



STRIKE IN ANDHRA BANK

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempt, an analysis of the strikes which took place in the Andhra Bank it focuses on various dimensions of the strikes held by the employees of Andhra Bank during this period. Some these strikes were ungave in terms of where then nature and length the issues unconventional for the first time in the history of the banking sector the officers, including the branch managers went on strike along with the clerical and other subordinate staff of the bank. It was unique also in terms of the strategies adopted both by the union and the management to deal with the strike.

KEYWORDS : Andhra Bank, The Sen Award, Strike Management, Association, Officers, Clearing House.

Unionization in Andhra Bank

The Andhra Bank was established as back as in 1923 in the small town of Machilipatnam, situated in the Andhra region of Madras province. Since its inception, the main investments of the bank consisted of advancing to the business firms and agriculturists without any security. This policy was radically revised later. In its place, a more cautious policy of advancing against the easily marketable securities on orthodox lines was adopted.

The Andhra Bank has started opening its branches steadily in the Andhra region. A modest beginning was made in 1929 by opening the first branch at Kakinada. By 1943, the Andhra Bank became a scheduled Bank with 42 branches all over the Andhra region and deposits of over Rs.4 crores. By that time, the bank had come to occupy a very prominent place among the banks existing in Southern India. With the boom in the money markets during the years 1945 and 1946, the prices of various commodities began to soar and the Government had to consider the adoption of suitable measures to combat the inflation. During 1947, all the new offices of the Andhra Bank opened during the previous two years were consolidated and only two new sub-offices were opened. Almost every branch of the Bank yielded a profit. The bank deposits were only 50 per cent of its paid-up capital during the first year of its inception and 75 per cent during the second year. Thereafter, the deposits increased from two and half times in 1926 and further to nearly 20 times in 1948.

During in the 1950s and the early 1960s the Bank did not make any spectacular progress because of the rather conservative policy of investments adopted by the Bank. The deposits have grown marginally. But these funds were not channelized into the investments that would be productive. Hence, the profits of the bank did not increase at a quick pace, the bank, until the mid sixties, continued to be a bank primarily confined to Andhra Pradesh and hence, its work-force predominantly consisted of a mixture of people from Andhra and Telangana regions.

The process of Unionization in India, particularly among the white-collar employees, began after the Second World War. The rising prices in the postwar period led to wide-spread agitation in respect of increase in wages and better service conditions among the employees. Among the Bank employee's unionization started at different stages in different banks depending on the background of personnel and the culture to which they belonged. In the banking sector the first union was formed in Calcutta, since West Bengal spearheaded the political and labour movements in the Country. It took quite some time before unionization in the banking sector spread to different parts of the country.

In the Andhra Bank unionization process started around the late 1940s. Unlike elsewhere, the first ever union in this Bank was formed by the top level officials of the Bank. The General Manager of the Bank was made as the President of the union, and all employees of the bank became members, irrespective of their position. The un-

ion was mainly confined to few cultural activities. In 1954-55, the employees of the Bank began to feel that the union did not properly represent their interests. In 1950, for the first time, an award was given for the entire banking sector by the Sen Tribunal which subsequently came to be known as the Sen Award. The Award was made applicable only to the banks which had branches in more than one state. Although Andhra Bank opened few branches in some neighboring states they were closed down subsequently by the Management. Hence, the Sen Award was not extended to Andhra Bank. The employees of the Bank, realized that they would have to organize themselves on sound lines to protect their interests. At that time the conditions existed in the Andhra Bank were rather poor but they were unable to represent their grievances due to the fear of intimidation.

In 1952, the Sastry Tribunal was appointed to look into the disputes between the banks and their unions. In 1953, the employees of Andhra Bank, were invited to give evidence before the Tribunal. But the management of Andhra Bank refused the invitation stating that there were no disputes between the Management and employees. Hence the Award of the Tribunal was not made applicable to Andhra Bank. This had created lot of discontentment among the employees of different cadres working in the Bank.

For the first time in 1956, the Andhra Bank granted house rent allowance only to its officers. The clerks and other subordinate staff demanded for the sanction of this allowance and they represented their demand before the Board of Management of the Bank. Consequently the house rent allowance was sanctioned to all the subordinate staff.

The First Change in the Union Leadership

Afterwards and effective the employees of the Andhra Bank, felt the need for an independent union to achieve their demands. In 1956, the General Body of the then existing union met to discuss the matter and took certain decisions.

