

# COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

(SEVENTH LOK SABHA)

## SEVENTEENTH REPORT

[Representation regarding grievances and demands  
of Railway Catering Services workers]



[Presented to Lok Sabha on 7th May, 1984]

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI

May, 1984/Vaisakha, 1906 (Saka)

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Corrigenda to Seventeenth Report  
of Committee on Petitions (7LS)

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS  
(1983-84)

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Shri K. P. Tewari

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3. Shri Banwari Lal
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12. Shri P. M. Subba
- \*13. Dr. Subramaniam Swamy
14. Shri Jagdish Tytler
15. Shri Balkrishna Wasnik

SECRETARIAT

Shri D. C. Pande	...	<i>Joint Secretary</i>
Shri S. P. Gupta	...	<i>Chief Personnel and Executive Officer</i>
Shri S. S. Chawla	...	<i>Senior Legislative Committee Officer</i>

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+Nominated w.e.f. 3rd September, 1983.

\*Nominated with effect from 23rd June, 1983,  
vice Shri Motibhai R. Chaudhari resigned.

# SEVENTEENTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (SEVENTH LCK SABHA)

## I

### INTRODUCTION

1.1. I, the Chairman of the Committee on Petitions, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Seventeenth Report of the Committee to the House on the representation regarding grievances and demands of the Railway Catering Services workers.

1.2. The Committee considered the representation at their sitting held on the 20th September, 1983. The Committee undertook on-the-spot study visit to Bangalore and Madras from 26th to 29 October, 1983 in order to study the working and service conditions of the Railway Catering Services workers in depth.

1.3. At Bangalore City and Madras Central Railway Stations, the Committee made visits to Catering Establishments—Refreshment Rooms (Vegetarian/Non-vegetarian), Cafeteria, Fruit and Tea Stalls run departmentally and other Stalls run by Contractors and enquired from workers about their duty hours, working conditions, wages and other facilities provided to them.

At Bangalore, the Committee held informal discussion with the petitioners,

At Madras Central Railway Station, the Committee held informal discussion with the representatives of the Southern Railway.

1.4. The Committee considered their draft Report at their sitting held on 30th April and adopted it.

1.5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Joint Director of the Railway Board General Manager, Additional Chief Commercial Supdt., Officer on Special Duty (Catering), Divisional Railway Manager, Bangalore and other Officers of Southern Railway for furnishing the requisite information to the Committee in connection with the examination of the subject.

The Committee also express their thanks to the representatives of the All India Railway Catering Services Workers' Union, Bangalore for their suggestions made during their discussion with the Committee when they visited Bangalore.

1.6 The observations/recommendations of the Committee on the matter have been included in this Report.

K.P. TEWARI,  
*Chairman,*  
*Committee on Petitions*

NEW DELHI;

*Dated the 30th April, 1984*

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*10 Voisakha, 1906 (Saka)*

## II

### REPORT

Shri T. I. Madhavan, General Secretary, All India Railway Catering Services Workers' Union, Bangalore, addressed a representation dated 5th March, 1982, duly countersigned by Shrimati Pramila Dandavate, M. P., regarding grievances and demands of the Railway Catering Services Workers' Union, Bangalore.

#### A. *Petitioner's Grievances and Demands*

2.2. In his representation (*See Appendix-I*), the petitioner stated as follows :-

“The Railways have improved passengers amenities to a considerable extent. The superfast trains are provided with kitchen cars/pantry cars to feed the passengers. More restaurants and stalls are opened to cater the needs of the passengers at stations. But the conditions of service of workers who man these kitchen cars, pantry cars, restaurants and stalls are very deplorable. All our efforts to improve the service conditions of these workers are not successful and hence we are approaching the Parliament as the matter of general interest.”

2.3. The petitioner made the following demands in this regard :-

- (1) Deductions on account of breakage of crockery etc. should be on the depreciated value of the item and the commission rate should be increased to 20% for all Commission Bearers/Vendors.
- (2) Productivity Linked Bonus should also be paid to Commission Bearers/Vendors.
- (3) Commission Bearers should be absorbed as permanent employees.
- (4) Workmen's Compensation Act should be made applicable to Commission Bearers.

- (5) Commission Vendors should also be absorbed like Commission Bearers on seniority basis.
- (6) The Commission Bearers/Vendors who were absorbed permanently should be fixed in scale Rs. 200-240.
- (7) While absorbing the Commission Bearers/Vendors into permanent jobs, their previous service should be taken into account for pension and other terminal benefits.
- (8) There are no promotional avenues for the Bearers/Vendors on the Railways.
- (9) Cooks and Bearers who are stagnating should be given selection grade.
- (10) Catering staff should also be provided quarters like other Railway employees.
- (11) In the Southern Railway Assistant Managers promoted on ad hoc basis and continuing for six years should not be reverted.
- (12) Catering staff working in North bound trains should be provided with warm clothes.
- (13) Rest rooms should be provided to the Catering staff in all the Railway Stations where they are Working.
- (14) The Assistant Cooks should be promoted to fill the vacancies Cooks.
- (15) 62 eligible Commission Bearers/Vendors on Southern Railway should be absorbed without delay.
- (16) First Aid Box should be provided in Kitchen/Pantry cars and medical benefits given to Commission Bearers/Vendors.
- (17) Catering staff should be given Health Allowance as they have to work in intolerable conditions.
- (18) The working hours of Catering staff in running trains exceed more than the hours prescribed under the law for which they are not compensated in any manner.



- (19) Cleaners provided in Super Fast trains should be given minimum wage fixed by Central/State Governments.
- (20) On Southern Railway there is no post of Divisional Catering Manager and promotional avenue to the post of Train Superintendent for Catering Inspectors has been withdrawn.
- (21) Coal used in Kitchen/Pantry cars gives smoke and sometimes suffocates which is a health hazard.
- (22) Catering staff should be given mileage allowance like Guards and Engine crews.
- (23) Commission Vendors should be provided with Trolleys as this has not been done on many Railway Stations.

