

AIRF Collection

LRSA Memorandum, AIRF Notice of Meeting (AIRF/ 160 -B (iii))

Authors: All India Loco Running Staff Association (AILRSA), AIRF

[Archives of Indian Labour / AILH – VV Giri NLI]

ALL INDIA LOCO RUNNING STAFF ASSOCIATION

(REGD. NO. 38/NAT)

CAMP: DELHI

21st December, 1973.

HUMBLE MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE HONOURABLE PRIME MINISTER

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI

Respected Madam,

With due respect, we beg to bring to your kind notice, the facts and circumstances which forced the Loco Running Staff on certain Railways to go on Agitation during the recent days.

2. The Loco Running Staff Association Agitation in August was withdrawn on the basis of an agreement between the Railway Minister, the Labour Minister and the Association signed on 13 August, 1973. It was agreed that the two main issues, namely, withdrawal of all victimisation cases and reduction of working hours to 10, would be implemented within six weeks of the withdrawal of the agitation, and four other demands, namely, equal pay for equal work, pay protection and job guarantee to medically decategorised staff, negotiating facilities and revision of mileage allowance, were, however, left to be announced through the Loco Running Staff Grievance Committee. It was also agreed that all other grievances would be discussed and decided by the Committee.

3. As suggested by the Chairman of the Loco Running Staff Grievance Committee at the first meeting on 23rd August, the Association submitted full details at the second meeting held on 10th September, at Madras of : (i) cases of victimization, (ii) past unimplemented assurance and (iii) list of grievances. The Committee has held six meetings so far, and nearly four months have elapsed since the agreement was signed; but it is regrettable that no progress has been made in regard to implementation of any of these issues.

4. In all the six meetings, only two subjects have so far been discussed and that too partially. These relate to withdrawal of victimization cases and implementation of 10 hours working. Though these issues were clearly unrelated to the other issues, the management side has been insisting in the later meetings of the committee that these constitute a part of the total agreement and as such can be settled only as a part of the package deal involving settlement of all the issues at the same time.

5. The Association has all along protested against this change of attitude and violation both in letter and spirit of the agreement. The Administration representatives have been adopting all through an obstructionist attitude and have consistently refused to implement even such decisions of the Committee which could easily have been implemented. They have been refused to supply the minutes of the meetings to the members representing the staff side. The staff side feels that this is entirely contrary to the spirit of the agreement reached with the Government. This is clear from the fact that the staff side members are not treated as on duty even for attending the meetings of the Grievances Committee. They are even refused leave to proceed on the line to collect relevant information in connection

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with their work on the Committee. This attitude clearly shows that they interpret their view not as one of finding ways and means of implementing the Govt. decision reached at the highest arrived at.

6. While decisions on issues under discussion in the Committee are unduly prolonged, a systematic campaign of further victimization, removals, reversions and transfers of active members of the Association in various Railways has been let loose.

7. This was particularly evident on the Western Railway where a number of active workers of the Association were victimised, retrenched or otherwise harassed. Fresh removals, reversions, suspension, penal transfers, charge sheets, pay cuts, surrendering of promotions and debarment of promotions were ordered and all the past cases were kept as a "package deal". Not only this the National Holiday payment for 15th August, 1973 was not paid to 70 employees, Ajmer, so many transfer lists were declared and even the train tickets of the Diesel Staff of Gandhidham were tampered as a result of which 15 days earned payments were not paid to entire staff. Some newer ~~XXXXXX~~ methods of harassing the staff were started such as keeping them under training for months together, by sending workers, for promotion courses and conversion courses out of seniority and out of turn and by bringing expert revengeful supervisors on peaceful places. This systematic harassment and refusal of the officers to even entertain any representation from the Association further disillusioned the loco staff with the unsatisfactory working of the loco running staff Grievances Committee. When it was found that there was no attempt to look into the grievances of the staff nor to ease the situation but only further repression, the agitation spread to other centres also. In a bid to get the matters settled amicably, the Association sent a number of representations to the Railway Minister, the Labour Minister, and even to the Prime Minister herself and all others concerned, seeking their help and intervention. But to no avail. In the meanwhile, newer methods of harassment and provocation were started by the Railway Board and railway authorities on all railways and the situation further deteriorated.

8. The President alongwith three secretaries of the Association met the Railway Minister and the Labour Minister on 1st December and brought home to them the seriousness of the situation and the need for immediate action. The Railway Minister promised to look into the matter and asked Mr. Sabhapathi to see him again on the 4th December. As, however, the Railway Minister was not available on the 4th, Sri Sabhapathi met him on the 5th alongwith Vice President, Mr. Kewalal. He informed him that in spite of his promised instructions to the Railway Administrations to withdraw the cases, etc. against the Association members, nothing had been done and the local Railway Administration had denied having received any such instructions. He, therefore, requested the Railway Minister to give him a copy of his instructions so that on that basis he could persuade his Association members to call-off the agitation and go back to work. At this time, the Chairman of the Railway Board, Shri Bery, joined the discussions. He stated that "there was absolutely no truth in the representation submitted by the Association to the Railway Minister on 1.12.73, and that in fact there was no agitation at all on the Western Railway." He further advised Mr. Sabhapathi not to irritate the Minister, and to go back.