In the elections held in 1956 at Tadepalligudem, for electing the office bearers of the Union a new person was elected as the General Secretary. This was the first major change in the Andhra Bank Employees Union. He was a subordinate employee of the Bank. Along with him two of his closest colleagues were also elected one as the President of the union and the other as the Joint Secretary. They were also working in the subordinate cadres.

The new union elected in 1956 submitted a "Character of Demands" to the Management. Along with this a programme of agitation was also drafted, to be started in case the Management did not accept the charter. A significant aspect of this Charter of Demands was that the establishment of the new Employees Union was incorporated in it. It was suggested to the union by the unions of other expand Banks and also by the AIBE that they should not include the officers' demands in their Charter. But the union rejected this suggestion.

The First Agreement Between the Union and Management

When the first Charter of Demands was submitted by the union to the Board of Management, of the Bank in 1957, it was rejected totally. It was considered almost as a demand put before a father by his son, and the very thought of it was outrageous." The Board of Management questioned the General Manager of the Bank as to why he had not checked this tending of the union earlier. Notwithstanding this aspect negotiations were initiated on the Charter of the Demands. But the then General Manager did not participate in them. As an union leader said: "He was a man who could not with stand being questioned. And this had created trouble."

In fact until then all the negotiations between the Management and employees union were conducted by the Joint General Manager. After an Agreement made in 1957 the relations between the then General Manager and the Board of Management got strained. In 1958, the General Manger resigned from his post. The Management was accepted for his resignation. In Board's point of view, he had failed to check the growth of unionism in the Bank. After his resignation, a new General Manager was appointed. He dealt deal strongly with the employees unions.

In 1959, the Joint General Manager of the Bank was promoted the General Manager. He continued in the office for 9 years. It was evident that the Management relationship with the employees union was by and large cordial. The picture of Andhra Bank in the late fifties and early sixties was, one of an organization moving at a rather low key. From the point of view of the business, the Bank was not growing at a tester. Although speed deposits were increasing, the quantum of both the investments and profits was low. On the front there was a marked complacency as was probably true of other banks too, in terms of their recruitment, training and placements. The pace of expansion of the Bank was also very slow. The recruitments consisted substantially of the relatives of the Bank's top Officers and placements and transfers were made mostly on the personal considerations. The promotions were also not systematic. Furthermore, the pace of work in the Bank itself was slow, as can be seen from the nature of business taken by the Bank. During those days the Bank was a small and loosely knit organization with ineffective and weak administration. In the contrast the employees union was effective relationship between the members and the union leaders cordial and based on mutual trust.

The Genesis of Officer's Association

In 1960, the All India Bank Employee's Association gave a call for sympathy strike. Accordingly, the Officers of Andhra Bank went on strike. This strike caused serious concern to the top Management. The strike forced the Officers of the Bank to withdraw themselves from the Union. They also felt that over a period of time, the Union would become interested in promoting the interests of the subordinate, staff only since they were in the majority and those of the officers would be neglected. Hence the officer decided not officers to continue in the union. In 1960, these officers and separate union under the name the Andhra Bank Officer's Association. Within two years, the majority of the officers working in difference joined the new Association.

Evidence shows that initially the Andhra Bank Officers' Association branches of Andhra Bank functioned more as a cultural organization than an employees' union. When the Officers Association was formed, the Employees Union strongly felt that the formation of a separate Union for Officials was a deliberate move on the part of the Management to weaken the Employees union, by adopting divide and rule policy. In 1960, the Management of the Bank sanctioned an allowance of Rs.30 per month to all the officers of the Bank. The subordinate employees considered this step strategy adopted for the Management to encourage the Officers to break away from the Employees Union and form a separate association exclusive for promoting the interests of the Officers of the Bank.

In 1962, the Desai Award was implemented, by the Central Government which led to a revision in the pay scales of all cadres of staff working in the Banks. In pursuance of this Award, the Officers' Association of the Andhra Bank also made a demand for the revision of pay scales of the officers. In September, 1962 the Management of the Andhra Bank revised the pay scale of officers that the increase was

marginal the effect of the revision was that every officer working in the Andhra Bank got an increment of Rs.20. In February 1963, the Officers Association to the Management with a host of demands.

We have submitted memorandum. The memorandum stated that representation in July 1962 dealing exhaustively with the scales of pay to be considered while revising the grade of officer-staff. But the "management has revised the scales in a way without showing any consideration to the scales proposed in- our representation. The depth of disappointment (among officers) can be understood when it is found by a comparative study that an officer is getting less basic pay than an employee continuing as a clerk all along with the same length of service. We therefore urge that a comprehensive reconsideration of these issues on the basis of our earlier representation may be taken up immediately."