**B. Comments of the Ministry of Railways  
(Railway Board)**

2.4 The representation was referred to the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) for furnishing their factual comments thereon for consideration by the Committee on Petitions. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have furnished their factual comments demand-wise, vide their note dated 28th December, 1982 stating as follows :-

1. *Deduction on account of breakage of crockery etc. on depreciated value and increase in Commission rates.*

Deductions for loss of crockery etc. are made or loss is written off on merit of each case. Commission rates are revised as and when considered necessary to ensure a fair living wage to Commission Bearers/Vendors. Moreover, increased sales turnover due to revision of tariff also ensures increased commission amount.

2. *Payment of Productivity Linked Bonus*

This scheme is applicable to only Railway employees. As and when Commission Bearers/Vendors are absorbed as regular Railway employees, they would automatically be covered by this scheme.

3. *Absorption of Commission Bearers as permanent employees*

On Southern Railway, 236 Commission Bearers/Vendors were absorbed in the first phase and 303 of them were absorbed in the second phase as regular employees.

4. *Benefits under Workmen's Compensation Act*

As Commission Bearers are not regular employees they do not come within the purview of Workmen's Compensation Act.

5. *Absorption of Commission Vendors*

On Southern Railway Commission Bearers and Vendors are absorbed without any distinction of seniority based on the date of remittance of security deposit.

6. *Rs. 200-240 scale for Commission Bearers/Vendors*

The Servers and Head Waiters of Southern Railway have been extended the correct Revised Pay Scales corresponding to the Authorised Scales as were prevalent for these categories.

7. *Counting of previous service for pension and other terminal benefits*

The previous service as Commission Bearers/Vendors cannot be taken into account for the purpose of pensions etc. as they become Railway employees only from the dates of their absorption.

8. *Promotional avenues for the Bearers/Vendors*

This is not correct. On Southern Railway the Servers are promoted as Senior Servers according to seniority and they in turn are eligible to be absorbed as Bill Issuers and Assistant Managers against the promotion quota from Class IV to class III to the extent of 33 1/3% based on seniority-cum-suitability.

9. *Selection Grade for Cooks and Bearers*

Cook is eligible for promotion as Senior Cook by selection and further to Head Cook on seniority-cum-suitability basis. Bearers

also have their channel of promotion to the post of Senior Servers and Bill Issuers.

10. *Staff Quarters*

Eligible Catering staff have been provided with quarters according to their priority and availability of quarters.

11. *Confirmation of ad hoc promotion of Assistant Managers*

Assistant Managers promoted on *ad hoc* basis against their quota have been regularised from 1-10-1980 after due selection. Those who have not been successful have been allowed to continue temporarily.

12. *Warm Clothes*

Warm Clothes are supplied to the Catering staff on the basis of recommendations of the Uniform Committee.

13. *Rest rooms for the Catering staff*

At Headquarters' stations rest room facilities are not provided. At outstations no accommodation is available but they are allowed to occupy accommodation provided in the train carriages.

14. *Promotion of Assistant Cooks*

There are 73 Cooks on the Southern Railway and there are no vacancies at present.

15. *Absorption of 62 eligible Commission Bearers/Vendors on Southern Railway*

On Southern Railway 62 posts of Commission Bearers/Vendors were assigned for pantry car service on Coromandal Express. They could not be operated as control of pantry car service of this train was transferred to South Eastern Railway.

16. *First Aid Boxes*

Instructions already existing for providing First Aid Boxes in all super fast trains and Managers have instructions to replenish the stock of medicines when exhausted.

17. *Health Allowance for Catering staff*

For providing relief to staff working in Kitchen/Pantry cars from high temperatures, gas ovens are being fixed on programmed basis. The demand for Health Allowance is not justified.

18. *Working Hours*

The deemed rostered hours for Pantry car staff are 52 per week and they are eligible for overtime if they work over and above the deemed rostered hours.

19. *Minimum Wages to cleaners*

Cleaners are employed by contractors. Action is being taken by Southern Railway to ensure that the contractor pays reasonable wages to Cleaners.

20. *Promotion of Catering Inspectors*

The staff from Catering Branch are eligible to become Group 'B' Officers on ex-cadre basis. Two Chief Catering Inspectors on Southern Railway were selected for Group 'B' posts. Catering Inspectors are also eligible to become Train Superintendents on Super Fast trains.

21. *Use of Coal as health hazard*

Steam coal and charcoal are used as a fuel in Kitchen/Pantry cars on the Southern Railway. These are being gradually replaced with cooking gas.

22. *Mileage Allowance*

The Pantry Car Staff not being classified as Running Staff are not eligible for Mileage Allowance. They are paid Travelling Allowance.

23. *Provision of Trolleys for Commission Vendors*

Trolleys are provided for transporting materials from each catering unit to the Pantry Car. Vending trolleys are also provided to vendors at stations for sale of eatables.

2.5 The Committee on Petitions at their sitting held on 20th September, 1983 considered the representation and decided to undertake on-the-spot study-visit to Bangalore and Madras in order to study the working and service conditions of the Railway Catering Services workers in depth. The Committee, accordingly, visited Bangalore and Madras from 26th to 29th October, 1983, and held informal discussions with the petitioners and Officers of the Southern Railway on the points arising out of the demands made in the representation. (See Appendix II).

2.6 During informal discussion with the representatives of All India Railway Catering Services Workers' Union, Bangalore, the Secretary of the Workers' Union made by following points :—

- (i) All Commission Bearers/Vendors should be absorbed on regular basis.
- (ii) There should be provision for weekly offs and overtime allowance for Commission Bearers/Vendors.
- (iii) In hotels, no loss or breakage of crockeries etc. was deducted from wages of Bearers. In trains, passengers were also responsible for loss or breakage of crockeries, flasks etc. to some extent. The entire cost of loss or broken articles should not be recovered from the commission of Bearers. It should be deducted at a depreciated value.
- (iv) Commission Bearers/Vendors should be paid bonus like other Railway employees as the Southern Railway Catering Department was earning profit of about Rs. fifty lakhs per annum for the last four or five years.
- (v) The winter uniform as provided on Northern Railway, should also be given to Commission Bearers/Vendors working on North-bound trains.
- (vi) The Railway authorities should take a lenient view on complaints made against Commission Bearers/Vendors by a passenger and, before taking any action against them, they should also be given an opportunity to explain their view-point.

