

VOLUME NO. XIX

SHE CAN

SHINE THROUGH

Triennial Highlights

➤ Leadership
Addressing the gathering

Over the years

➤ Trade Union Rise
in Banking Industry

The Ravi Kumar Era

➤ Rise of Women Leadership in
CBOA

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**CANARA BANK
OFFICERS'
ASSOCIATION**



VIJAYAWADA OFFICE
PLOT NO 39
NEAR AMBITUS SCHOOL
GUNADALA, VIJAYAWADA



FROM THE DESK OF



GENERAL SECRETARY

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world.”

- Margaret Mead

The turn of a new year carries its own strength. It invites us to pause, to look back with understanding and to step forward with renewed purpose. Standing at this threshold, we are reminded that progress is shaped not only by milestones achieved, but by the manner in which we have travelled together.



The recent Triennial Conference reaffirmed a simple yet enduring truth—that strength lies in togetherness. Senior leaders and members from across the organisation came together with a common purpose: listening to one another, engaging in meaningful dialogue and reaffirming the values that bind us. What emerged was not merely clarity of direction, but a deep sense of reassurance that we are moving forward together.

“When people feel valued, commitment follows naturally.”

The themes explored in this issue speak directly to that spirit. The piece on trade unionism in the banking sector reconnects us with our collective roots and responsibilities. The narrative on women’s leadership within CBOA tells a story of steady trust—of women stepping into roles of responsibility not as an exception, but as a natural progression shaped by dedication and capability.

The All-Women Central Committee photographs included here are deeply meaningful. They reflect confidence built over time and leadership earned through dedication and hard work. Each image stands for effort, balance and a firm determination to serve with integrity. The glimpses from the Triennial capture moments that stay with us—shared smiles, camaraderie, coordination and the satisfaction of work done well. Behind every smooth session were countless unseen efforts, offered freely and with care.

She Can exists to nurture that humanity—to ensure that women feel seen, supported and encouraged to lead with confidence. May the year ahead bring clarity to your goals, strength to your efforts and steadiness to your spirit. Together, we move forward—grounded, grateful and hopeful.

As we step into a new year filled with possibility, the words of Maya Angelou remain close to the heart:

“People will never forget how you made them feel.”



LEADERSHIP ADDRESSING

AT THE 20th TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

The conference began with a warm welcome from Reception Committee Chairman Sri. Rama Prasad, who noted that the venue surrounded by mountains and the sea –symbolizes the depth of CBOA’s challenges and the height of its achievements.



Shri P Rama Prasad
Reception Committee Chairman



Jacob P Chittattukalam
Chairman



Rajiv Nigam
President

Chairman Sri. Jacob P C and President Sri. Rajiv Nigam delivered key addresses, outlining the core strengths of CBOA and how this Triennial sets our course for the next three years.

LEADERSHIP ADDRESSING

AT THE 20th TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE

We were also honored by the presence of our Executive Director, Shri Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia, whose encouraging words reinforced the strong bond between management and the association.



Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia
Executive Director



Vinny Martis
Senior Vice President

The 20th Triennial Conference was marked by the presence of Smt. Vinny Martis, the first woman Vice President of CBOA. Her participation in the proceedings served as a powerful symbol of the changing face of our association and its commitment to inclusive leadership. As a pioneer for women in the trade union movement, her unique position inspired many and highlighted the vital role women play in CBOA.

LEADERSHIP ADDRESSING

AT THE 20th TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE



Kukatlaopalli Ravi Kumar
General Secretary, CBOA



K Satyanarayana Raju
MD & CEO, Canara Bank



RISE OF TRADE UNIONS




IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY

WHERE NUMBERS END,
VOICES BEGIN !



Trade unionism in the Indian banking industry did not emerge in defiance of institutions; it arose from within them. As banking transformed into a pillar of national development, its employees recognised that stability, fairness and professional dignity could not be left to administrative discretion alone. The growth of banking unions, therefore, was not merely a labour movement—it was an institutional necessity.

