

Voice of Rail Engineers

Official Organ of

INDIAN RAILWAYS TECHNICAL SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION

Vol – 1 No-1&2

January - February, 2008

Price: Rs.10

MID NIGHT CANDLELIGHT DEMONSTRATION BY IRTSA

HUNDREDS OF ENGINEERS OF ICF & SOUTHERN RAILWAY AT CHENNAI DEMAND

At the stroke of MID-NIGHT on 27/28, February, hundreds of Supervising Engineers from ICF and from all the sub-units of Southern Railway held a MID-NIGHT demonstration in front of Chennai Central Railway Station, lead by Central President Er.M.Shanmugam. Engineers in large number responded instantaneously to the call given by Central President to highlight their agony in not allocating sufficient funds in the Railway Budget to meet the additional expenditure of implementation of Sixth Pay Commission's Recommendation.

"Candle gives light by sacrificing itself. Like that the Engineers had lighted candles to mark symbolically the sacrifice being made by the Railway Employees to achieve the dream targets set-forth by the Railways" said the President.

Engineers raised the following main demands:-

- ❖ Increase Budget allocation in Railway Budget from the allotted Rs. 5000 crores to Rs. 25000 crores to meet the additional expenses of Sixth Pay Commission and arrears thereof.
- ❖ Increase the Government budgetary support to Railways by three times.
- ❖ Grant two grade up-gradation Technical Staff in the replacement scales of proposed by Sixth CPC.
- ❖ Grant up-graded pay scales to Technical Supervisors in line with the increased duties and responsibilities.
- ❖ First class pass to all JEs, Irrespective of date of appointment.
- ❖ Incentive or Special pay to all Open Line Engineers
- ❖ Design allowance to all Design and Drawing Engineers.
- ❖ Revision of Incentive rates to the Staff & Engineers working in Production Units and Workshops
- ❖ Stop surrender of post immediately.
- ❖ Fill up all the vacant posts immediately
- ❖ Exempt all the allowances from Income tax.

Earlier Er.Tamilmaran, Vice President/IRTSA made an emotional appeal to all the Engineers to unite at this time of crisis and urged every one to educate the working class.

President Er. Shanmugam speaks to Media Direct action after SCPC Report if Basic Demands are not met

Print and Visual media made a wide spread coverage of the Candlelight Rally by IRTSA at Chennai. Central President IRTSA, Er Shanmugam explained about the demands of Railway men at large particularly of the Supervising Engineers, in a Press Conference, which was well attended by all the print and visual Medias and discussions held were given good coverage. President announced that if the Report of the Pay Commission turns out to be disappointing, there is bound to be a widespread agitation by IRTSA as well

NEW WEBSITE OF IRTSA LAUNCHED WITH MULTIPLE FEATURES

A beautiful & multi-featured website of IRTSA has been started from January, 08, under the domain name of www.irtsa.net. The website www.voiceofrailengineers.com started earlier, is also now directly linked to it, for convenience & effective management.

Now the members of IRTSA as well as others, will be able to know (*just with a "click of a mouse"*) on the internet, every thing about IRTSA including its Constitution, History, Struggle, Achievements, Charter of Demands of IRTSA's, its Reply to Questionnaire and exhaustive Memorandum to Sixth CPC as well as view copies of recent issues its Journal "Voice of Rail Engineers" & Pensioners Forum etc.

Links to all Railway Codes & Manuals and Administrative Acts, Rules and Orders have been provided through direct links to various important websites of Government of India, Indian Railways, Sixth CPC, Report of Fifth CPC, Pensioners Portal, Online Booking of Railways and Airlines and provision for placing Free Classified Adds for Members of IRTSA etc. Website shall be regularly upgraded to post Administrative Orders, Report of Sixth Pay Commission (*as soon as released*) and action taken thereon by the Government.

All Rail Engineers and others are requested to visit the site regularly to keep them fully informed.

- GS, IRTSA

Previously Published as "THE RAIL SUPERVISOR"

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: Rs.50

"SUCCESS COMES TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE"



Editorial**SHALL WE GET JUSTICE?**

As if the recent decision of the Government to raise the salary of the President of India to merely Rs one lakh P.M. and that of the Governors at Rs 75000, were not adequate indications of the shape of things to come, the government has added fuel to fire by making inadequate provision of only Rs 26657 crores in the Union Budget (for 2007-08) and only Rs 5000 crores the Railway Budget (for 2007-08) for implementation of Sixth Pay Commission Report and arrears thereof. These provisions are not adequate even to meet with the annual requirement of Rs 35, 000 crores (including Rs 8500 crores by the Railways) required for just one year of additional wages and Rs 1,00,000 crores with arrears from 1.1.2006, as per charter of demands submitted by IRTSA and other sections of employees to the Sixth Pay Commission. This has completely shattered all hopes of the employees, especially those in various Trade Unions – including IRTSA - who had worked hard to justify a much higher pay structure - keeping in view large scale erosion of value of currency, multiple rise of wage structure elsewhere in the country and huge rise in the GDP, NNP & Central Revenue collections and thus the consequential major rise in the paying capacity of the Government.

Apparently the Government does not want to share this bounty with the employees. How far the Pay Commission expects it to part with – is any bodies guess at this stage. The decision of the Government to revise the salary of the President & Vice President of the Country, does not come a day too soon – as it should have been done long back. But the amount of their revised salaries is neither adequate with their status nor commensurate with the huge pay packets available to top brass in the Indigenous Corporate Sector & the MNCs.