- (vii) Cleaners should also be employed by the Railways on regular basis and the practice of employment of Cleaners through contractors should be abolished. Cleaners were not paid minimum wages statutorily fixed by the State Governments by the contractors and there was no machinery set-up by the Southern Railway administration to ensure that all labour laws regarding minimum wages, overtime allowance, weekly offs and payment of compensation etc. were implemented in their case.

2.7 During the course of informal discussion with the Committee, the Additional Chief Commercial Superintendent, Southern Railway, Madras *inter alia* made the following points :—

- (i) There were prescribed Pay Scales, fixed duty hours, weekly rest, medical and other service benefits and promotional avenues at par with Railway employees for Bearers/Vendors who had been absorbed as regular employees. However, Commission Bearers/Vendors alone, and not their families, were entitled for medical benefits as outdoor patients.
- (ii) Losses were recovered from Bearers on the basis of the value depending upon 30 to 50 per cent of the value of the articles. Breakages had also been reduced with the provision of plastic tumblers/cups for supply of beverages and use of disposable cardboard containers for supply of breakfast.

Total annual breakages on Southern Railway came to Rs. 38,000/- on an average it was Rs. 4/- per month for each worker.

- (iii) Southern Railway Catering Department was earning profit to the tune of Rs. 50 lakhs per annum. However, the Commission Bearers/Vendors were not entitled to any bonus as they were not regular employees of Railways.
- (iv) At present, blue serge coats and pants were supplied to Managers and woollen jerseys were supplied to Bearers, Waitors, Servers and Cooks. It was proposed to supply closed collar coats, serge ordinary navy blue trousers, serge ordinary navy blue cap from 1984 winter season onwards at the rate of two sets for three years.

- (v) Sleeping accommodation was provided to Commission Bearers/Vendors after dinner and before morning tea in Pantry Cards.

It was explained that it was not feasible to provide Rest Rooms to Commission Bearers/Commission Vendors at out-stations, as there were many other various categories of railway employees who were not getting that facility and no exception could be made in the case of Commission Bearers/Vendors.

- (vi) There were 850 Commission Bearers/Vendors. About 100 vacancies were going to be filled up soon. Financial implications were under examination and the Railway Board was being consulted for regularisation of some more posts of Bearers and Vendors on the Southern Railway.

The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) *vide* their note dated the 18th March, 1984 have informed the Committee that at present there are 100 vacancies in the category of servers in Static and Mobile Units. A Screening Committee is processing the papers of senior most commission bearers to be absorbed as regular Railway servers. The processing is expected to be completed shortly.

Opportunity was given to Bearers to explain their position with regard to any complaint. However, the weightage had to be given to the statements of Passengers/VIP Passengers. Bearers/Vendors were asked to improve their conduct with the travelling public and not to be rude with them.

2.8 It had been submitted before the Committee by the petitioners during their Study Visit that cleaners should also be employed by the Railways on regular basis and the practice of employment of cleaners through contractors should be abolished. Cleaners were not paid minimum wages statutorily fixed by the State Governments by the contractors and there was no machinery set up by the Southern Railway administration to ensure that all labour laws regarding minimum wages, overtime allowance, weekly offs and payment of compensation etc. were implemented in their case. When asked to state why the cleaners were employed through contractors and why they should not be employed by the Railways on regular basis and whether the cleaners were being paid

by the contractors minimum wages as fixed by the State Governments, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their written note dated 18th March, 1984, have stated as follows :—

“The work of cleaning is entrusted to contractors as per the recommendations of High Power Committee (Alagesan Committee) appointed by the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in the year 1955 so that the establishment cost could be kept down. If this work is entrusted to the regular railway employees the establishment cost would go up and this would prove to be an uneconomical proposition. The rise in cost will also affect the ultimate selling price of various articles and may attract avoidable public criticism. Thus, taking into account the cost factor the Southern Railway Administration had decided to entrust the work of cleaning to contractors only.

- 1.1 The cleaning contractors at Madras and Bangalore City have engaged 61 and 22 cleaners respectively. These cleaners came under the purview of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Central Rules, 1971, and the principal employer is Southern Railway. As per the agreement reached between the Regional Labour Commissioner Government of India and the Southern Railway Administration on 24-3-87, it had been decided to pay a fair wage of Rs. 5.25 per day per head and the payment of wages at this rate of Rs. 5.25 per head is witnessed by the Railway's representative.
- 1.2 The minimum wages fixed for an unskilled worker by the Government of Tamilnadu is Rs. 100/- per month plus Rs. 3.75 per day if no free food and tiffin are supplied, plus 2 paise per point per day as Dearness Allowance as per G.O. No. MS 254 dated 31-1-1983. Similarly, the minimum wages fixed by the State Government of Karnataka for an unskilled worker is Rs. 285/- per month, Dearness Allowance at the rate of 2 paise per point per day or 52 paise per point per month as per G.O. No. SWL 106 LMW 78, dated 24-2-82 effective from 1st March, 1982. As stated above the cleaners are paid a fair living wage of Rs. 5.25 per head at Madras Central and at Rs. 8.06 per cleaner per day at Bangalore City.



1.3 Although the cleaners employed by the Contractors are not regular Railway employees, there are clauses in the agreement entered into between Union of India and the Contractor to the effect that the contractor shall be responsible for the payment of wages due to the cleaners and the Supervisory staff appointed by him, shall comply with the payment of Wages Act, Hours of Employment Regulation and Fair Wages Act and any other enactments, Rules of orders that may become applicable now or hereafter for works and workmen connected with the contract and shall indemnify the Railway from and against any claim and also reimburse the Railway any such payment made by them under the aforesaid Acts or Rules."

2.9 During their Study Visit, it was pointed out to the Committee that when recruitments were made for the posts such as Assistant Cooks, Servers etc., these commission bearers/vendors were relegated and recruits from outside were selected. On being asked to state the criteria laid down for absorption of commission bearers/vendors, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated that :

"It is not correct to say that when recruitment of Asstt. Cooks is made, Commission Bearers/Vendors are relegated to the background and outsiders are selected. According to the position explained by the Southern Railway, when selection for Asstt. Cooks takes place, preference is given to substitutes/casual labourers/Commission Bearers knowing cooking. No outsiders have been employed as Bearers/Vendors/Servers on regular basis by Southern Railway during the last 3 years."