9. This clearly shows the usual bureaucratic unhelpful attitude of the Chairman of the Railway Board. It may be pointed out that the August agitation was also sparked off by the refusal of Mr. Bery to implement the assurances given

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by the Railway Minister in May, 1973. In June '73, when there was a prospect of settlement of the dispute where the Association representatives met the Railway Minister, it was only the intransigence deliberate of Mr. Bery that scuttled the settlement. As Member Staff of the Railway Board instead of helping a settlement, he took a hostile attitude, started a revangeful action against the Association and its members particularly on the Northern and western Railways.

10. The Railway Administration has also been using Mr. George Fernandes and the local unions affiliated to the AIRF to disrupt the locomen's agitations.

11. The Association is fully alive to its responsibilities in the present critical phase of our national economy and is most anxious to settle all issues peacefully and across the table. If this has not been possible so far, the responsibility lies squarely on the Railway Administration. We can assure you that the Association is prepared to take all steps necessary for an honourable settlement of dispute.

12. While we are thankful to the Hon. Labour Minister for the steps he has already initiated to bring about a settlement, we would suggest respectfully, that, as a first step the Railway Minister should invite all the Staff Members of the Grievance Committee to Delhi immediately so that negotiations could be started and issues settled expeditiously.

13. We would further suggest that the outstanding issues which would enable the Association to advise its members to call-off the agitation immediately are :-

- a) All arrested persons should be released forthwith, pending warrants withdrawn and charge-sheets withdrawn. All acts of victimisation whether of an administrative character or otherwise should be rescinded, period of all agitations be treated as on duty.
- b) Negotiation facilities to the All India Loco Running Staff Association should be ensured at all levels.
- c) The Hon. Labour Minister should be asked to take up the responsibility of implementing the August Agreement and all matters arising therefrom subsequently.

In concluding, we would reiterate, once again, Respected Madam, that the matter brooke no delay and we trust you will take urgent action on the same.

We beg to remain, respected Prime Minister,

Yours obediently,

Sd/-

(M. R. Sabapathy)  
President

(H. S. Choudhary)  
General Secretary,  
Western Railway.

Copy to :

The Hon'ble Minister for Railways,  
The Hon'ble Minister for Labour/All Hon'ble MPs  
All Press and Public Representatives.

# All India Railwaymen's Federation

(Estd. 1924)

125/E, BABAR ROAD, NEW DELHI-1.

26th December, 1973.

22  
x10

MEETING

100

met: 20.  
30 < 10  
200

OF

ALL INDIA RAILWAYMEN'S FEDERATION

WITH

REPRESENTATIVES OF CATEGORICAL ORGANISATIONS  
UNIONS/ASSOCIATIONS OF RAILWAYMEN AND OTHER  
ORGANISATIONS/UNIONS/ASSOCIATIONS OF CENTRAL  
GOVT. EMPLOYEES WILL BE HELD TODAY, THE 26TH  
DECEMBER, 1973, AT 3.00 P.M. IN THE AIRF'S OFFICE  
AT 125/E, BABAR ROAD, NEW DELHI.

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ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CATEGORICAL  
ORGANISATIONS/UNIONS/ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER  
ORGANISATIONS/UNIONS/ASSOCIATIONS ARE REQUESTED  
TO K Y MAKE IT CONVENIENT TO ATTEND THE  
MEETING IN AIRF'S OFFICE AT 3.00 P.M. ON 26TH  
DECEMBER, 1973.

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*Priya Gupta*

(PRIYA GUPTA)  
GENERAL SECRETARY,  
ALL INDIA RAILWAYMEN'S FEDERATION  
125/E, BABAR ROAD,  
NEW DELHI-1  
26.12.73.

1 copy in NRMU office  
1 copy in AIRF office  
1 copy in [unclear]

2/10/2018  
12/2/2018  
H. Sh. J. N. Pandey (N.K. President Egg Workers)

① Why Categorical Workers  
took it, Both,

② P.K. Thakur Nammamthar  
was chairman APC  
- but could not  
implement one union in  
one industry

Two Decisions -

(a) Both federations to be merged

(b) Right of representation -  
must be there

(c) Mode of expenditure of  
money to be collected  
in struggle fund

5. Reasoning emergence of Categorical workers -  
Guard's Council -  
① Leadership break -

②

Here there is no Categorical Association  
which do not support A.P.C. -  
they should be called again by A.P.C.  
for discussion

He is keeping Rs 800 of the left over  
Whereas in July he gets only Rs 200/-  
Hence this ..

The draft of the statement was  
placed before the representatives of  
Associations / Unions