Unless the Pay Commission provides adequate relief, apart from the possibility of a major exodus & brain drain and flight of talent from Government to Private & Corporate Sector, serious agitation and unrest is bound to pick up after the belated Pay Commission Report. Already there is much erosion in the quality of talent opting to join the Government services – reversing the age old tradition of the best of the brains joining the clan. But a negative Report by the Sixth Pay Commission, will be a big dampener.

Let us hope that the Sixth CPC is not carried away by the said decisions of the Government - which can in any case improve upon the salaries of the First Citizen of the country and also be just to all the rest as well. - **HS**

**INCENTIVE / MOTIVATIONAL ALLOWANCE
DEMANDED FOR OPEN LINE ENGINEERS**

Central President submits memorandum to R.Velu, MOSR
On 30th January, at Basin Bridge Chennai, Coaching Depot, Southern Railway, Central President **Er.M.Shanmugam**, submitted a memorandum to **Sri.R.Velu, Honorable MOSR** demanding immediate grant of incentive/ motivational allowance to open line Engineers and staff. As an example, the manpower requirement for maintenance of passenger coaches in Train care centre, Basin Bridge, Chennai and its analysis about the short fall in manpower, model calculation sheet for coach earnings and motivational allowance were also presented. At the time of submission of memorandum, Er.Abdul Salam, Southern Railway Zonal Secretary, Er.Tamilmaran, Er.Nirmal Chandran, Er.K.V.Ramesh and other office bearers of IRTSA were present.

REVIEW OF PLB SCHEME PROPOSED

Railway Board (vide letter No.E(P&A)II-2006/PLB-16 dated 07.12.2007) has proposed a Review of the scheme of Productivity Linked Bonus for the financial year 2007-08 and onwards, to include a few additional factors for calculating the PLB.

Following is an extract from the Railway Board's letter (No.E(P&A)II-2006/PLB-16 dated 07/12/2007) to the Federations, while seeking their views thereon:-

I am directed to invite your attention to the cited subject and to state that subsequent to payment of productivity linked bonus (PLB) for the financial year 2005-06, a departmental committee was set by the board to review the scheme of PLB. The committee has submitted their report and changes recommended by the committee therein are as under:-

- ❖ The list of items being reckoned for working out capital weightage may be expanded from the existing three items viz (i) Tractive effort, (ii) Wagon Capacity and (iii) Seating capacity, to include another four items in physical terms viz. (a) Track modernization, (b) Tokenless Block Signalling, (c) Optical Fibre for control communication and (f) FOIS location
- ❖ For working out inter-se weights in respect of these proposed seven items, average capital investment of the preceding three years on the relevant plan heads may be reckoned.
- ❖ Instead of reckoning only non gazetted staff strength (excluding RPF/ RPSF personal), the total staff strength (including gazetted officers and also RPF / RPSF personal) be reckoned towards input.
- ❖ In addition to the non-gazetted staff (excluding RPF / RPSF personal), the scope of PLB scheme may be extended to cover all gazetted officers also (excluding RPF / RPSF officers / personal)

It is brought to your notice that the recommendation contained in item (i) above is identical to the recommendation made by the committee on Running Allowances – 2002 regarding revision in the PLB formula, which was considered in consultation with you earlier also; your letter dated 14-1-2005 connects. A sample PLB calculation sheet for the financial year 2006-07 by adoption of the above recommended parameters is enclosed which bear out the fact that the recommendation of the present committee are further refinements/rationalizations in the extant PLB scheme.

It is requested that your views in the above matter may please be furnished at the earliest to enable this office to concretize the PLB formula and obtain cabinet approval thereto for the purpose of PLB for the financial year 2007-08 onwards by taking in to account these revised parameters.

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RAILWAY BOARD ORDERS ON STAFFMATTERS

1. Implementation of Mutual Transfer orders.

Railway Board's letter No. E(NG)/2007/TR/26 dated 4-12-2007.

It has been brought to the notice of this Ministry that the requests for mutual transfer of employees are not being processed /implemented by authorities concerned in the Railways/ Divisions/Units and even after such transfers are accepted, the same are not implemented for the reason that one Railway/Division/ Unit wait for the other Railway/ Division/Unit to relieve the employee first. This leads to avoidable staff grievance and representations.

The Ministry of Railways have taken a serious view of the matter inasmuch as mutual transfers on the one hand enable transfer of an employee to a place of his choice with no or minimum loss of seniority and on the other since such transfers are on one to one basis in the same grade, the Railway/Division/Unit get the replacement simultaneously. Therefore, the Ministry of Railways desire that:-

- the request for mutual transfers should be processed/ accepted as soon as they are received subject to fulfillment of prescribed conditions and
- once the transfers are accepted, the employees concerned should be relieved immediately without waiting for the other unit to relieve the employee first.

It has also been decided that it should be the responsibility of concerned Head of Department of concerned Railway under whom the staff is working to ensure compliance of above decision in each and every case of mutual transfer.

2. Amendment to IREM - Para 1132 of Chapter XI- Inclusion of Private Insurance Companies approved by Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA) for the purpose of Insurance of the Houses/flats constructed/purchased with HBA.

Railway Board's letter No. F(E)Spl.2007 ADV./3/5 dt. 7-12-2007.

