

Shiv Gopal Mishra, Railways, Secretary, NRMU, HMS & AIRF, Delhi

Name	Shiv Gopal Mishra, Railways, Secretary, NRMU, also in Leadership of HMS & AIRF
Date of Interview	October 11, 2002.
Time	Afternoon
Place	NRMU head office at Chemsford Road, Delhi.
Context	Shiv Gopal Mishra is in good health and the second rung leadership of HMS and AIRF though he is one of the Secretaries of NRMU one of the unions of HMS in AIRF. He has struggled and seems to be a good leader and sharp in his memory and quite honest in his personality.
Interviewers	Anil Rajimwale, and Bobby Poullose

Biographical Sketches

He was born on 15th August 1950 in Haldoi in UP. His father worked in the electricity department. He was a leftist and moved from left to ultra. Shiv Gopal Mishra did his M.Sc. from Lucknow and Kanpur. In 1969 he joined as Apprentice Mechanic and training got over in Dec. 1974. He joined railways as Electrical Chargeman in 1974 December just after the historic 1974 railway strike. During the strike he was a supervisor in the railways. As their jobs were temporary they were told by the union not to join the 1974 strike. The 1974 strike had a big impact on him. And in December 1974 he joined the AIRF union NRMU. In 1976 he organized a strike and Lucknow bandh over the issue of beating up of a railwayman by police. He won the strike. This was his personal experience. Till 1991 Shiv Gopalji worked at the division level and then moved to the center level as Assistant Secretary and General Secretary of the UP HMS. In 1991 he again was part of the national level hartal on giving DA to employees in lieu of price rise. In 2002 he again got elected as UP Gen Secretary of HMS. He was board of director to many railway cooperative banks. Now he is in the top leadership of NRMU.

Transcript Summary

Shiv Gopal Mishra was born on 15th August 1950 in Haldoi in a village called Naya gaon in UP. His father was working in the UP electricity department but was a committed communist and moved from CPI to CPI (ML). He has seen Jharkhande Rai in his childhood and saw his simplicity. However his father used to be always out and it was his mother who somehow managed. It was a tough life nevertheless his father's life impressed him. He studied B.Sc. from Lucknow and from Kanpur did his M.Sc. Then in 1969 he got selected in railways as Apprentice Mechanic and training got over in December 1974. He joined as Electrical Chageman in 1974. Actually he wanted to be a teacher but by accident joined the railways. His stipend in those days was Rs. 250/- after training. During his student days Shiv Gopal Mishra was with SFI and SYS and under the influence of P.D. Tandon and supported the 1968 rail workers strike whose leader in Lucknow those days was T.N. Bajpai who was the messiah of lower class employees. During the 1974 railway strike Shiv Gopal Mishra was in railways and was a supervisor. As they were temporary they were told by the union not to strike as they would lose their jobs and only support the strikers which they did do. In the Mugal Saria railway headquarters Mrs. Gandhi really let loose repression on the rail workers. It had a big impact on him. In December 1974 he joined NRMU and got elected as delegate from a constituency i.e. Town Supply Charbagh. Till December 1976 he worked at the branch level and then moved to the divisional level. There he found the work suffocating. In 1976 there was an incident in which the police officials beat up one of the railway officials badly. On this issue Shiv Gopal Mishra mobilized the NRMU rail workers and there was three days of Lucknow Bandh. The Lucknow DM in those days was Yogendra Narain who later became Defence Secretary. Shiv Gopal Mishra himself negotiated and got ex-gratia payment for the rail workers and the man responsible for the attack on the rail worker was removed. It was an experience for Shiv Gopal Mishra. Till 1991 Shiv Gopalji worked at the division level and then moved to the center level as Assistant Secretary and the General Secretary of the UP HMS. In 1991 he was part of a hartal on the issue of government giving cost of living compensation. In 2002 again he was elected to UP HMS Gen. Sec. Post. Then he was a board of director in the many railway employees cooperative banks. Thus he was part of the cooperative movement. As regards the major strikes he said that in the 1960 strike there was no negotiating machinery and it got created as a result. As regards the 1968 strike Mrs. Gandhi saw it as a revolt by govt. employees. As far as the 1974 rail strike is concerned it was thrust upon the workers as Mrs. Gandhi did not like George Fernandes. In 1996-97 Inderjit Gupta gave the workers a good deal with the 5th Pay Commission. As regards today's challenges he said they are from outside i.e. globalization and internally from BMS and Shiv Sena trying to form unions in railways, however still AIRF is still the biggest union in the country with 1.3 million members and over 20,000 cadres at an all-India level all under one "malik".