Regarding the direct recruitment to the cadres officers the Memorandum demand all opportunities for promotion should be given to the staff of the institution as per seniority based on the date of joining, without resorting to direct recruitment were not impact these demands confined to Andhra Bank. During the early sixties, there was an awareness among the officers in all the Banks, that their position was secure vis-à-vis the top management, as we as the union. It became difficult for them to control the clerical employees for two reasons first the clerical staff are also equally educated and second, they are getting unionized. On the other hand, they are not getting necessary support from the top management in the exercise of their powers. In most banks, these Officers Associations functioned as separate institutions regular from the staff unions. Among other things, this has happened due to the certain provisions neglected in the Labour Laws. Though under the Trade Union Act 1926, any group of seven employees can form a trade union, under the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 only workmen and their representatives can raise an industrial dispute. Officers working banks are considered as a managerial and supervisory staff and not as workmen and hence they do not come under the preview of the Industrial Disputes Act.

Developments in the Officers' Association

In 1964, there was a change in the leadership of the Officers Association of Andhra Bank This change was due to certain reasons. In the elections held to the Officers Association in 1964, new officer-bearers were elected. They were close associates of the Employees unions General Secretary. The fact that the new office-bearers of the Officers Association had sympathy with the Employees Union is evident from some of the circulars issued by it in 1964. One of these circulars states: "Members are aware that the Association was born in April 1960 amidst a great deal of controversy. It was well known that the management as the chief architect of the association sought the creation of a parallel organization to the employees union in order to paralyse the other's working and undermine its bargaining power".

"The repercussions that followed have only confirmed our anticipations. The disintegration started step by step gradually snapping completely the chain of inter-cadre relations. It is exactly this state of affairs to which the management desired to reduce the employees and dissipate their energies in fighting each other so that they may not have time or, patience to unite together and present a case on bigger problems such as better wages and service conditions".

"The only alternative left to us is to control the affairs of the association and prevent it from being used as an instrument by the management in subverting the general employees movement. That is why, we who have been intimately connected with the union, on its advice, have taken a lead in this direction and taken over the responsibilities of the Association at its last general body meeting in December, 1963."

In February 1964, a joint meeting of the Officers Association and the Employees Union was held in which a Resolution was adopted for the setting up of a single organization of all the categories of employees working in the Bank. The last paragraph of the Resolution reads "In order to implement the decisions arrived at in the joint meeting, our executive committee resolved to affiliate the association with the Andhra Bank Employees" union. Since there is no provision for affiliation in our constitution, our committee has also decided to call for an extraordinary general body meeting for amending the constitution

and enabling the association to secure affiliation with the employees union. In pursuance of this Resolution 1964, the Officers Association of the Andhra Bank passed a resolution affiliating itself to the Employees Union by virtue of which the Officers Association was to be treated as a Unit of the Employees Union. As a result, all the members of the Officers Association automatically became the Employees' members of the Union. This made it clear that since 1964, there had been a tendency developed in the Officers Association to work closely with the Employees Union in some way or another.

Officers differences with the Management:

The demand of the Officers Association made in to clarify the criteria on which these promotions were made was not conceded to by the Management on the ground that the officers belonged to the managerial cadre. That never in the history of the Banking industry sector in India Management had come to a settlement with the Officers on the issue of promotions. The Officers Association considered this as a denial by the Management of the right of the Officers to organize and fight for better service conditions. It then decided to launch a strike in may, 1964 it protest against the attitude of the Management of the Bank. At this Javeture the Management made it clear to the Association that, "any direct action taken by the responsible officers, holding powers of attorney and who are part of the Management will be treated as an act of indiscipline and necessary disciplinary action will be taken against them".

The Management made certain suggestions to the Officers Association and also assured them that they would consider the representations of the Association provided following two conditions were fulfilled:

the Officers' Association should not to resort to strikes under any circumstances in future; and

the Association should function as an independent body without any affiliation or connection the Employees Union in any way.

The Officers Association, however, refused to agree to these two conditions. Their argument against the first condition was that the strike was the ultimate weapon available to them to fight against the management for protection of their rights. It was unreasonable on the part of Management to deny this right without making alternative arrangements for the speedy settlement of the Officers demand raised by them. On the second condition, the argument of the Association was that whether the Association should affiliate to any outside union is also a matter of there right. Ultimately the Officers Associate on emphatic calling stated that it would not agree to abide by these two conditions without any tangible benefits offered by the Management.

