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All India Railwaymen's Federation
(Estd, 1924)

4, STATE ENTRY ROAD,
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No.AIRF/Sub-Committee(98)

Dated: December 22, 2011

The General Secretaries,
All Affiliated Unions,

Dear Coms.,

Sub: Issues raised by AIRF representatives during meeting with the High Level Safety Review Committee

During the meeting held today, i.e. on 22nd December, 2011, with the High Level Safety Review Committee, which was attended by myself and Rakhal Das Gupta, Working President/AIRF, the following issues were raised by us:-

- There are large number of vacancies(more than 1,50,000 safety categories belonging to Running, Operating and Maintenance Cadre) which needs to be filled up immediately.
- Running and other operating staff are not getting periodical rest. Leaves are refused to them. Even Leave Reserve, Rest Giver and Trainee Reserves are not available.
- Infrastructure is being developed and new trains being introduced, without additional proper manpower.
- Indiscriminate surrender of posts on thumb-rule principle is counter-productive for an organization like Railways.
- Inadequacy of funds for replacement/renewal and maintenance of rolling stock, track and signalling.
- Inadequate facilities of training and that too without motivation to the trainees as well as trainers.
- New technology is being adopted without any arrangement for proper training of the staff.
- There are inadequate research facilities.
- Material/equipment failure is attributed to Human Failure – life cycle principle has not been fixed. The process of procurement being age old and traditional, the material input, even for safety


components, is delayed inordinately as also quality of procurement is not maintained because of lowest rate concept of the tenders.

- Running Staff must be provided with electronic safety backup, so that in case of any failure, trains may stop to avert accidents.
- Excessive stress on Railway employees on account of overburdening of workload.
- Long duty hours of the staff, particularly Running Staff, Trains Controllers, S&T Staff, Track Maintenance Staff, Elect. And Mechanical, Shed and open line staff, Traffic and Operation Staff etc.
- Breach of rest of the Running Staff due to (i) shortage of manpower and, (ii) Inadequate Running Rooms facilities.
- Inadequate blocks for track maintenance due to over capacity utilization of routes.
- Feurocycosis – Minimum punishment, removal from service, particularly in case of passing signal (SPADE). Pending Discipline & Appeal cases also cause stress.
- Manning of unmanned level crossing.
- Assault on the Railwaymen, particularly on manned level crossings.
- Dying of staff on duty, particularly running-over of thousands of Trackmen.
- Recruitment of wards of the Railwaymen(recommendations of many Safety Committees and Commission's reports).
- Unauthorized encroachment on railway land near railway tracks.
- Condition of the Railway quarters and colonies is not conducive for proper rest in case of Running Staff and the staff engaged in maintenance of rolling stock, tracks and signalling.
- No proper counseling and inspection.
- Decision making process being extremely slow, sometimes it becomes irrelevant and out of context.
- Lack of proper mechanism for timely redressing staff grievances even at the lowest level adds to working with strain and stress, particularly by the staff of safety categories.
- No proper mechanism for motivation of railway staff and inadequate promotional prospects.
- Sabotage in terrorist infested areas and killing of on duty Running, Operating, Signal and Track Maintenance staff. There should be provision of Display Board in Driver's cabin, so that driver could see line position. This is specifically required in case of possible sabotage.

- Earlier detonators were used to be fixed 270 mtrs. away from the distance of the signal. Now the same has been changed to 270 mtrs. from the home signal. Further, where detonators are not used/available, white marking is being done on the track. These are some potential dangers to control trains in the event of impending accidents.
- Break Power Certificate is issued for specified distance/days. In case of life of Break Power Certificate is lapsed, the Loco Pilots are being asked with the remark “proceed with some condition.”
- Present communication system is inadequate. In addition, Running and Operating Staff feels that CUG Phone should also be provided to them.
- Fire in trains has become a serious problem. Some device should be evolved so that smoke and fire could be detected on primary stage and could be contained. Existing fire extinguisher could not meet the situation. This needs to be upgraded for easy handling and affective application.
- Classification of duty hours is changed arbitrarily. Somewhere duty hours are not available to the staff. Running and Operating staff are being compelled to perform excess duty, which is dangerous not only for the staff itself but also the travelling public.
- There is serious unrest among the staff, mainly Loco Running and Artisan staff. There major grievances are not redressed, e.g. Loco Pilots(Goods, Passenger and Mail/Express) have been bunched in one Grade Pay, i.e. Rs.4200 and on promotion, they are not benefitted even by a single pie.
- Departmentalization is a big problem in the Railways.
- Unconstrained is a major affair. Even social cause born to the tune of Rs.15,000 crore annually are not being reimbursed by the general revenue. It is feared that whatever progressive recommendations may be made by the Committee, the same may be bogged down in the name of fund constrain.

Request has been extended to the Committee to visit Zonal Railways and important centres. Federation, however, may be given a scope to make a detailed submission.

Comradely yours,



(Shiva Gopal Mishra)