srinivasa Rao, CGM (Retd) of our bank who flagged off the campaign today online has lauded the initiative of the Association as a great gesture and noble service to the retirees. The program was a roaring success and proved to be very useful, particularly the super senior citizens and family pensioners. We hope to continue the effort in the ensuing years too.

18. MEETINGS WITH MANAGEMENT

We were a recognized organisation and the sole representative of retirees of the bank which in Syndicate Bank. We were participating in Structural meetings at Corporate Office, periodical meetings at Zonal Offices and Regional Offices. Apart from that our officebearers were regularly meeting the management officials including the MD, EDs, GMs and RMs and pursuing the grievances of the members. But subsequently Syndicate Bank was amalgamated with Canara Bank. It was difficult to establish a line of communication with the new management immediately, not only due to alien atmosphere but also covid conditions. During the period our office bearers at various centres have met the Top Management Teams at Circle Offices and have successfully taken up the issues of the members and established good rapport with the local managements. Meanwhile we continued our efforts to reach the ED and the GMs and put forth our demand for extension of recognition which we were already having. Finally, through a lot of our efforts, by involving well-wishers and our Bengaluru team visits to HO we could establish liaison. We had to first take care of continuation of monthly subscription deduction through checkoff/ standing instruction. Initially the HO: HRW refused to recognise our checkoff/ standing instruction facility stating that they do not have provision for such facility and that existing retiree organisations are also not given any such facility. We could finally convince them by providing all documents of decisions taken by Syndicate Bank

Thereafter we had to ponder over participation in the grievance redressal meetings conducted by the bank. During the interregnum the bank has held two meetings of the GRC. Both were held through online Video Conference. When the first meeting was held on 30.9.2020 it was in the early stages of our liaison with the management. We were permitted to participate on oral permission, as there was no time left before meeting date. we got the information about the meeting date and venue. Our Vice Presidents com. A Venkatesan and Com. SB Sai Prakash participated in the online VC meeting from Chennai and Bengaluru respectively. Our views on all issues of the retirees were presented to the management. The next meeting of GRC was also held online VC on 31.3.2021. By then we had almost completed the formalities of

amendment to byelaws of our association as requested by the management but the certificate was yet to be received. The management said the formalities were pending. And so, we were invited to participate in the GRC as observers. That time it was officially communicated in writing. Com. RK Sharma, President and Com. C Gangadhar Yadav, General Secretary participated in online meeting through VC at Circle Offices Delhi and Hyderabad respectively. Our views on all issues of retirees were clearly presented at the meeting. But when the proceedings of the meeting were released by the management we were astonished to find that there was no mention of either names or the view expressed by our representatives. We immediately approached the management to find out the reasons. Then we were assured that the needful will be done upon our completion of pending formalities. Subsequently we have submitted all the documents, certificates including the total list of our members to management. Now we are officially called to participate in the meetings. We shall make best use of it.

19. CBSPRA IS FORMALLY RECOGNISED BY BANK

Canara Bank Syndicate Pensioners and Retirees Association (CBSPRA) has now been recognized by the bank by officially permitting its representatives to take part in Grievances Redressal Meetings of the bank. It is highly gratifying that our strenuous efforts for the past two years have yielded result. A letter to this effect has since been received by our office from HO: HRW: IRS Bengaluru. This is a great achievement of the organisation in the post-merger scenario. We congratulate all the dedicated and determined membership of CBSPRA, without whose unflinching faith in the organisation and its leadership this achievement would not have been possible. We thank the CGM, GM and all the executives and staff at HO: HRW: IRS of our bank for the favorable decision. We also place on record the unstinted efforts made by our Bengaluru team of office bearers in making this happen. Comrades, this is only a beginning and a first milestone in our long way towards our goal of achieving amelioration of bank retirees' welfare. With the status conferred on us we will be able to take up grievances/issues of our members assertively henceforth.

20. TASK AHEAD

Comrades, our journey has been on right path and right course. But we have a an arduous path and long distance to cover. We are fully aware of the difficulties faced by pensioners; pension-less retirees; and the family pensioners. It is our responsibility to bring non-members into our fold and serve them. And as already mentioned in detail many pending issues are there to be resolved. We must plan and work to find a solution.

We have to continue our rapport with the management of the bank and work to bring solution to the members issues. We also have to improve our coordination and rapport with the serving as well retirees association already existing in the bank. We also envisage coordination among the retirees associations in the bank and work together

The task is tough but we can handle. We have the total support of AIBPARC and apex organisation CBPRO. We are sure we will reach the goals set for ourselves and fulfil the aspirations of retirees of the bank.

21. COMMUNICATIONS

We have minimized sending printed circulars/ communications as it is outdated and requires a lot of effort and resources. Nevertheless, we request all our members to update their address, phone number and email ID in case of change from the one provided to us for effective communication.

We have been sending short messages in respect of latest developments and guidelines issued by bank from time to time. So far, we have sent about 2 lakh units of SMS to our members on various matters, which we hope were useful.

We are very happy to inform our members that our website is since updated by making necessary changes. Our new website is cbspra.in. It is exclusively meant for CBSPRA members. For the time being it serves the purpose of speedy communication and uploading of our circulars. We are continuously on the job to improve the quality and content of the website. We welcome suggestions for improvement.

Please note our new email ID is cbspra.centraloffice@yahoo.com. To which any correspondence may be sent.