The Ministry of Railways are pleased to amend the existing provisions in Para 1132 of Chapter XI of IREM - Vol.I (Revised Edition, 1989) relating to House Building Advance as per enclosed Advance Correction Slip No. 197. **Advance Correction Slip No- 197**

The amendment placed below may be carried out in Para 1132 of Chapter XI of IREM, Vol. I (Revised Edition, 1989) regarding House Building Advance:-

Add the following as item 5 under sub-para 19 (i):-

5. "Any other Private Insurance Company approved by Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA) for the purpose of insurance of the Houses/flats constructed/ purchased with the help of HBA.

NOTICE

All Units & Subunits of IRTSA are requested to:-

- i) Get their Accounts audited & passed by EC & GB.**
 - ii) Hold their AGMs, conduct Elections & send reports to General Secretary & Zonal Secretaries.**
 - iii) a) Launch intensive Membership Drive for 2008 @ Rs 100PA. Approach all Engineers personally.**
 - b) Ask for Receipt Books from Central Treasurer.**
 - iv) Send Central Quota to Central Treasurer, IRTSA.**
- Er. O. N. Purohit, # 106, Suraj Nagar, Jodhpur- 342008**
(Mob 09828024476) by DD –in favour of IRTSA only.
- v) Collect Struggle Fund for the struggle ahead and send the same to the Central Treasurer as indicated above.**

GS, IRTSA

3. Grant of House Rent Allowance to Railway employees posted to new Zones/new Divisions - *Railway Board's letter No. E(P&A)II-98/HRA-6 dt. 12-12-2007.*

The question of extending the currency of the sanction contained in this office letter of even number dated 9-3-2004 as extended vide letter of even number dated 9-8-2005 and 9-8-2006 has been considered by the Board subsequent to issue of letter No. E(G)2007 QR 1-5 dated 88-2007 and it has been decided to extend currency of the instructions contained in letter dated 9-3-2004 ibid upto the dates specified against each new Zone, as under:-

East Central Railway : 31st December, 2007,
East Coast Railway : 31st August, 2007, North Central Railway : 31st August, 2007, North Western Railway : 31st August, 2007, South East Central Railway : 31st August, 2007, South Western Railway : 30th Nov., 2007, West Central Railway : 31st December, 2007.

Changes in Accounting Policy of Railways

Only one accounting change for capitalization of capital repayment component of lease charges payable to Indian Railways Finance Corporation was made with the approval of Comptroller & Auditor General of India during 2005-06. During 2006-07, following two accounting change have been carried out in consultation with Ministry of Finance, in accordance with the generally accepted accounting" practices and to reflect correct picture of financial status in the financial statements of railways with due disclosure in the budget documents:

- Accountal of reimbursement of loss on Strategic lines received from General Revenues as reduction in working expenses of concerned Railways. Previously, this amount was deducted from dividend payable by Indian Railways to General Revenues.

- Accountal of interest earned on Railway Fund balances to Railway Revenues as Miscellaneous Receipt. Previously, this amount was credited to fund balances directly without routing through railway revenues. The matter is under reference with Comptroller & Auditor General of India for their approval.

The accounts of 2006-07 are yet to be finalized. However, the accounting changes would increase the cash surplus by Rs. 2,183.47 crore in 2006-07, whereas these had no effect on the cash surplus of 200506. The fund balances of Indian Railways available for investment remains unaffected.

The accounting change for capitalization of capital repayment component of lease charges payable to Indian Railway Finance Corporation carried out in 2005-06 has approval of Comptroller & Auditor General of India. As regards accountal of reimbursement of loss on Strategic Lines received from General Revenues as reduction in working expenses, Audit has suggested to account for the amount as sundry other earnings instead of reduction in working expenses as proposed by Railways. The contention of Audit for accountal of interest earned on Railway Fund Balances as Railway Revenues is that this would lead to accountal of interest on fund balance as expenditure by both Ministry of Finance as well as Ministry of Railways. The matter is under discussion and will be finalized in consultation with Ministry of Finance and Comptroller & Auditor General of India

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CENTRAL PRESIDENT INTENSIVELY TOURS SUBUNITS OF SOUTHERN RLY

Urges cadres to get ready To face the challenges ahead

During the month of January, 2008 Central President, **Er.M.Shanmugam**, visited many sub-units of Southern Railway and addressed the gatherings of Supervising Engineers. The meetings were organized as a preparatory work prelude to the much expected VI Pay Commission recommendation. **Er.Tamilmaran**, Convener Technical Forum, **Er.K.V.Ramesh**, ACT, **Er.Abdul Salam** Zonal Secretary, S.Rly and **Er.Nirmal Chandran** accompanied Er.Shanmugam to the sub units.

At Chennai Egmore **Er.Thirugananam**, Vice President, S.Rly and **Er.Ravichandran**, Treasure, S.Rly assured participation in good numbers in all the programmes conducted by IRTSA. At Basin Bridge **Er.Thiyagarajan** welcomed the gathering and requested the Engineers to follow in the foot steps of the leaders. In the well attended meeting at Arakkonam **Er.Mathiazhagan** welcomed the gathering. In his speech **Er.Shanmugam** explained the difficult days ahead for Railwaymen particularly for the Supervising Engineers, if the increased duties and responsibilities of the cadre were not taken into account both by the Pay Commission and the Government. He explained the need to fight instantaneously if any injustice is done to the cadre in the VI Pay Commission recommendation and its implementation. **Er.Ragavan**, **President/AJJ**, **Er.K.V.Ramesh**, ACT, **Er.Ravichandran**, Treasurer/S.Rly, **Er.Nirmal Chandran** and **Er.Krishnamoorth** also spoke on the occasion.