2.10 During their Study Visit, the Committee were informed by the Southern Railway Officers that there were 850 Commission Bearers Vendors. About 100 vacancies were going to be filled up soon. Financial implications were under examination and the Railway Board was being consulted for regularisation of some more posts of Bearers and Vendors on the Southern Railway.

In this connection, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their written note dated the 18th March, 1984 have stated that at present there are 100 vacancies in the category of Servers in Static and Mobile Units. A Screening Committee is processing the papers of senior most commission bearers to be absorbed as regular Railway servers. The processing is expected to be completed shortly.

2.11 In regard to absorption of commission bearers by Railways, the Ministry in their written note dated 18th March, 1984, have stated as follows :

“The Bearers engaged on Railways on Commission basis are not railway employees. However, instructions were issued on 26-4-78 for the absorption of the Commission Bearers as Railway employees in a phased manner. Out of the total of about 2,000 Commission Bearers then available, it was decided to absorb about 50% in the first phase. Subsequently, instructions were issued in 1979 for absorbing the remaining 50% of Commission Bearers also. On Southern Railway 539 Commission Bearers/Vendors have so far been absorbed in this manner. There are 852 Commission Bearers as on 31-12-1982 on that Railway.”

2.12 As regards payment of commission to Bearer /Vendors, the Ministry in their written note have stated that the percentage of commission payable to Commission Bearers on this Railway is as follows :—

“Refreshments, beverages, aerated waters, meals etc.	10%
Biscuits and confectionery items	5%
Smokes and Cigars	2%

Action is on hand to review the commission payable to commission bearers. However, it is pointed out in this connection that the commission Vendors/Bearers working in Mobile Units get on an average of Rs. 450/- per month and those working in Static Units are getting between Rs. 300/- and Rs. 350/- per month. Since the percentage of commission is fixed taking into account the local conditions, no uniformity in this regard is possible.

2.13 On the question whether the past services rendered by the commission bearers should be counted for the purpose of pension and other benefits on their absorption on regular basis, the Ministry have stated that “as per the extant Rules/orders, the services rendered by a person as a Commission Bearer in the Catering Department are not counted for pensionary benefits on his absorption in the regular cadre.

Southern Railway are, however, being directed to furnish their report in the matter”.

2.14 In his Railway Budget Speech in Lok Sabha on the 24th February, 1984, the Minister of Railways (Shri A. B. A. Ghani Khan Choudhary) has stated as follows :

- 6.5 “Demands for improvements in catering services on the Railways have been voiced from time to time both inside the House and outside. Efforts to effect further improvements in the services have been continued on a sustained basis, Hon’ble Members may recall that a Services Improvement Group (Catering) comprising experienced officers was formed to look after the quality of the catering service. This group carried out intensive inspections, examination of the existing arrangements, and monitoring of the catering services on important trains, stations and base kitchens. Based on the suggestions of the Group, necessary instructions have been issued to the Zonal Railway for effecting improvements in the services.

Amongst the various measures being actively considered for improving catering services is the setting up of a Catering Corporation to look after the catering on the Railways. While this may take some more time to materialise. I have, in order to bring about immediate further improvement in the services, taken the first step in revamping the existing arrangements by setting up, as a pilot scheme, a Centralised Catering Organisation at New Delhi. Initially, this will look after catering on 14 pairs of important Mail and Express trains and 7 base kitchens. Our intention is to expand the scope of this organisation after watching the results achieved.”

*Observations/Recommendations of the Committee*

2.15 The Committee note the position stated by the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their factual comments on the various demands contained in the representation and in their submissions made by the Officers of the Southern Railway before the Committee during the course of informal discussion and visits to catering establishments during Study Visit.

2.16 The Committee note from the factual note furnished by the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) that the Bearers engaged on Railways on commission basis are not Railway employees. Instructions were issued on 26 April, 1978 for the absorption of the Commission Bearers as Railway employees in a phased manner. Out of the total of about 2,000 Commission Bearers then available, it was decided to absorb about 50% in the first phase. Subsequently, instructions were issued in 1979 for absorbing the remaining 50% of the Commission Bearers also. On Southern Railway 539 Commission Bearers/Vendors have so far been absorbed in this manner. There were 852 Commission Bearers as on 31st December, 1982 on that Railway.

Catering is one of the basic amenities being provided by the Railways to the travelling public on long distance trains. The Government are aware of need for improvements in catering services on the Railways and propose to establish a Catering Corporation to look after the catering on the Railways. At the same time, the Committee feel that there is need for improvement in the service conditions of catering staff. As the job of the staff engaged in catering is of permanent nature, they should be employed by the Railways on regular basis.

So far no definite rules have been framed nor any criteria have been laid down by the Railways for absorption of Commission bearers on regular basis. Only instructions were issued in 1978 for absorption of 50% Commission Bearers and again in 1979 for absorption of 50% of the remaining Commission Bearers. In order that Commission Bearers/Vendors are assured of permanent career, the Committee recommend that definite recruitment rules may be framed for absorption of Commission Bearers/Vendors on regular basis so that there is no cause of resentment and agitational approach on their part. The Committee also feel that those Commission Bearers/Vendors who have already worked for minimum five years should be considered for absorption as regular Railway employees.

2.17 The Committee further note that in Southern Railway, at present there are 100 vacancies in the category of Servers in Static and Mobile Units. A Screening Committee is processing the papers of senior most Commission Bearers to be absorbed as regular Railway Servers. The processing is expected to be completed shortly. The Committee trust that these vacancies would be filled up without delay.

2.18 As regards payment of commission to Bearers/Vendors, the Committee note that commission is payable to Commission Bearers at a rate of 10% on refreshments, beverages, aerated waters and meals etc. 5% on biscuits and confectionery items and 2% on smokes and cigars and that action is on hand to review their commission. The Committee may be informed of the action taken in this regard.

2.19 The Committee note that the Southern Railway Catering Department is earning profit of about Rupees fifty lakh per annum. However, the Commission Bearers/Vendors are not entitled to any bonus as they are not treated as regular employees of the Railways. The Committee feel that when Catering Department of the Railway is earning profit, there is no reason to deprive these Commission Bearers/Vendors of payment of productivity linked bonus.