Yet, as with much of India's labour history, the narrative of banking trade unions has largely been told through a masculine frame. This is not because women were absent, but because systems were slow to recognise participation beyond visibility. To understand where banking unions stand today—and where women leaders are now emerging—we must trace both the institutional rise of banking trade unionism and the deeper currents of women's engagement with organised labour.

Banking Trade Unions: An Institutional Response

Trade unionism in the Indian banking industry did not emerge in defiance of institutions; it arose from within them. As banking transformed into a pillar of national development, its employees recognised that stability, fairness and professional dignity could not be left to administrative discretion alone. The growth of banking unions, therefore, was not merely a labour movement—it was an institutional necessity.

Yet, as with much of India's labour history, the narrative of banking trade unions has largely been told through a masculine frame. This is not because women were absent, but because systems were slow to recognise participation beyond visibility. To understand where banking unions stand today—and where women leaders are now emerging—we must trace both the institutional rise of banking trade unionism and the deeper currents of women's engagement with organised labour.

This maturity culminated in the formation of the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), a collective platform uniting multiple unions across cadres. UFBU became the principal voice in wage settlements, service conditions and policy dialogue, reflecting a rare consensus-driven approach in Indian trade unionism.

Women and Trade Unions: Presence Without Power

While banking unions strengthened institutionally, women's participation followed a more complex trajectory. Women entered the banking workforce in increasing numbers, particularly in clerical and officer cadres. Union membership figures reflected this growth. Yet research consistently points to a gap between membership and meaningful participation.

Studies on women's trade union involvement describe this phenomenon as pseudo representation—a condition where women are counted but not heard. Membership numbers rose steadily, yet leadership and decision-making remained disproportionately male-dominated. This was not a reflection of women's lack of interest or capability, but of union cultures shaped around uninterrupted availability, confrontational meeting styles and informal power networks.

Employment Trends in CPSEs: A Structural Shift

This structural gap becomes clearer when viewed against broader public sector employment trends. Banking, as a major component of organised public employment, reflects similar pressures visible across **Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)**.

Source:

Public Enterprises Survey, Department of Public Enterprises; official analyses published in national business dailies.

Parallel to this, officer-level unionism developed a distinct identity through AIBOC. AIBOC asserted that officers, despite their managerial roles, were not detached from collective interests. Its interventions extended beyond pay to questions of ethical banking, professional accountability and institutional integrity—concerns central to the survival of PSBs.



These structures were inherited rather than intentionally exclusionary. Yet their impact was tangible. Women often deferred leadership roles, displayed lower confidence in male-dominated forums or withdrew from active participation when family responsibilities collided with rigid union schedules. The issue, therefore, was systemic—how unions were designed, not whom they were meant to serve.

“Women’s presence in trade unions has never been the problem; the challenge has always been whether participation was allowed to mature into power.”

Indicator	FY 2022–23	FY 2023–24
Total CPSE employment	15.18 lakh	15.42 lakh
Regular employees	~8.40 lakh	~8.14 lakh
Contractual / casual workers	~6.78 lakh	~7.05 lakh
Growth in total employment	—	+1.61%

While overall employment shows marginal growth, the decline in regular employment alongside a rise in contractual and casual labour signals a deeper restructuring of public employment. For women workers, the consequences are sharper. Contractualization weakens job security, slows career progression and dilutes access to social security—areas where women are already structurally disadvantaged.

Though banking has historically remained relatively insulated, consolidation, outsourcing and digitalisation are increasingly reshaping its workforce. In this environment, the gap between women's participation and leadership within unions is no longer incidental; it is consequential.

Lessons from Women-Led Labour Movements

Indian trade union history offers instructive correctives. Women leaders such as **Anasuya Sarabhai**, who led the 1918 Ahmedabad textile strike, demonstrated that labour leadership could be principled, inclusive and firm without being adversarial. Her work laid an ethical foundation for organised labour in India.

Later, **Maniben Kara's** leadership among railway workers and her presidency of the **Hind Mazdoor Sabha** in 1948 showed how labour rights and democratic values could advance together. The informal sector revolution led by **Ela Bhatt** through **Self-Employed Women's Association of India (SEWA)** in 1972 further expanded the definition of labour, insisting that dignity, social security and financial independence were as critical as wages.