At Carriage & Wagon works, Perambur, **Er.Giridaran** and **Er. Sanmugasundaram** made elaborate arrangements for the President's meeting with the Supervising Engineers shop wise. At LOCO works, Perambur, **Er.Ponpandi** organized the meeting shop wise. In the meeting held at Thondiarpeth yard, **Er.S.Subramanian** welcomed the gathering. **Er.C.V.Babu** urged the need to have smooth relation with the organized labour and organize ourselves still better manner.

Coimbatore Coaching Depot & Diesel Shed Trichy Sub Unit Formed

During his visit to Southern Railways sub Unit Central President interacted with open line Engineers of Coimbatore coaching depot and Trichy Diesel Loco Shed.

He also nominated office bearers for the new sub units. This adhoc committee will function until the office bearers are elected by its members.

New Office Bearers for Coimbatore

Sub unit President – C.Radhakrishnan
Sub unit Vice President- Venkatasubbhan
Sub Unit Secretary - Haridoss
Sub Unit Treasurer - Prathep Kumar.

New Office Bearers for Diesel Shed – Trichy

Sub unit President – Gunasekaran, SSE
Sub Unit Secretary - K.Baskar, JE
Sub Unit Treasurer - Balakrishnan, SSE

At the Diesel Shed Trichy, Central president inaugurated the new lecturer hall in the Training Centre on the request made by Sr.DME.

CENTRAL PRESIDENT VISITS GOLDEN ROCK WORKSHOP AND MADURAI DIVISION

On 22nd & 23rd of Feb, Central President along with **Er.Tamilmaran**, **Er.K.V.Ramesh**, **Er.L.Markantayan**, **Er.Raju** and **Er.Jagadeswaran** visited Golden Rock workshop, Trichy and Madurai. At GOC, **Er.Tirumaran**, Secretary welcomed the large gatherings of Engineers and assured the central leadership all kind of assistance that are required to face the Sixth Pay Commission Recommendation. **Er.Zaheer Hussian**, proposed the vote of thanks.

At Madurai, **Er.Balasuramanian**, welcomed CP, Office Bearers and the members. **Er.Sankaranarayanan** while delivering his vote of thanks assured Central President participation by Madurai Division in all the programmes/agitations going to be organized by IRTSA more vibrantly.

Central President's second leg of tour to Southern Railway sub-units

On 15th & 16th Feb, 2008 **Er.M.Shanmugam** along with **Er.Tamilmaran**, VP, **Er.K.V.Ramesh**, ACT, **Er.Abdul Salam**, ZS/S.Rly and **Er.Jagadeswaran**, CEC member visited Jolarpet, Erode, Coimbatore Coaching Depot, S&T workshop Podanur and the newly formed Salem Division.

At Jolarpet, **Er.Saravana Babu** chaired the meeting. **Er.Krishna Babu**, Secretary welcomed the gathering. **Er.Natchimuthu**, Treasurer proposed the vote of thanks. In a well attended meeting **at Erode** **Er.Elango**, President/AC Loco welcomed the Engineers. **Er.Jarom & Er.Basker** made elaborate arrangements for the meeting. In his vote of thanks **Er.Preenth**, Secretary, Diesel Shed, reminded all the members about the phrase "Sow your seeds, Harvest the crops". He also recalled the activities of IRTSA in the immediate past in which he has seen the involvement of Central President in each and every inch.

Highlights of President's speech

In his speech **Er. Shanmugam** elaborated three stages with past examples by which the much expected Sixth Pay Commission recommendations has to be approached.

First Stage: Injustice by the Pay Commission. In the V CPC for S-13 scale the common multiplying factor of 3.25 was not applied and for all scales 20% Pay fixation formula recommended. Due the fire got up immediately with the cadre IRTSA was able to agitate instantaneously to pressurize the Government to change the lower slab of S-13 scale from Rs.7000 to Rs.7450 and increased the fixation benefit to 40%.

Second Stage: Pay Commission Recommendations not accepted / Modified by the Government: HRA recommended as 30%, 15%, 7.5% and 5% of maximum of pay scale was modified as 30%, 15%, 7.5% and 5% of actual pay drawn. Dearness allowance (including dearness pay) should be paid net of taxes recommendation not accepted by the Government.

Third Stage: Pay Commission recommendations accepted by Govt. Not implemented by Railways:

III A/C travel for those drawing pay more than Rs.4100 was not implemented in Railways and JEs whose pay is Rs.5000 is continuously humiliated by denying upper class travel. Benefit of Gazetted status extended to SE & SSE scale was not implemented in Railways. Design Allowance implemented in other departments was not granted for Design Engineers working in Indian Railways.

Technical Forum of IRTSA, ICF & S.Rly celebrated New Year and Pongal Grandly, GM, Former MM, HODs, Officers & Union leaders graced the occasion

Nearly 800 Engineers from ICF & S.Rly participate

On 6th February Indian Railways Integrated Technical Forum of ICF and Southern Railway, A Cultural & Technical Wing of IRTSA celebrated New Year and Pongal grandly at Rail Kalyanmandapam, Perambur, Chennai. The programme turned out to be a grand success with Engineers in very large numbers participating from ICF and Sub – units of Southern Railway from Arokkonam, Avadi, Jolarpet, Podanur S&T workshop, Basin Bridge, Chennai Egmore, Chennai Division, Golden Rock work shop, Trichy, Tondiarpet participated.