2.20 As per the extant Rules orders, the services rendered by a person as a Commission Bearer in the Catering Department are not counted for pensionary benefits on his absorption in the regular cadre. It has been pointed out to the Committee that the Commission Bearers/Vendors had been working on the Railways for many years. Only in 1978, instructions were issued for the first time for absorption of 50% Commission Bearers as regular Railway employees. At the time of absorption, some of the bearers would be forty years of age after rendering 15-20 years of service on commission basis. The Committee feel that there is no justification for not giving any benefit of their past services rendered by the Bearers for the Department for the purpose of pensionary and other terminal benefits. The Committee, therefore, recommend that past services rendered by a person for the period exceeding five years as a Commission Bearer may be considered for pensionary and other benefits.

2.21 It has been submitted in the representation that as the job of the cleaners is of permanent nature, these cleaners should be absorbed by the Railways on a regular basis. During their Study Visit, it was pointed out by the petitioners to the Committee that cleaners were not paid minimum wages statutorily fixed by State Governments by the contractors and there was no machinery set up by the Southern Railway to ensure that all labour laws regarding minimum wages, overtime allowance, payment of compensation etc. were implemented in their case. In this connection, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their written note have stated that the work of cleaning is entrusted to contractors as per the recommendations of High Power Committee

(Alagesan Committee) appointed by the Ministry of Railways in the year 1955 so that the establishment cost could be kept down. If this work is entrusted to the regular Railway employees the establishment cost would go up and this would prove to be an uneconomical proposition. The Ministry have further stated that the cleaning contractors at Madras and Bangalore City have engaged 61 and 22 cleaners respectively who are paid a fair living wages of Rs. 5.25 per head at Madras Central Railway Station and at Rs. 8.06 per cleaner per day at Bangalore City Railway Station as fixed by the State Governments of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. These payments are witnessed by the Railways representative.

The Committee, however, are of the opinion that the job of cleaning in Railway Catering Units is of a permanent nature. Further if the work which is at present being done by a very small number of cleaners employed through the contractors by the Southern Railway is entrusted to the regular employees the establishment cost would increase only marginally and it will not in any way affect the profits being earned by the Catering Department. The Committee recommend that the Government should review the present practice of employment of cleaners through contractors and consider their employment directly by the Railways. This would end the exploitation of cleaners which has also been alleged in the representation.

NEW DELHI;

*Dated the 30th April, 1984*  
Vaisakha 10, 1906 (Saka)

K. P. TEWARI,

*Chairman,*  
*Committee on Petitions.*

## APPENDIX I

(See para 2.2 of the Report)

[Representation re. grievances and demands of Railway  
Catering Services workers]

*All India Railway Catering Services Workers' Union*  
Affiliated with HMS

9, Lingaiahnapalays,  
Ulsoor, Bangalore-560 008.  
Dated : 28.12.1981

To

The Hon'ble Speaker,  
Lok Sabha,  
Parliament House,  
NEW DELHI-110001.

Subject : Certain grievances of the Railway Catering Workers.

Sir,

We would like to bring to your kind notice certain grievances of the Railway Catering Workers, who are directly controlled by the Railway Board ; for getting justice and settling the same.

The Railways has improved passenger amenities to a considerable extent. The Superfast Trains are provided with Kitchen Cars/Pantry Cars to feed the passengers. More Restaurants and stalls are opened to cater the need of the passengers at Stations. But the conditions of service of the workers who man these kitchen cars/pantry cars restaurants and stalls are very deplorable. All our efforts to improve the service conditions of these workers are not successful and hence we are approaching your goodself to use your good office to set right the grievances given here under :—

1. There are about 5000 bearers/vendors working under the Railways. Out of this 50% of these bearers were made per-

manent. Remaining 50% are called as Commission Bearers, working on commission basis. Commission on the sale of items vary from Railway to Railway. In Southern Railway and South Eastern Railway it is 10%. In other Railways it varies from 10% to 15% of a rupee. From the commission earned by these workers, loss or breakage of cups or other crockeries, flasks are deducted. Mostly these items are broken or lost by the passengers but the Bearers are made responsible and an average of 3% to 4% of the commission earned monthly are deducted towards this. The cost deducted from the commission is the value of a new item and not the depreciation value. The rate of the commission has been fixed some 6 years ago and since then cost of essential articles had increased considerably and many D.A. instalments were drawn by the permanent Railway employees but the commission of these workers remain at the same rate. Our demand is to increase this commission to 20% to all Commission Bearers/Vendors till they are absorbed as permanent employees.

## 2. *Productivity Linked Bonus :*

In the Railways all the permanent employees, extra temporary employees, work charged employees, casual employees are granted bonus. But the commission bearers/vendors who are employed to provide amenities are denied Bonus. Many of these commission bearers/vendors are put in 4 years to 20 years of services. Though the Catering Department is running under profit, our effort to get productivity linked Bonus to these workers is not successful.

## 3. *Absorption of Commission Bearers :*

Nearly 2400 commission bearers/vendors, working since many years are still rotting in the same stage. They have no weekly off, no earned leave, no sick leave or any other benefit enjoyed by the permanent workers in the Railways. If they work and earn commission then they can carry that commission after deduction towards breakage or loss of articles, to their homes. The commission earned per day ranges from Rs. 5/- to 15/-. If they do not come due to sickness or other reasons they do not get any benefit for that day. The service, these workers are



carrying out are for the welfare of the Railway passengers under difficult situations during day and night are of a serious nature. They should be observed as permanent employees.

4. *Workmen's Compensation Act :*

Due to accidents sometimes the Catering staff, i.e., commission bearers also die. But they are not given any benefits under the Workmen's Compensation Act, under the plea they are not workmen. Though employer-employee relationship between these employees exists like other railway employees, the commission bearers who die while on duty due to Train accidents are denied this benefit.

5. *Absorb Commission Vendors :*

From the year 1978 onwards in two instalments nearly 2500 employees are being absorbed on the basis of seniority. While absorbing these commission bearers/vendors in the Southern Railways, no distinction is made between commission bearers and commission vendors because they do a-kin job. Unfortunately, in other Railways only commission bearers were made permanent and commission vendors who had put in even 20 years of service are not being absorbed. On seniority basis without any distinction commission vendors should also be absorbed.

