

# Several IDBI Bank staff transferred, suspended

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**N**EW DELHI: Several employees of IDBI Bank, who went on a strike at the end of the last financial year to protest against the government's move to lower its stake below 51%, have been transferred, while 11 have been suspended after the management took a grim view of their conduct.

Bank employees said nearly 200 of their colleagues have been transferred across the country with some of the leaders in cities such as Guwahati and Delhi being on the list. A senior bank executive, however, said around 50 employees have been transferred across zones, a decision that was taken by the central office, adding that he did not have the numbers for intra-zone transfers. He also described some of the transfers as routine.

"As a bank we have been mild. The number of suspensions is small considering that the action of some people affected the bank at a very critical time, which is end of the financial year," said the executive.

IDBI Bank employees brought work to a standstill during the last week of March to protest against the government's move to reduce its stake and offload it to international and institutional investors.

Sources said the management has taken exception to some of the posts that were circulated via social media, including a call to withdraw salaries from bank accounts so that IDBI Bank's deposits were lower at the end of the year. Similarly, some of the employees who accused part of the top management of being corrupt, have been suspended. "There were derogatory comments that were circulated through social media and WhatsApp, which cannot be condoned," said a source in the government.

Employees were quite vocal in their protests at town hall meetings across the country that were attended by IDBI Bank MD &

CEO K P Kharat, deputy MD B K Batra and other senior executives.

However, the government has not altered its plan and is holding firm despite other unions joining the protest. The All India Bank Employees' Association, for instance, has included dropping IDBI Bank privatisation plans as one of the demands, while calling for a strike next month.