These movements succeeded because they restructured participation itself. They acknowledged the triple burden women carry—as workers, caregivers and homemakers—and brought childcare, health, maternity benefits and financial inclusion into the centre of union discourse. Not as concessions, but as necessities.



Maniben Kara



Anasuya Sarabhai



Ela Bhatt

Why This Matters for Banking Unions Today

Within banking trade unions, women leaders are increasingly reshaping priorities without fragmenting collective goals. Issues once seen as peripheral—work–life balance, maternity-linked transfers, workplace dignity, safety and mental health—are now being articulated as integral to fair service conditions.

Rather than diluting bargaining power, this broader agenda strengthens it. It aligns union demands with lived realities, reinforcing credibility among members and legitimacy in negotiation.

Towards a More Representative Union Culture

The future of banking trade unionism depends on its ability to adapt without losing institutional discipline. Trade union education, mentorship and deliberate leadership grooming are essential to bridge the gap between participation and power. When women are equipped with legal knowledge organisational exposure and policy understanding, engagement deepens naturally.

This is not a story of replacing leadership, but of broadening it. Banking unions such as UFBU and AIBOC stand at a juncture where inclusivity can reinforce foresight and resilience. A union that fully reflects its workforce is better positioned to negotiate, to resist inequitable reform and to safeguard public banking.

“When women move from membership to leadership, trade unionism does not fragment; it becomes complete.”



Conclusion

The rise of trade unionism in Indian banking is a story of collective responsibility, institutional maturity and disciplined negotiation. The gradual ascent of women within this movement reflects not a rupture, but an evolution—one that mirrors broader social change.

As women move from presence to power, they bring with them a more expansive understanding of labour—one that accounts for life beyond the ledger and dignity beyond designation. In doing so, they do not weaken trade unionism. They complete it.

The next chapter lies not in asking whether women belong in union leadership, but in recognising that the future strength of banking unions depends on how fully they are included.



Rise in Women Leadership in CBOA in the Ravi Kumar Era

From Representation to Responsibility



Women's Leadership in CBOA in the Ravi Kumar Era

Institutional change rarely announces itself. It becomes visible instead through everyday practice —through who is invited to speak, who is trusted with responsibility and who participates in shaping decisions. In the Canara Bank Officers' Association (CBOA), the years following 2021 marked such a transition. Not dramatic, not declarative, but steady and unmistakable.

Women were never absent from CBOA. What changed after Shri. K Ravi Kumar assumed charge as General Secretary was the manner in which women's participation began to translate into responsibility, influence and sustained leadership. Representation moved decisively beyond visibility and into decision-making.

“Women were always present in CBOA. What changed was the seriousness with which their participation was allowed to shape decisions.”

From 2021 onwards, under the leadership of Shri. K Ravi Kumar, this shift gained clarity and momentum. The emphasis was not on symbolism, but on work. Inclusion was not framed as a gesture, but as a function of commitment, capability and willingness to serve the organisation.





WOMEN
in Leadership

Leadership Across Levels

Presently, women's leadership at the senior-most level includes Senior Vice-President, Vinny Martis Mendonca, reflecting the confidence placed in women at the apex of the association.

“

As this approach took root, women's leadership became clearly visible across organisational tiers, following a defined and respectful hierarchy.

At the level of Deputy General Secretaries women leaders have been actively involved in organisational functioning, coordination and policy engagement.

At the level of Assistant General Secretaries women have taken on operational and representational responsibilities central to the association's work.

Taken together, this represents ten women members in the Executive Committee—comprising one Senior Vice-President, five Deputy General Secretaries and four Assistant General Secretaries. Prior to 2021, women's representation at the Executive Committee level was limited to five Assistant General Secretaries.

What is significant in this progression is not numbers alone, but continuity. Women's leadership within CBOA is no longer isolated or episodic; it is distributed, sustained and embedded across the organisation.