The Officers Association served a notice to the Management of stating its intention to go on a strike from the 19th of May, 1964. Along with it a ten point Charter of Demands and a programme of action was also submitted to the Management. Afterwards the Officers of the Central Office of the Bank issued an appeal all the Officers to go on a strike. The Association responded that the strike would be withdrawn if the Management agreed to discuss all the issues concerning their service conditions and welfare. In response the Management suggested that they would discuss the issues with a committee of officers consisting of a few senior working in officers at the Branches and Central Office along with two representatives of the Officers Association in their individual capacity. The Association stressed however, that the Management should discuss with their representatives alone. Ultimately, the Officers Association withdraws its call.

However, the Officers Association, asked the AIBEA to request the Chief Labour, Commissioner to institute conciliation proceedings, so that the possibility of going on strike on these issues in future could be averted. The Regional Labour Commissioner Central contented a meeting on 19th of May 1964. The Management, of Andhra Bank however, raised an objection that Officers of the Bank are not covered by the Industrial Disputes Act of and the government do not have the authority to institute conciliation proceedings on any matter. The Regional Labour Commissioner referred the matter to the Central Government, and subsequently issue was sorted out. However, several other as a result issues were kept pending, and there was a stalemate in the relations between the Association and the Management in during 1964.

The First Strike by Officers

In 1965, an incident occurred which led to a wave of protests from the Officers of the Andhra Bank. The Chief Accountant of the Bank was retired the Banks from service at the age of 56, although the retirement age was 58 years at that time. This raised the issue concerning the age of retirement for the officers of the Bank The Officers Association appealed to its members to take this as serious. Subsequently the Officers Association gave a call for strike, which was launched on 30th of January, 1965. About 20 per cent of the Officers of the Bank have participated in this strike. The strike had the full support of the Employees Union. The strike lasted for about a week and was called off by the Association on 5th of February.

The important fact about this strike of Bank Officers was that none of the Officers-in-charge participated in the strike. The Association's circular issued after the strike said: "We have a frank word of caution for the in-charge officers. By abstaining totally from the officer's movement the in-charge officers as a class did serious disservice to themselves as also to the general movement. By seclusion they have greatly weakened the organization and also exposed themselves as a class for cheap exploitation by the management. Officer-in-Charge will do well to realize their position and not repeat this mistake once again."

After the strike talks were initiated between the Management and the Officers' Association. The two conditions imposed upon the Association i.e. deaffiliation from the Employees Union and second of not going on strike at any time in future were discussed. The Management made it clear, that only those striking officers who gave letters of apology would get their pay during the strike period. It was pointed out that this was strategy that the Management adopted to prompt the Officers to break away from the Officers Association.

It is obvious that in spite of its attempts the Officers Association could not achieve its demands. In April 1966, a meeting of the General body of the Officers Association was conducted to elect the office-bearer. But there was no quorum as very few officers, attended the meeting. The Secretary and the President of the Officers Association resigned from their positions and the Employees Association defunct for a considerable period during 1966. During this period the General Secretary of the Union announced that the union was open to the officers, if any-body wished to join it.

Revival of the Officers' Association

The Officers' Association was revived on the some Officers. The requested the Secretary who was in office until 1966 to take over the Secretaryship once again but he refused. He remarked in an interview with this scholar that "we knew very well the behavior pattern of the officers and so we said we would not like to lead them". Later, the secretary of the Association was asked to take over the office of the secretary and he took it over at the end of 1966. In its circular issued in October 1966, the Association expressed reaction of the officers about the situation prevailing in the bank. Thus the Andhra Bank today we are now having two kinds of cadres one section coming under the purview of the awards and the industrial Disputes Act and the other outside the purview of the machinery". The other section, which is outside the purview of the machinery, is paradoxically called the officers cadre gives a false impression of being a privileged section.

The interviews of this scholar with Officers of certain Branches of Andhra Bank revealed that the officers dissatisfied with the situation in which they have to work were that during the old age one cannot effectively exercise authority over the subordinates. On the other hand even if there is a need the clerks would refuse to work beyond working hours or even if they do, the claims overtime. In the case of an officer, however, he has to complete all the pending work for which he is held responsible. At the same time, he does not get any overtime. Therefore the officers are utterly dissatisfied with certain conditions existing in the Bank.

Unrest Among the Officers

Around the middle of 1966, there became evident that the Officers in the Andhra Bank became totally frustrated due to certain reasons. Their main grievance related to the pay scales, which were very low when compared with the other Banks. Some of the major grievances of these Officers include.

"There is a gulf of difference between the pay scales of Andhra Bank officers when compared with those of four selected large banks, whereas the pay-scales of the award staff are equal for similar services in other banks".