Er.Tamilmaran, Convener S.Rly, welcomed the gathering and gave a brief report about the activities of the Forum. The function was inaugurated by **Smt.Sabita Gopal, GM/ICF. Sri.V.Carmelus, CME, S.Rly**, initiated the deliberation of Technical session.

Er.K.V.Ramesh, ACT, made a power point presentation on “**Media Reports on Indian Railways in the year 2017**” – A display of the dream of an eminent person. The vision report of **Sri.S.Dasarathy, Former MM** on Indian Railways dreamt about Trans Asian Rail Corridors, large freight corridors in Indian Railways, export of oil Bio Diesel to OPEC countries by India, container service in every station in Indian Railways, Guinness record set by IR as cheapest freight carrier, Five star overnighters on freight corridors, MPs demanding additional zones to their areas etc.

Er.M.Shanmugam made presentation about “**Greater Chennai and its transport needs**”. He explained about the need to increase the Metro Rail system in Chennai to the length of 261 kms with the minimum investment of Rs.11280 crores. He stressed upon the need to have only surface and elevated Metro Rail facility across the Chennai city and Greater Chennai. The new Rail connectivity proposed by the Forum will ease the population density in the Metro area and the density will evenly spread to the Greater Chennai area. Business centres, Industrial houses will move out to suburban area if proper Rail connectivity is established, he added. He gave a detailed power point presentation about the routes proposed and their cost.

Sri.T.P.Abdul Khader, DME/BBQ made a presentation on “**Crucial Role of Carriage Depots to meet customer needs**”. In the presentation he explained the huge increase in passenger volume handled by extra coaches in regular trains and by running special trains, over and above the introduction of new regular trains. Increased coach KM/day achieved by coaching depots due to increase in BPC to 3500km, elimination of secondary maintenance at congested coaching depots, augmentation of trains to 24 coaches rake, reduction of traffic spares from 10% to 5%. He also highlighted many passenger amenities introduced in the recent years.

In his highly enlightened valedictory address **Sri.S.Dasarathy, Former MM**, appreciated the efforts of IRTSA in uniting all Rail Engineers under one roof for the cause of betterment of Railway community.

Highlights of Sri.S.Dasarathy's speech

- ❖ Engineers' population in India is very high compared to USA and China by which India will have a distinct edge over other countries in the near future.
- ❖ Every one/group has to set a mission and work with zeal and commitment.
- ❖ Services of Railway Engineers behind the screen to run the Railways 24 hours 365 days may not be recognized by the users, as like the inventor of Television, but life will be miserable without rail wheels moving.
- ❖ The system adopted by HITACHI, SONY to elicit new innovations from employees should be adopted.
- ❖ Odd balls in the society should be nourished to get many innovative ideas from them.
- ❖ Introduction of Double Decker coaches on IR in a big way to meet the growing demands.
- ❖ Wheel diameter has to come down to get more passengers and freight space.
- ❖ IR should improve to export technologies related to Railways to advanced countries.
- ❖ High speed trains possible only on fully fenced tracks.
- ❖ Radical changes in use of materials to reduce the weight of rolling stock and to improve the ratio of pay load to tare weight.
- ❖ Coaches without any weld by using new generation adhesives.
- ❖ Dust and Noise free coaches.
- ❖ Thermo Electric cooling systems for air conditioned coaches to reduce the cost of air conditioning.
- ❖ Every production unit has to set target to manufacture certain number of zero defect rolling stocks, which should run trouble free until it reaches the work shop for POH.
- ❖ Syllabus in the STS and BTC should be reviewed regularly to include new technologies that can trigger new innovations.

Earlier in their speech **Sri.Arumugam**, President/**SRES**, **Sri.Janakiraman**, General Secretary/**DREU** and **Sri.Swaminathan**, Staff council member/**ICF & Vice President/ICFLU/AIRF** appreciated the efforts made by **Er.M.Shanmugam** and IRTSA in educating the Railwaymen in technical as well as other fields and assured their cooperation for their foresighted actions.

Er.M.selvaraj, Convener, ICF, Proposed the vote of thanks.

In the cultural session the top class classical dance presented by children of AKSHAYA ARTS won every body's appreciation.

The programme ended with a community dinner.

SC Railway, IRTSA unit Releases Diary and Honours Retired Engineers

In a function organized by Lalaguda Work shop IRTSA unit **Sri.Upendra Rao, CWM**, released the Diary published by IRTSA. In an another function held at Mettuguda, **Er.Krishna Rao**, Zonal Secretary, SCR released the hand Diary published by S&T unit of IRTSA. **Er.Appalasamy**, President, SCR, **Er.N.V.Ramana Murthy**, Org.Secretary and other office bearers were also present on the occasion.