6. *Re-Fixation of Wage Scales :*

When Commission Bearers/Vendors were absorbed on the order of Railway Board in the year 1978 and 1980 the South Central Railway fixed the Wage Scales of Commission bearers in the scale of Rs. 200-240, whereas Southern Railway fixed the scale of Rs. 196-232, though the jobs of these bearers are similar. The Commission Bearers/Vendors who were absorbed into the service as permanent should be fixed on the scale of Rs. 200-240.

7. While absorbing the Commission Bearers/Vendors into permanent job their earlier services are not taken into account and they are considered as fresh employees. This will affect their pension benefit etc. Previous services of Commission Bearers/

Vendors who had been absorbed as bearers should be counted for the purpose of Pension and other terminal benefits.

8. *Promotional Avenue for Bearers/Vendors :*

There are no promotional avenues for the bearers/vendors in the Railways. They have to rot as bearers till they retire from the service. They should be given promotion as senior bearers in the scale of Rs. 210-290 on a ratio of 10 : 1 (Ten bearers one senior bearer).

9. *Selection Grade :*

A good number of cooks and bearers are stagnated in the scale. They should be given selection grade.

10. *Quarters :*

Quarters are not provided to the Catering Staff like other Railway employees. Catering staff should also be provided with quarter.

11. *Confirmation of ad hoc Promotion of Asstt. Managers :*

In the Southern Railways some Catering Staff are promoted as Asstt. Managers on *ad-hoc* basis. These Asstt. Managers are performing their duties efficiently for the past six years. But now we understand that these Asstt. Managers are going to be reverted back to their earlier designations for no reasons at all. They should be allowed to continue as Asstt. Managers.

12. *Warm Cloths :*

In the superfast trains running from South and back are not provided with Blankets and only a third grade jersey is issued to them. Their difficulty to adjust with the winter season without proper warm cloth are not at all considered and the Railway is taking undue advantage of the poverty and unemployment problem prevailing in our country. The catering staff working in North bound trains should be provided with warm cloths.

### **Rest Rooms :**

In all the superfast trains starting from South, the catering staff has to report for duty a day before to load items required for the Kitchen/Pantry Cars. They are not provided with Rest Rooms and the catering workers has to spend the nights in the platforms. The same situation prevails when they return to their head quarters also. This state of affair is prevailing in Madras Central Station, Nagpur, Bhusawal, Cochin Harbour, New Delhi, Kazipet, Poona, Agra Cantt., Mathura etc. Rest Rooms should be provided to the catering staff in all the Railway stations where catering staff are working.

### **14. Promotion of Asstt. Cooks :**

There are number of vacancies for Cooks. But job of Cooks are extracted from the Asstt. Cooks under the threat of Transfer etc. The Asstt. Cooks should be promoted as Cooks to fill up the vacancies of Cooks.

### **15. Absorption of 62 Commission Bearers/Vendors :**

The Work Study group appointed by the respective Railways recommended to make certain commission bearers/vendors as permanent. The Work Study group of Southern Railways recommended to absorb 365 Commission Bearers. The Railway Board issued orders to absorb 365 Commission Bearers on 6-5-1980. Out of this only 303 commission bearers/vendors were made permanent. The remaining 62 workers are not made permanent because of the delay in making decision by the Railway Board whether the Coramandel Express be run by the Southern Railway or by South Eastern Railway. In this wrangle 62 Commission Bearers who should have been absorbed are in a state of mental agony. These 62 eligible commission bearers/vendors should be absorbed without delay.

### **16. First Aid :**

Major and minor accidents and burn do occur always in the running trains. No first aid box is provided in the kitchen/Pantry Cars. Medical benefits are allowed to permanent staff only. The commission

bearers and vendors who work shoulderr to shoulde with the permanent staff is not allowed this benefits.

**17. Health Allowance :**

During the summer months the temperature in the kitchen/Pantry Cars is very high, it is humanly intolerable to work. No measure is taken to reduce this heat in the Kitchen/Pantry Cars. No milk or any other benefit is provided to the staff working in the Kitchen/Pantry cars for the loss of their energy.

**18. Working Hours :**

The working hours of the running catering staff exceeds more than the hours prescribed under the law. The cooks and their assistants has to get up at 2 a.m. to prepare and make coffee/tea, breakfast etc. The work of the bearers starts at 5 a.m. and ends at 10.30 p.m. and the cooks work upto 9.30 p.m. If the trains are running late the catering staff are forced to be awak even after 1 a.m. For taking work beyond the limit of law in this regard, is not compensated in any manner.

**19. Minimum Wage to Cleaners :**

In the Superfast trains Kitchen/Pantry cars, 2 to 3 cleaners are provided through Labour Contractors. These poor cleaners are paid Rs. 2.50 per day or Rs. 75/- per month, working from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. leaving their headquarters. This is very much lower than the minimum wage fixed by the State/Central government for lowest paid employees. From this Rs. 2.50 daily wage they have to pay for food etc. This exploitation have to be stopped and the minimum wage fixed by the Central/State Government should be given. Moreover, the job of these labourers are of permanent nature so they should be absorbed.

**20. Promotion ;**

- (a) Southern Railway is one of the biggest charters in the Railways. In other Railways where less catering activities are taking place, there are Divisional Catering Managers. But in Southern Railway though the Catering work is of the high magnitude no Divisional Catering Manager is appointed.
- (b) One of the promotional avenue for Catering Inspectors was to become Train Superintendent in supar fast trains. This promotional avenue has been withdrawn.

**21. Health Hazards :**

In many of the Kitchen/Pantry Cars lico coal is used for cooking. Lighting of the "Sikdi" start at about 2 a.m. The smoke emanate from burning of Lico some times suffocate and also create burning sensation in the stomach of the cooks and the catering staff sleeping in the Kitchen/Pantry cars. The workers get giddiness and eye burning also. This has to be considered as health hazard.

**22. Mileage Allowance :**

Catering, Pantry/Kitchen Car Staff should be given mileage allowance instead of T. A., like guards, Asstt. guards and engine crew.