"In view of the industry wide bipartite agreement of 1966 the clerical basic pay will be increased more than that of officers in grade III for the same length of service."

"Our officers are holding independent responsibilities under the power of attorney granted to them whereas the officers in other banks hold joint responsibilities."

"Revision of pay scales of officers are effected from 1-7-1962 and the revision of pay scales of award staff are effected from 1-1-1962.

"Promotions should be made strictly on the basis of seniority in the total service and not on the basis of seniority in the concerned cadre."

The Officers Association presented its case before the Management for the revision of their pay scales pleading that the Banks of comparable size in the region were better scales to their Officers than the Andhra Bank. The Officers' Association also reacted vehemently against the revision pay scales of the subordinate staff such as clerks which became clear in one of their circulars issued in February, 1967. In response to the charter of demands submitted by the Officers' Association in February 1967, the pay scales of Officers were slightly revised by the Management.

While demanding for higher pay scales the Officers Association was also aware of the financial position of the Bank. At the same circular mentioned above stated the issue of promotions had been agitating minds the of the Officers Andhra Bank. This issue was raised repeatedly by the Officers Association. One of the circulars issued in 1967 by the Association emphasized.

"A promotion to a higher post is one of the fundamental privilege which should be kept open to every employee of our institution. A sound promotion policy, which ensures fairness free from partiality and nepotism, will definitely stimulate best performance of it employees. There are two ways of promotions-indoor and open door. An open door recruitment policy (for officers) is an open insult to the entire personnel of any establishment".

The issue of promotion versus direct recruitment and the development of a suitable promotion policy has become a major bone of contention between the Management and the Officers Association a while as all other employees unions in the Andhra Bank for a long time.

The Employees Strike of 1968

After the new Management had taken charge in 1968, in Andhra Bank they faced, a number of problems relating to the finances, business and personnel. However, since the business of the Bank had to be improved immediately, it received top most priority by the Management. Simultaneously several issues relating to the staff of the Bank was waiting for solution by the Management. However the Management was firm on attending the rather than the relating to the staff business matters issues. Hence the settlement of the Union problems was delayed. This situation was perceived by the Employees Union as a lack of interest on the part of the Management toward of the welfare that the staff. After closely watching the 'attitude of the Management for quite some time the Employees union felt that the new Management was not interested in maintaining good relations with the employees of the Bank. This realization prompted them to launch a strike in November 1968 to bring pressure upon the Management to settle the pending issues relating to their service conditions and pay immediately. The strike demand that the subordinate employees who completed Matriculation should be automatically promoted to the next higher cadre i.e., the clerical cadre on the basis of availability of vacancies. The Management rejected this demand on the ground that, it was unreasonable. The Management stood firm by on their stand and did not yield to their strike. Ultimately the Union called off the strike even though the Management Employees did not meet their demands in 1969, the Management come forward settled to a number of pending issues were which causing concern. These issues related to the bipartite settlement of 1966. But the Union did not

agree with the Manager in which the Management settled these issues.

The problems of Employees

At that the juncture, there were strong rumours that the Management was unhappy with the officers. In a letter addressed to the chairman of the Andhra Bank in April 1970 the Secretary of the Officers Association categorically started

The above statement reflects the thinking of the Officers Association about certain issues. There are evidenced which prove that certain officers were showing good performance their performance was even appreciated by the top Management During the mid-1970s there was a strong demand made by the officers that their pay scales should be revised. Subsequently talks were held between the Officers' Association and the Management of the Bank. At that time a number of clerks were promoted; as officers in Grade III. These Employees considered their promotion as disadvantageous for certain reasons such as the loss of overtime benefits and so on.

The Employees Union insisted that the Management should discuss the issues relating to these promotions. The Management did not agree with their demand on the contention that this particular issue do not come under the preview of the Employers Union.

In 1970, The Andhra Bank Employees' Association, a minority union referred the matter of promotion to the Union Labour Ministry which interim referred it for adjudication to the industrial Tribunal. The place of the Labour Ministry was that the fitment formula followed in the promotions the Bank Management neglected the interest the clerical staff who were promoted as the officers in Grade III.

While examining this matter the majority Employees Union in the Andhra Bank was asked by the Tribunal to submit its claim. The Labour union strong evacuated a new formula for guiding the promotions to the Officer Cadres in future. The formula evolved by the Labour Ministry specifies that: "A comparison of the duties of a special assistant And the duties and responsibilities of officer grade III will show that officers in grade III are called upon to shoulder far higher responsibilities than the special assistant. Further, the special assistants, in addition to getting an additional amount of Rs.161 by way of special allowance and dearness allowance thereon. Over and above that is paid to a clerk, also are entitled to such beneficial conditions of service as regulated working hours, holidays and payment of overtime which are not made available to the officers grade III in the bank".