HISTORY OF IRTSA – ITS STRUGGLE & ACHIEVEMENTS ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

IRTSA was formed in November, 1965, with an objective to unite & strive for better service conditions and emoluments of the Technical Supervisors / Engineers on the Indian Railways. Prior to the formation of IRTSA, there was no platform or organization to represent this vital category of "Frontline Managers" on the Indian Railways. Consequently the category had suffered tremendously at the hands of the Railway administration as well as the First and Second Pay Commissions due to lack of any forum to represent them before either of these forums (set up between 1946 - 1948 & 1957 - 1959 respectively) due to lack of any forum to represent them before either of these forums (set up between 1946 - 1948 & 1957 - 1959 respectively). Consequently, the category was equated erroneously with the non technical categories in group 'C' although the pay scales of Engineers / Technical Supervisors were much higher in Pre-1931 era than the other categories. IRTSA has represented and struggled for resolving the major problems facing the Engineers on the Indian Railways and has made remarkable achievements for the betterment of the Engineers in particular and the Railway men at large.

FORMATION:- Finally an Association was formed on 27th November, 1965, at Chennai. Shri Harchandan Singh was elected as its first General Secretary. The Association was initially named as Indian Railways Apprentice Mechanics & Ex-Apprentice Mechanics Association. Within an year thereof, the name of the Association was changed to INDIAN RAILWAYS TECHNICAL SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION (IRTSA), in a historic All India Conference held at New Delhi, on 27th November, 1966. The Conference was largely attended and widely publicized in the media. The Association was thereafter got registered at Delhi (no. 1329) under Indian Trade Union Act. Steps were simultaneously initiated to represent the problems of the category and to seek their early redressal through collective efforts and enmass representations. The Association worked in coordination with Indian Railways Foremen Association - which was formed in 1964 and which was finally merged with IRTSA in August, 1970 during the All India Joint Convention held at Ajmer.

GRADUAL GROWTH:- IRTSA initially represented a section category of Frontline Engineers // Technical Supervisors (*who were then called the Chargemen, Foremen & Draughtsmen etc.*) on the Indian Railways when there was no other platform to represent the category as a whole on the Indian Railways - due to which the category suffered a lot at the hands of the administration and the first two Pay Commissions. Its membership was subsequently extended to other cadres of the Technical Supervisors including the Junior Supervisors, thereafter to the *TXRs, IOWs, PWIs, SIs, & BRIs etc.* – (*who had since been re-designated along with Chargemen, Foremen and Shop Superintendent etc, as Junior Engineers, Section Engineers & Senior Section Engineers*) Over the years, the Membership was further extended to Store Incharges (*DSKps / DMS, Lecturers, Instructors & Scientific Staff etc.*

IRTSA gradually built up into a strong organization and made remarkable achievements – continuously struggling for the betterment of Technical Supervisors and Railway men at large during the last nearly 40 years. But in spite of strong recommendation by Railway Accident Inquiry Committee (RAIC) and Railway Reforms Committee (RRC), it had not been given "de-jure" recognition. But still it kept up its struggle and made numerous achievements (as enlisted separately in the chapter on Achievements). However, it had not affiliated itself to any Union or Federation at any stage, even though continuously striving for better Industrial Relations at all levels.

OFFICIAL JOURNALS

THE RAIL SUPERVISOR:- IRTSA started its monthly journal "*The Rail Supervisor*" in 1969 as a mouth piece of IRTSA. The journal served a very useful purpose as a media for communication both with members and the administration - highlighting the demands and aspiration as well as the organizational activities besides the publishing the copies of administrative orders & decisions made from time to time on related issues.

VOICE OF RAIL ENGINEERS:- After publishing "*THE RAIL SUPERVISOR*" for 37 years, CEC, IRTSA, decided to start a new journal under the title "*VOICE OF RAIL ENGINEERS*" keeping in view the changed environments and perspective. It has since been registered and is being published from Chennai.

STRUGGLE, EFFORTS & ACHIEVEMENTS AT ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL

IRTSA continuously tried to resolve the problems of the category. It represented their grievances before the Railways Administration at all levels as well as before various other forums - including 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th Pay Commissions, Railway Accident Inquiry Committee (RAIC) and Railway Reforms Committee (RRC) etc.

IRTSA organised Mass Movement for betterment of Technical Supervisors and held Rallies, Dharnas, Relay Fasts and Work-to-Rule to highlight the plight of Technical Supervisors, who had been completely ignored by the previous Pay Commissions due to lack of any platform to represent them.

IRTSA was the first organisation to raise the demand, for "Parity of Pay Scales with Government Undertakings" and "Time Bound Promotion" in 1967. While these demands were initially termed as unrealistic by several veteran leaders at that time, but ultimately became the hallmark of the Trade Union Struggle on the Railways and elsewhere in the country.

"Mass Petition to Parliament"- IRTSA organised an all India "Mass Signature Campaign" in 1968-69 through 4 sets of petitions in all the four directions of the country and submitted a 12-Meters long Petitions (*on tracing cloth*) to the Parliament, followed by raising of several questions in the Parliament - through numerous M.Ps. – including Shri Minu Masani & Com. Oye Gupta etc, on the plight of Technical Supervisors on the Railways.

The Struggle of '74:- IRTSA joined the struggle of Railway men at large for some of most genuine and long pending demands – including Payment of Bonus to Rail men and Parity of Pay Scales with Public Undertakings and decided, for the first time in the history of Railways, that Technical Supervisors should participate en-mass in All India Strike by Railway men in May, 1974,

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HISTORY OF IRTSA (Continued)

It was especially on account of the totally negative & apathetic attitude of the Railway administration towards their demands. The Strike was total and complete success - especially at places where the Technical Supervisors took the lead and participated en-mass. Over 350 Technical Supervisors were removed from service and many more were suspended and arrested all over India, including most of the senior central leaders of IRTSA - including Er. (Late) S.C.Gupta, Central President, Er. J.N. Rao, Er. Harchandan Singh, Er. Jyoti Banerji, Er. A.C. Bhattacharya, Er (Late) K.Sampat, and Er (Late) K.N. Kundu and Er. Tapan Banerji etc. – to name just a few - although the sacrifices of all others who were victimized were in no way lesser or possibly more.