**23. Trolleys :**

In many of the Railway Stations Trolleys are not provided to the commission vendors and Trolleys issued some years back in some Railway Station for vending is in a dilapidated conditions and no repairs are made nor replaced. The need to earn their bread the commission vendors spend their own money for repair which is not reimbursed. In Mathura and Agra Cantt. Railway Stations on account of not replacing the old ones the Commission Vendors are forced to get Trolleys on payment of Rs. 30/- per mensum which is also not reimbursed.

To alleviate the difficulties of the Catering Staff whose service conditions are similar to bonded Labour, we took many steps. The Railway Board who is eye witnesses to the sufferings of these workers are not at all seems to be bothered about making any improvement in service conditions of these workers and they seem to be inhuman.

We, therefore, pray your goodself to use your good offices to set right the grievances of the Catering staff of Indian Railways. We will be grateful to you for helping to solve the problems of these workers which is also a Constitutional obligation.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

Sd/—

T. I. MADHAVAN,  
General Secretary.

## APPENDIX II

(See para 2.5 of the Report)

[Study Notes of the Tour of the Committee on their visits to Bangalore and Madras in October, 1983, in connection with the representation regarding grievances and demands of Railway Catering Services workers.]

### I. BANGALORE

#### (a) *Briefing by Southern Railway Officials :*

Before visiting the Railway Catering Establishments located at Bangalore City Railway Station. The Divisional Railway Manager Southern Railway, Bangalore City welcomed the Chairman and members of the Committee on Petitions. The Study Group was informed by the Officer on Special Duty, Railway Board that there were two types of catering units—one run by the Department and the others run by the contractors.

The Catering Units at Bangalore City Station consisted of a Vegetarian Refreshment Room, a Non-vegetarian Refreshment Room, a Cafeteria, a Proprietary Articles, Depot, a Restaurant and Platform Vending Stalls run by the Karnataka Dairy Development Corporation selling milk and milk products and the Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Products Marketing and Processing Corporation Ltd. selling apple juice on commission basis.

Of These, only the VRR and Cafeteria were run departmentally.

The Departmental Vegetarian Refreshment Room situated at Platform Nos. 4 and 5 prepared hot beverages, breakfast items and meals. This also served as a base kitchen for 127—Karnataka Express and 40—Brindavan Express supplying edibles sweets, food packets etc.

The following modern equipments were available in the Vegetarian Refreshment Room :

Wet grinders, Bulk Idle Cookers (machine) electrically operated, hot water geyser, Gas Cooking and Refrigerator.

The average sales per day of the VRR were stated to be to the tune of Rs. 3,500/-.

The Departmental Cafeteria was located in the new building. Edibles and beverages were prepared and sold. Gas cooking range, geyser, wet grinders, steam steriliser and hot food cabinet were available in the Cafeteria. This Cafeteria was becoming popular and on an average edibles and beverages worth Rs. 2,500/- were being sold per day.

The average monthly profit earned by the Departmental Units at Bangalore was Rs. 25,000/-.

2. The Officer on Special Duty (Catering), Railway Board, also informed the Study Group that the Non-vegetarian Restaurant functioning on the first floor of new building was run by a contractor and was popular with the travelling public. Another Non-vegetarian Refreshment Room, selling tea, biscuits and non-vegetarian meals and situated between Platform Nos. 4 and 5, was also run by the same contractor.

In addition to the catering units, there was a vending contract selling items like fruits, tea and biscuits etc. at all platforms through stalls as well as trollies.

3. The Study Group of the Committee was also informed that in addition to the permanent staff of various categories, 32 Commission Bearers were also working in the Departmental Catering Units at Bangalore. The Commission Bearers were paid commission at the rate of 10% on eatables, 5% on biscuits and confectionary items and 2% on cigarettes. On an average, a Commission Bearer earned Rs. 460/- per month.

*(b) Visit to Railway Catering Establishments at Bangalore City*

4. During their visits to Refreshments Rooms (Vegetarian and non-vegetarian), Cafeteria and Kitchens attached to them, the Study Group found that the service was quite prompt and adequate care was taken for maintaining cleanliness. There were both coal ovens and cooking gas ovens for cooking eatables. There were also arrangements for providing First-aid medical attendance to the needy.

5. The Committee also visited Restaurant, Non-vegetarian Refreshment Rooms and other tea and fruit stalls run by the contractors. In all these catering units, workers were employed by the contractors. The Study Group enquired from the workers about their duty hours, wages and other facilities given to them by the contractors. The Study Group of the Committee was informed by the workers engaged by the contractors that they were being paid Rs. 8 to 12 per day for doing 10 to 12 hours work in shift system. On certain stalls, workers were on duty from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M. with some rest during lunch.

**Conference Hall, System Technical School  
Southern Railway, Bangalore City**

*(c) Informal Discussion with petitioners-representatives of All India Railway Catering Service Workers Union, Bangalore*

6. The Study Group held informal discussion with the representatives of the petitioners. Explaining the background of grievances and demands of Railway Catering Service workers, Shri T.I. Madhavan, Secretary, All India Railway Catering Services Workers' Union, Bangalore, stated that grievances of Railway Catering workers were not looked after. The Union was formed as they were unable to get their demands settled through the recognised unions. Though their Union was unrecognised, they represented a majority of catering workers. They raised certain demands with the Railway authorities. They went on hunger strike in November, 1977 in support of their demands. In 1978, the Catering workers went on strike for fulfilment of their demands. On intervention of the Minister of Railways, a Work Study Group was appointed to go into the demands of Railway Catering workers. The Work Study Group made certain recommendations for absorption of Commission Bearers/Vendors on regular basis. In implementation of the recommendations of the Work Study Group, services of about 300 more Bearers/Vendors were regularised in May, 1980. Still, there were about 60 eligible Commission Bearers/Vendors on Southern Railway who should be absorbed without delay. It was also explained to the Study Group that Commission Bearers worked on the running trains and took orders from passengers for supply of things whereas Commission Vendors worked at the platforms.