Employees Union's Strike 1970

In August 1970, the Employees Union of the Andhra Bank launched agitation in support of its demand for giving promotions to the subordinate staff to the clerical cadre. This issue was first raised in 1968 but the Management did not resolve it. The Management discussed this matter with the Employees union in the presence of Officials of IBA and AIBEA in Bombay in 1969. But both parties did not come to an agreement on this issue. Hence the subordinate Employees Union started strike in 1970. This strike went on for a very long period of more than 3 months (109 days).

This strike provided a chance to test the strength of both the Union and the Management of the Bank. The Officers did not participate in this strike. Hence the strike had no effect on. the working of the Bank it worked without any interruption thorough out the strike period.

On December 30, 1970, the Management revised the pay scales of the Officers with effect from January, 1 1970. An extra increment was given to those Officers who completed part II of the Associate Examination held by the Indian Institute of Bankers. The Management also revised the fitment formula following in the promotion. The revision of pay scales of the officers in 1970 caused the Bank an extra expenditure to the tune of Rs.6.94 lakhs.

The Bombay Branch Strike.

A Pilot agitation was launched in the Bombay Branch of Andhra Bank in November 1971. The mean of this strike was that two clerks issue was appointed as officers in the Bombay Branch. The strike was started as a protest against that two promotion.

The strike was conducted in a planned manner. The support from the Award Staff was minimal. The strike was called off as the Management agreed to discuss the related issues with the Association. When the Management of Bank asked the employees to call off their strike they refused to do so. Until they had clear instructions from the union office in Hyderabad.

After the Bombay Branch strike talks took place between the Management and the Officers' Association in December 1971. During these talks the Employees Association demanded the Management that since they had appointed 24 persons through by direct recruitment as grade II and Special Grade Officers. They had agreed to promotion on equal number of clerks seniority basis. The Association laid as at this a precondition for arrears at an understanding with the Management on Promotions. The Management proposed to give promotions to the clerical staff along with the direct recruitment in the ratio mentioned in the discussions. But this proposal was not accepted by the Association.

Agitational Programme of the Employees Union:

As the Management refused to discuss the important issues with the Andhra Bank Employees Union called a meeting of the Union Secretaries of, all the 219 Branches of Andhra Bank on 26th February, 1972 at Vijayawada. It was decided at this meeting that if the Management did not start negotiations with the Union, on their issues within 10 days, they would resort to any action including direct action. At this meeting the Employees Union also evolved a plan of action. This programme had two phases one for, the period starting February 28 to March 8, 1972, and the other starting on March 9 until further instructions.

The first phase of the programme, from February 28 to March 8, consisted of work to rule agitation. The officers required to work only during the Office Hours. They should not to work on holidays and Sundays. No late cash transactions should be allowed. The subordinate staff were also instructed to slow down their work, accumulating as much of pending work' as possible. No subordinate should do over time further, it was decided to Act. Intensive pressure on the officer in charge for terminating the temporary employees. If they did not do so, the work of those employees had to be obstructed in every possible way.

The first phase of the programme was implemented as stipulated from 28th of February. Accordingly work to rule the award staff of the Bank followed principle. Specific instructions were given to the staff that during this first phase of action that they should go on strike for any reason whatsoever.

In this, a letter to the management written on March 1, 1972, the Employees Union reminded the resolution passed by them on the 26th of February. In the same letter they gave a 10 days notice about their intention to go on total strike from March 9, 1972.

The Management considered the proposed strike as illegal, for two reasons. First, it was strike by the workmen in connection with a matter that did not startle pertain to the workmen, namely, whether or not officers could join the workmen's union. The argument of the Management was that the industrial Disputes Act laid down certain terms on which an industrial dispute as defined by Law may be raised, either by the employer or by workmen. The above issue did not fall within those items and was hence outside the purview of Law. To this, the Union's reaction was that even if it was not an industrial dispute per se it was definitely a dispute, the only point being it could not be referred for adjudication. But their main point was that anything that does not come within the purview of law does not, necessarily become illegal. They felt that law is for the people and not people for the law.

The second reason why the management considered the strike as illegal was that a notice of minimum of 14 days, for the strike was not served by the union though banking is a public utility service. The Union's reaction on this issue was that law and legality are for the management. So far, as the Unions are concerned we have to keep fighting in the teeth of law.