IRTSA mobilised and provided relief to victimised Supervisors. Er. Jyoti Banerji, then Zonal Secretary, IRTSA (Eastern Railways) and many others – in-spite of being victimized themselves, intensively toured to raise and distributed relief to the victimised Technical Supervisors every month for the entire period of removal, especially on Eastern Railways, where over 120 Technical Supervisors were removed from service, and reinstated mostly after court cases or on issue of General Orders of Reinstatement in 1977 (issued by the then Railway Minister Prof. Madhu Dandvate).

Relations With other Trade Unions:- IRTSA maintained cordial and federal relations with other Trade Unions, as it was strongly felt that a time had come when the Technical Supervisors could not remain aloof or in isolation from the mainstream of Trade Union Movement. CEC, IRTSA strongly and unanimously endorsed these views and asked its office bearers and members to develop and maintain cordial and interactive relations with other Unions.

REPRESENTATIONS BEFORE 4 PAY COMMISSIONS & OTHER FORUMS

Railway Accident Inquiry Committee (RAIC):- IRTSA appeared before Railway Accident Enquiry Committee (RAIC -1968) headed by Justice Wanchoo, and proved that one of the reasons for lack of safety on the Railways was the growing frustration amongst the Technical Supervisors due to low pay scales, inadequate avenues of promotion and non-supply of requisite material. The RAIC accepted the evidence and made several recommendations for improvement of status and powers of Technical Supervisors and for recognition of their Association to discuss and represent their problems.

Third Pay Commission (TCPC): IRTSA submitted an exhaustive Memorandum to the Third Pay Commission. A team of CEC Members appeared before a Pay Commission for the first time, to represent the case of Technical Supervisors and achieved substantial improvements in the pay scales – including reduction of pay scales of Technical Supervisors from 6 to 4 and highest Pay Scales of Rs.840-1040 and Rs. 840-1200 exclusively for the Technical Supervisors which were highest amongst the entire Group 'C' cadre .

Railway Labour Tribunal (RLT): Many members of IRTSA – appeared before the Railway Labour Tribunal headed by Justice Miabhoj and evinced evidence before the Tribunal to secure better pay scale of Mistries (Supervisors) and Special Pay (superintendent Allowance) for Foremen & Assistant Foremen who were thereupon designated Shop Superintendents and Asst. Shop Superintendents.

However, The case for better avenues of promotion for Chrgemen (now called Junior Engineers) could not be won in the Tribunal and IRTSA gave a call for "Work-to Rule" in 1973 for this and some other demands including grant of PCO Allowance/Special Pay etc. it many years of struggle to get these demands conceded (as enlisted under the Achievements).

After years of Struggle, the whole category was treated as one cadre for the first time in 1984 and provided with a marked improvement in the avenues of promotion by re- distribution of posts on percentage basis (raising the number of posts in the two highest scales from about 18% to 37%).

RRC- IRTSA submitted a Memorandum to the Railway Reforms Committee (RRC) on 1983-84, on administrative, conceptual and manpower planning on the Railways - besides the role and plight of Technical Supervisors. RRC accepted many of the suggestions and made suitable recommendations on the issues, including better avenues of promotion, better Supervisor-to-Workers ratio and recognition of Association of Senior Supervisors to discuss and resolve their problems at all levels. The proposal for recognition was later on accepted by the Railway Board, but was dropped due to opposition from certain quarters.

Fourth CPC: IRTSA submitted an exhaustive and comprehensive memorandum and appeared before the Fourth Pay Commission as a main spokesman for Technical Supervisors and were able to get the highest Pay scale gong upto the maximum of Rs 2375-3500 which was the highest amongst entire Group 'C', besides numerous other benefits.

Court Cases : IRTSA fought and won three prestigious cases in the CAT for the grant of Group 'B' status for Senior Technical Supervisors and higher pay scales for Chrgemen (since designated as J.Es)(both in CAT New Delhi) and Incentive Bonus for the S.E. and S5.E. (in CAT Bombay). Railways side tracked the judgement of CAT for removal of anomaly regarding classification of posts in Group B. But the other two Judgements brought much needed relief to the category.

Struggle for better Avenues of Promotion & Cadre Restructuring:- IRTSA carried on continuous and intensive struggle for better avenues of promotion and career planning. Finally, the Railway Board improved upon the Cadre Restructuring of Technical Supervisors in 1993 (raising the percentage of posts in highest scale from 10 to 17%, and from 37 to 45% in the two highest scales combined together).

Change of Designation : IRTSA launched an intensive battle in 1995-96 for change of designation of Technical Supervisors as Engineers. While some immature youngsters tried to spoil the game, but they were checkmated by IRTSA through vigorous agitation including threat for Work-to-Rule. The Railway Board finally acceded and redesignated the category as Junior Engineers, Section Engineers and Senior Section Engineers (instead of outdated designations of Chrgemen and Asst. Shop Superintendent/ Asst. Foremen and Shop Superintendent/Foremen, etc.