22. FINANCES

We have maintained utmost austerity in spending funds of Association. We are aware that the money is coming from our members by way of monthly subscription deducted from hard earned pension. The statements of account and audited balance sheet of the Association for past two financial years ending 31.3.2020 and 31.3.2021 are presented to you for your perusal and approval. Whatever surplus funds accumulated during the interregnum was due to curtailment of movement of office bearers and holding physical meetings and undertaking other organizational work due to Covid restrictions. As and when conditions improve our physical movement and organizational activities will have to continue. Meanwhile there are suggestions to utilize accumulated surplus to introduce a scheme to provide subsidy towards medical expenditure, death relief or such item, particularly to those who are drawing meagre pension. We shall take the idea forward to evolve a suitable scheme.

SBOA (CBOF) DONATION

We are happy to inform that our beloved SBOA has donated a sum of Rs 51 lakhs to CBSPRA. The amount was utilized for purchase of the flat which was housing our Central Office at Hyderabad. The flat was purchased at Govt. fixed rate from Bank officers coop Credit Society for Rs45,05,000/-. The remaining amount has been

accounted for under contributions received. The entire transaction was transparent and in white. Now we are proud owners of the flat housing our central office at Hyderabad. We have no words to commensurately thank the leadership of SBOA viz. ComS A Manjrekar, Com Vilas Nayak, Com V Kannan and all the EC of SBOA for their splendid goodwill gesture.

23. CONCLUSION:

This General Body meeting is being held at a time when the pensioners and retirees of banking industry are reeling under the pressure of Covid pandemic and restrictions thereof. I am sure CBSPRA we will be able to hold physical meetings soon. We hope the conditions will improve in a couple of months. This General Body meeting has already generated a lot of enthusiasm within the ranks of the Association and also among the sympathizers and supporters all over India. Today all the retirees are looking to the Association with a fond hope of amelioration in their retired life. In this situation, I believe that this 4th General Body of CBSPRA will become a source of strength and unity for all suffering and struggling retirees of the banking industry in general and Canara bank in particular. And that it will deliberate on all the issues confronting the retirees and come out with suitable solutions and resolutions. Unity and solidarity shall be key words and guiding factors which will only ensure justice to the retirees. I am sure we will make headway in solving various long pending issues very soon.

OUR DUTY

Comrades, let us not forget the fact that we are now members of integrated Canara Bank family. We have a role to play as natural brand ambassadors of the bank. We shall continue to extend our fullest support for the growth and development and image building of our bank The New Canara Bank, which is nothing but an embodiment of Syndicate Bank. Remember that Success of the Bank is Security of its Retirees.

24. THANK YOU, SYNDICATE BANK

We find it hard to search for commensurate vocabulary to ventilate our feeling of hurt and sorrow deep in our hearts caused by merger of our great mother institution Syndicate Bank into another bank. All along for decades we have been paying tributes to the founders of the bank for their philanthropic visionary pioneering and a revolutionary thought which was shaped into reality as one of the greatest institutions of India i.e. Syndicate Bank. We never imagined even in our dreams that one day we will have to bid goodbye and pay tribute to the bank itself. But then it is a reality. Though the very decision of the Govt. to merge our bank into another is perplexing and does not stand test of rationale it is already implemented. It is a fact of life that we will not find Syndicate Bank in future. It was an abrupt end to a live throbbing vibrant enviable great banking institution and its entire rich and a century old heritage wiped off and buried into the past. We are left with no option but to be mute spectators and to

accept the reality since the developments are beyond our capacity and control. However, we, the Syndicate Bank Retirees are an enlightened lot. We shall take the developments in the normal stride and overcome the present gloom and get going. We assure all our members that CBSPRA will continue to strive to ensure the best possible for the retirees post-merger and to take the retirees movement forward along with our fraternal comrades in the new entity, Canara Bank.

It is time to place on record our lifetime gratitude to Syndicate Bank. All of us grew up in Syndicate Bank working for several decades, developing emotional lifelong bonding, serving the customers friendly and faithfully, attaining strength and a stature not only in the bank but simultaneously in the society. We were transformed from a person into a personality; developed from a no-one to someone. The bank took care of us as a mother and provided for all our needs. Our gratitude to the Bank is immeasurable. For whatever we, and our family and children, are today we owe everything to Syndicate Bank. The name of Syndicate Bank is embossed in our hearts indelibly. We vow to take forward its legacy, rich traditions and our experiences and pass on to the next generations. On this historic occasion of our 4th General Body Meeting we remember and pay our solemn tribute to the three great visionary founders of Syndicate Bank viz. S/Sri Upendra Anant Pai, Vaman Srinivas Kudva and TMA Pai.

Finally, we humbly bow in salutation/reverence to our dearest institution. Thank you and Goodbye, dear Syndicate Bank!

25. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Members has reposed a lot of confidence in us. We are indebted and shall work hard to prove worthy and retain the same. During our journey we have faced a lot of challenges and executed the onerous task given to us sincerely. I hope we have performed well within our human capabilities. This was possible with fullest co-operation of my Chairman Com. Dinker S Punja, President Com. RK Sharma and the Central Committee Members. Com RSR Prasad, Vice President; Com. CUVTN Dutt, Treasurer and Com. R Adishesu Babu, Jt Treasurer and Com. R Balakrishna and Com G Anand Kumar, JS and ZS of Hyderabad Zone stood by me always. My special thanks to Com. V Suryanarayana the Central office-in-Charge. A specific mention must be made of contribution of Com. K Suresh Babu, Secretary in discharging all the organizational responsibilities jointly with me and at times substituting for me during my absence, when I am out of country. I once again thank you all.



C Gangadhar Yadav
GENERAL SECRETARY

**CBSPRA-ZINDABAD
AIBPARC-ZINDABAD
CBPRO-ZINDABAD**