The issue referred to Conciliation

The union Labour Minister interfered in this matter and gave certain instructions to the Management. The ABEA suggested that both the Parties should be invited by the Labour Minister for talks to resolve the matter. On March 3, 1972, a representative of the Banks Management approached the Central Labour Department in Delhi for intervention in this particular dispute between them and the employees.

The Strike Begins on March, 1972

On March 4th, the Management of the Bank referred the matter to the Regional Labour Commissioner RLC Central, Hyderabad. The General Manager and Employees Officer represented the Banks Management at the meeting convened by the R.L.C. Its General Secretary and Assistant Secretary represented the Employees union. The management of the Bank defended its stand by stating that it is not the prevailing practice in most banks and hence they would not like to adopt it. It also raised a legal point that the Officers are not workmen under the Industrial Disputes Act and hence could not be represented by the Employees Union. In contrast, the Union's challenged the attitude of the Management towards the Union. Any how, the meeting did not yield any results.

On the 6th March 1972, a representative of the ABEA and a representative of Andhra Bank were summoned by the Union Minister of Labour along with the for talks on this issue. At this meeting the ABEA requested the Labour Minister to refer. This matter for arbitration, the Management contended that on the ABEA's suggestion was limited to the officer of the conciliation machinery of the Government. Considering the seriousness of the issue the Management of the Bank rejected these suggestions. It arranged that the matter was not a simple one to be referred to the arbitration of merely a conciliation officer who already appeared to be in favor of the Union negotiating on behalf of Officers of the Bank.

On March 9, the clerks of the Andhra Bank All the Branches of Andhra Bank situated all over the country participated in the strike and stopped functioning. The officers went on for a week. As the strike took a serious turn Elaborate arrangements were made by the Bank Management to reduce its impact. The Police were posted at different Branches throughout the State to preserve Law and order. The Management got the help of the state Government to deal with the employees strike.

At the time of the Andhra Bank strike, there were strikes in that two other Banks in Andhra Pradesh namely the State Bank of India and the Reserve Bank of India RBI. Some offices of the RBI were located in the premises of the main office of Andhra Bank in Hyderabad. During the period of the strike the work of clearing houses in the state suspended and clearing facilities were not available to the people. However, even after the strike in these two banks had ended the work in the clearing house remained suspended until, the Andhra Bank strike was called off in May. The reason for this was that the management of Andhra Bank insisted that the clearing house should not function if even a single bank was prevented from participating in it. In fact a rule to this effect was passed by the Hyderabad Bankers Clearing House in 1969 in connection with a strike in the State Bank of India.

The Andhra Bank brought a number of court injunctions on deferred striking employees at different places, which had the effect of restricting their activities. The Union's objection was that the handling of the strike by the Management with the help of police and getting the Courts to issue injunctions was concerned, it showed the unreasonable anxiety on the part of the Management in ending the strikes. However, the Management defended its action by stating that it was in the best interests of the Bank that they involved the police and Courts. During the strike period the Management asked the officers of the head Office who were not on the strike to work in the Branches which were closed due to the strike. This strategy of the Management evidently worked well because a number of officers of the Head Office were supported the Management and hence helped it in dealing with the employees, strike.

Strategies Adopted by the Union

Few days after the starting of the strike the Bank's Management decided to inform the Branch Managers that they should keep their branches open and conduct the minimum transactions everyday. But

the attempt of the Management was a failure since no Manager of any Branch responded positively to the instructions of the Management. All of them were also on strike.

The strike of Officers in 1998

In 1998, the National Platform Organisation has given a call for one day General Strike by all the Banks on December, 1998. The All India Bank Employees Association and the All India Bank Officers Association AIBOA which are the constituent units of the National Platform Forum supported the strike call given by this platform. Accordingly, the Banks in the Country went on one-day strike on among the 24 demands raised by the National platform the strike the important demands include

- Non-implementation of Narasimham Committee's recommendations;
- The Privatizations of Banks and Insurance companies;
- Failure to control the abnormal price rise in the country;
- Withdrawal of the Policy of disinvestments and privatization in all the Public Sector Undertakings.