Fifth CPC : IRTSA delegation appeared before the Fifth Pay Commission after submitting an exhaustive Memorandum to the Commission. The Pay Commission accepted various demands including parity of pay to Drawing Design Office and Store Supervisors with other Technical Supervisors.

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HISTORY OF IRTSA (Continued)

Fifth CPC suppressed the top grade of Technical supervisors - by deviating from the broadly accepted principle of 3.25 times rise of the existing pay scale, merely to accommodate Group 'B' and Group 'A' officers above the Scale of Technical Supervisors.

IRTSA retaliated strongly against the great injustice done by the Fifth Pay Commission. All Trade Unions as well as IRTSA served a Strike Notice against this and other anomalies in the CPC Report. The Railway Board finally agreed to remove some of the anomalies and to improve the highest grade of Technical Supervisors to Rs. 7450-11500 instead of Rs. 7,000 - 11,500, (as recommended by the Pay Commission). Though the improvement was marginal but the violation of basic principle was undone.

In this period, Central leaders of IRTSA (lead by Er. M. Shanmugam & Er. Harchandan Singh had series of meetings with Members of the Railway Board and intensified interaction with Railway Board as well as with other Trade Unions of Railway men to resolve the numerous outstanding problems of Engineers / Technical Supervisors at large (especially those for improvement in Pay Scales of Supervisors as J.Es., grant of group 'B' status to Senior Technical Supervisors and Cadre Restructuring etc), which are now at the stage of finalization.

SCPC & Role of IRTSA:- Like the previous 3 Pay Commission, IRTSA had presented, to the Sixth Pay Commission, a separate Memorandum for grant of Interim Relief, a Reply to the Questionnaire of the Commission and another exhaustive Memorandum on charter of demands. The Pay Commission assured IRTSA that the Memorandum shall be given due consideration. The Memorandum was well argued and supported with a lot relevant data and documents.

Building consensus on basic issues:- A major effort of IRTSA this time had been to build consensus on basic areas of thrust not only within the organisation but also in the Trade Union movement as a whole. This was very important as there used to be a big gap between the demands made by IRTSA and by other trade unions and Federations etc. But this time the gaps in demands made by IRTSA and those made by other Unions / Federations was substantially narrowed down. This was on account of a large number of Engineers and others participating in the internal deliberations of various unions, with the similar data base while framing the charter of demands.

However, there was bound to be a lot of difference in emphasis on many issues – especially in regard to categorical problems, anomalies and job contents – which were differently reflected by others than IRTSA. It was in this regard, that the Oral Evidence was essentially required. Denial of it by the Pay Commission to any of the Associations other than the recognized Federations, was bound to have its impact – but to what extent, only time will tell. But the struggle will go on till we get full justice.

**By Harchandan Singh,
General Secretary IRTSA**

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF IRTSA

1. There are numerous achievement of IRTSA - most vital amongst them is the provision of an effective platform for uniting and highlighting the problems & aspirations of Technical Supervisors / Engineers on the Indian Railways and representing the same before the Administration as well as before all the Pay Commissions and other forums, and developing better industrial relations with staff & administration.
2. a) Allotment of highest Pay Scales to Technical Supervisors / Engineers amongst group C including the scale of Rs. 840-1200 through 3rd, CPC and Rs. 2375 - 3500 through Fourth CPC.
3. Reduction in number of Technical Supervisors from 6 to 4 by 3rd Pay Commission.
4. Honorarium to JEs for payment of Boxing & Disbursement of wages to staff –(in 1968 and subsequent revision thereof).
5. a) Bringing entire cadre of Technical Supervisors in one category - (from JE to SSE) in 1984 onwards, for Cadre Restructuring.
b) Raising of no. of SSEs posts from 3% in Workshops & 1.5% on the Open Line to 10% in 1984, 17% in 1993 and 18% to 21% in 2003. (*Struggle continues for 30% in highest grade.*)
b) Raising of no. of SEs post from 12% to 29%.
6. Change of designation of Technical Supervisors as Engineers (as Junior Engineer, Section Engineer and Senior Section Engineer)
7. Upgrading of Mistries to Junior Engineers II.
8. Hurt on Duty / Hospital Leave to Apprentices / Trainees (only from 1967 onwards).
9. Counting of Apprenticeship / training period for Retirement and incremental benefits etc.
10. Reduction of training period of JEs to 18 months.
11. Grant of PCO Allowance to PCO Staff.
12. Revision of rates of Incentive Bonus (in 1968, 1975, 1990 & 1998).
13. Revision of Stipend equal to pay during Apprenticeship / Training.
14. Grant of Special Pay to Instructors and Lecturers.
15. Won Court cases for
i) Group B status to Sr. technical Supervisors.
ii) Higher pay scales for Chargemen (*since designated as J.Es*)
iii) Incentive Bonus for the S.E. and S.S.E.
16. PLB for all Technical Supervisors - irrespective of their pay limit.
17. Raising SSE pay scale to Rs. 7450-11500 - *instead of Rs. 7000 - 11500 recommended by 5th CPC.*
18. Grant of scale of Rs. 7450-11500 to Drawing & Design staff.
19. Re-designation of Drawing & Design Staff as Engineers (as Junior Engineer, Section Engineer and Senior Section Engineer)
20. Grant of Incentive Bonus to SE & SSE working in Production Units and Workshops.