Vinny Martis Mendonca
Senior Vice President, CNT



Surabhi Sharma
CNT & AGS

The present composition therefore reflects a 100 per cent increase in women's representation at the highest decision-making level of CBOA



WOMEN
in Leadership

DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARIES



Swathi K



V. S. Anuradha



Rashmi Sharma



Rachna Kashyap



Priya Yogesh Ghorpade

ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARIES



Goutamee Ghosh
AIBOC West Bengal EC
Member



Neha Aafreen
Chief Editor
She Can Magazine



Sushma
Assistant General
Secretary

In the era of Ravi Kumar 3.0. there has been a stupendous rise in women's representation at 40% in Central Committee and 16.67% in Regional Secretaries.



WOMEN
in Leadership

CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**Shradha Purushottam
Chourasia**



V Ramya



Suchitra B



**H S Indumathi
Thange**



**Athira R
Chandran**



**Lavanya
Patnana**



**Tangala
Bhavani**

REGIONAL SECRETARIES



Chanchal



**Maha
Lakshmi P**



**Ankita
Kandari**



**Darshan C
Shigihalli**



**Antony Maria
Anitha J**



Kasthuri R



Patil Saritha



CENTRAL COMMITTEE INVITEES



Vidhi Jataniya



Henu Madhan



Deepika Khapate



Ayushi Malviya



Parnita Keshri



Deepali Awasthi



K Sowjanya



Triveni Botu



Bandlamudi
Sireesha



Kallam Aswini
Pratyusha



WOMEN
in Leadership

Under the initiative of Shri K Ravi Kumar, She Can also evolved into a collective of nearly 300 bright and committed women officers across India. This group was consciously built by identifying women with enthusiasm, clarity of thought and leadership potential. Through this collective, women were encouraged not merely to participate, but to think and lead.

“

This shift found its strongest expression in policy and practice. Platforms such as She Can were conceived not as ceremonial forums, but as structured spaces for engagement, dialogue and leadership development. Women were included in CNT teams and involved in discussions that shaped organisational priorities.

The association's agenda during this period also reflected a deeper understanding of women's lived realities. Motherhood was addressed not as a personal limitation, but as an organisational responsibility. Measures such as crèche facilities for mothers with children up to two years, transfer exemptions for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and smoother transitions back to work after ML were pursued with intent.

One of the most consequential developments during this period was the menstrual leave. A long-standing demand within CBOA, it gained momentum after the association's re-affiliation with the AIBOC. During the bipartite settlement process, the sustained push from our GS resulted in the introduction of a one-day sick leave for women employees across public sector banks, without the requirement of medical certification. The measure rested on trust and dignity.



Policy Shaped by Lived Experience

One significant outcome of this trust was the decision to entrust women members with the responsibility of selecting the Tagline of the Year, giving them a direct role in shaping the association's public voice and vision.

The She Can magazine further strengthened this effort by creating sustained visibility for women leaders. It documented ideas, experiences and leadership journeys, ensuring that women's contributions were not confined to internal spaces, but became part of the association's intellectual and organisational record.

“She Can did not merely create space for women; it created visibility, continuity and confidence.”

Transparency around sabbatical leave—particularly for new mothers—was strengthened, replacing uncertainty with clarity. Spouse-ground transfers received greater attention, with women's circumstances reflected more consistently in representation.

“When policy is shaped by lived experience, it ceases to be exceptional and becomes standard.”



Leadership as listening

What underpins these developments is a leadership style rooted in listening. Shri K Ravi Kumar's engagement across cadres and regions focused on identifying commitment and willingness to serve the association. Women's inclusion followed this principle naturally. It was neither selective nor performative, but part of a broader effort to draw from the organisation's full strength.

Those prepared to work found space. Those ready to take responsibility were trusted.



Conclusion

The rise of women's leadership in CBOA during the Ravikumar era reflects an association comfortable with evolution. It demonstrates how inclusion, when backed by intent and structure, moves beyond representation into responsibility.

Women in CBOA today contribute to policy, participate in decision-making and uphold organisational values with confidence. In recognising this, the association has not altered its purpose; it has strengthened it.

“When leadership reflects its membership, credibility follows naturally.”

The confidence with which women now occupy leadership space within CBOA is not an endpoint. It is a foundation—one that speaks of balance, institutional maturity and unshakable pride.

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RC Member, Hyderabad



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