The Unions of Andhra Bank Officers informed in 1998 that they would resort to Trade Unions actions resorting to including strike for holiday Bilateral discussions with the unions employees, for solving their problems. By the time of this strike many demands raised by the Unions of various Banks' employees were under discussion with the recognised Officers Organizations. The Management declared that the Officers who participated in this strike were liable for disciplinary action in addition to cut in the wages according to the Principle of No Work No Pay. The Regional Zonal authorities were asked to ensure the normal functioning of all the Branches of their strikes in the country and any un towards incident should be brought to the notice of the Head Office of the concerned Banks that immediately. It was also ordered any type of leave should not be sanctioned to the employees during the days of the strike and all the Branch Managers should be present in their respective Banks under any circumstances.

The Strike of Workmen Unions of Officers Associations : 2000

The united Forums of Banks Unions called for the strike by all the banks on 15.11.2000, against the privatization of public sector under taking in the country. By way of dilution of Government Equity below the existing Not less than 51% and also against the proposed reduction in the retirement age of Banks employees from 60 to 58 years. The total staff of all the Banks participated in this strike.

All Indian Bank Officers' Association gave a call for strike on 26th April, 2000, demanding Implementation of the salary unions Agreement for the Officers in the Indian Bank and United Bank of India. There are 9 Unions, in the Banking namely AIBEA, NCBE, BEFI, NOBE, AIBOC, AIBOA, INBOC, NOBO, give a notice for days strike on 4th July, 2001 urging the immediate release of arrears of revised wages payable to the employees and officers of the above Banks.

All India Bank Employees Association, 2002

All India Bank Employees Association gave a notice for one day strike on 4th January, 2002 by its members in the Banking Industry to protest against the alleged coercions and unlawful and malafide transfers of workmen by the Standard Chartered Bank

The strike on 21st May 2003 by all the major Unions of the Officers and Award Staff working various in the country was for making Banks amendments to the Banking Regulations Act. The Trade Union and desirments of, recruitment closure, etc., policies of the Government in regard to abdicate of its responsibility alteration as Trade Union.

Demands

- Social security measurements to working class both in organized and unorganized sectors.
- Security of jobs to workmen in organised and unorganised sectors.
- Adequate generation of Employment opportunities both in private and public sectors.
- Early salary per annum in Banks

- Pension for all secured options
- Restorations of Recruitment Promotions in Banks.

August 2004 Deductions of wages strike the wages for one day i.e., on 24.3.2004 Head that united Forum of Bank unions the Umbrella Organisation of the Major Unions. Organ status of the Officers and Award staff operator in the Banks have given a call for an all India strike on Tuesday 5th October and Wednesday 6th October, 2004.

Strike of Foreign Banks in 2005

The United Forum of Bank unions has served a notice which communicated that the members of their constituent unity will be observing one day country-wide strike on 22nd March, 2005 to protest against the acquisition of public sector banks and the foreign Banks Institutions taking over the Indian Banks. The all India Banks Officers Confederation (AIBOC) served, a notice of strike on 29.8.2005. In pursuance of this call the Officers working in the Banks in the public sector, private sector and Rural Banks observed one day strike throughout the Country on September, 2005.

Demands

- The major demands of the striking officers include Introduction of 2nd option on pension;
- Restoration of compassionate appointments;
- Systematically fixed working hours;
- Payment of wages to the Employees who participated in the strike held on 22.3.2005.

Conclusion

The strike of workmen unions and Officers Associations held 27th, October, 2006 was organised by the United Forum of Bank Unions representing the workmen unions AIBEA, NCBE, DEF, INBEF and other NOBW 4 Officers Associations. The strike was organized to oppose the disinvestments in the public Sector undertakings India A.B. award Employee's Union. AIBEA, the A.B. Employee's Federation BEFI and A.B. Officer's Union AIBOA to Oppose the disinvestment public sector the award staff Employees and Officers owing allegiance these unions struck work in the day of the commencement of Public officer 6.1.2006. The employee participated in the strike "No work No Pay".

Universalizing the public distribution system throughout the country, to cater all essential commodities at controlled price through PDS, reduction of tax on petrol and diesel, stringent auction against hoarding and black marketing.

Street implementation of all Labour Laws particularly in respect of minimum wages, working hours, social security, safety stringent auction against all cases violations.

Bill pending, farmers learn recruitment in Govt. Series. One day strike, or two days strikes on 12th & 14th March 2009. Indefinite strikes on 25th March.

Transfer of Branch Managers, working conditions of officer in the bank the issue leave Harsh punishments, working on Sundays holidays and beyond normal working hours, Accetes shortage of man power C.B.S Implementation. Ill treatment and inhuman treatment to VRS optees officer on resignation delay in acquiring officer's quarters. Introduction of 2nd option on pension restoration of compassionate appointments Systematically fixed working hours Payment of wages to the Employees who participated in the strike held on 2010.