7. The Secretary of the Railway Catering Services Workers' Union also made the following demands—



- (i) All Commission Bearers/Vendors should be absorbed on regular basis.
- (ii) In hotels, no loss or breakage of crockeries etc. was deducted from wages of Bearers. In trains, passengers were also responsible, for loss or breakage of crockeries, flasks etc. to some extent. The entire cost of loss or broken articles should not be recovered from the commission of Bearers. It should be deducted at a depreciated value.
- (iii) Commission Bearers/Vendors should be paid bonus like other Railway employees as the Southern Railway Catering Department was earning profit of about Rs. fifty lakhs per annum for the last four or five years.
- (iv) The winter uniform as provided on Northern Railway, should also be given to Commission Bearers/Vendors working on Northbound trains.
- (v) There should be provision for weekly offs and overtime allowance for Commission Bearers/Vendors.
- (vi) Cleaners should also be employed by the Railways on regular basis and the practice of employment of Cleaners through contractors should be abolished. Cleaners were not paid minimum wages statutorily fixed by the State Governments by the contractors and there was no machinery set up by the Southern Railway administration to ensure that all labour laws regarding minimum wages, overtime allowance and weekly offs, payment of compensation etc. were implemented in their case.
- (vii) The Railway authorities should take a lenient view on complaints made against Commission Bearers/Vendors by a passenger and, before taking any action against them, they should also be given an opportunity to explain their view-point.
- (viii) They were not aware of the revision of Pay Scale of Bearers/Vendors to Rs. 200-240/- since July, 1983 as the same was not intimated to them nor had it been implemented on the Southern Railway.

8. In their written Memorandum dated 28 October, 1983, submitted to the Study Group of the committee on Petitions during their

visits to Bangalore and Madras, the President and the Secretary, Southern Railway Mazdoor Union, Madras, stated as follows :—

“Most of the Commission Vendors with no prospect of gaining the status of a Railway employee when recruitments are made for the posts such as Assistants Cooks, Servers etc. these Commission Vendors are relegated and recruits from rank outsiders of doubtful capacity are selected probably because of reasons best known to those at helm of affairs.

The Officers conveniently forget to implement even such things they accepted to implement. They promised ‘Rest Rooms’ for bearers/vendors ; grant of PTOs and free passes on requisitions. Even statutory weekly rest only on requisition and that too after long delay. But very prompt is the Administration in summarily punishing staff without going into the *bona fide* of the allegations.

The worst exploitation the Catering Staff undergoes is the unilateral levy and recovery in the name of shortages in which items such as tables and chairs are also not exempted.

It is pathetic that the respected Dy. CCS/Catering who promised higher commission for Commission Vendors till they are absorbed as regular employees, continues to remain silent without implementing his promise.

The Commission Bearers get only the average commission and not full commission as they are directly involved in the particular work. For instance, the vendors who serve and gain profit are not only getting the commission from the sales, but the whole lot of people like Cooks, Assistant Cooks are also included. By the way the Commission Vendors directly involved are loosing their full share of the commission (This will exclude cafeteria at Madras Central).

The Southern Railway Mazdoor Union requests the Committee to ensure fair deal to the Catering staff and would apprise the Committee that *continued negligence* would only pave way for unrest and frustration among staff which would culminate in serious downfall in the standard of catering services to the public and adverse criticism.”

## II. Madras Central Railway Station

### (a) Briefing by Southern Railway Officials

9. On 28 October, 1983, the Chief Commercial Superintendent, Southern Railway and Officer on Special Duty, Railway Board, welcomed the members of the Study Group and briefed them about Catering Units at Madras Central.

The Catering Units consisted of Vegetarian Refreshment Room, Cafeteria, Proprietary Articles Depot on the ground floor and Restaurant on the first floor. In addition to this, stalls run by Tamil Nadu Co-operative Milk Products Federation Ltd. selling milk and milk products, Himachal Pradesh Horticulture Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation Ltd. selling apple juice on commission basis were functioning. They were managed by their own representatives. Two ice cream stalls selling Kwality Ice Cream and Dasprakash Softy Ice Cream were also available in the concourse selling ice creams on contract basis, giving commission/minimum guarantee.

Platforms No. 3 & 4, 5 & 6, 7 and 8 were provided with light refreshment stalls selling coffee and edibles and Proprietary Articles Depot selling aerated waters, biscuits and cigarettes during the arrival and departure of trains. Trolleys selling biscuits, cigarettes and aerated waters, etc., were also plying on the platforms. All Catering Units except food stalls were being run departmentally under the Headquarters control. The food stall was run by the contractor.

There was also a Lassi Stall with sweetmeats to cater to the taste of passengers from North India.

Packed meals for common man were being made available at Rs. 1.60 per packet.

The main kitchen situated on Platform No. 7 at the entrance near the apple juice stall, prepared edibles and beverages which were supplied to various light refreshment stalls situated on platforms and also fed the counter stall opposite II Class Waiting Hall. Items for vegetarian breakfast required for use in the Pantry Car of superfast trains starting from Madras Central were prepared at this kitchen. On an average, 1,000 breakfast consisting of mainly iddli-vada and masala dosa-vada and dry lunch packets were supplied to the various trains.

The Study Group of the Committee was also informed that kitchen in Catering Units—both in static and mobile units, were being modernised and coal ovens were being replaced by cooking gas ovens.

Same rate of commission was paid to Commission Bearers/Vendors whether they were working in catering units run departmentally or by contractors. The average commission of each Bearer/Vendor ranged from Rs. 450/- to Rs. 550/- per month. Sometimes it was Rs. 20/- per day. Recovery on account of breakage ranged between Rs. 2 and Rs. 8 per 10 days per worker.

*(b) Visit to Railway Catering Establishments at Madras Central*

10. The Study Group of the Committee, thereafter, went round the Catering Establishments at the Madras Central Station and saw the actual working conditions in kitchens, etc. The Study Group also enquired the position about the commission of Bearers, working hours, etc. The Study Group perused from the registers maintained by these Catering Establishments with regard to payments being made to each Commission Bearer/Vendor and breakage charges recovered from the workers. The figures as intimated to the Study Group above, tallied with the records maintained at the Cafeteria.

*General Manager's Meeting Room Southern Railway, Madras*

*(c) Informal Discussion with the Officers of Southern Railways*

11. At the outset, the Additional Chief Commercial Superintendent, Southern Railway welcomed the Chairman and members of the Committee on Petitions. Thereafter, he made the following points :—

- (i) There were prescribed Pay Scales, fixed duty hours, weekly rest, medical and other service benefits at par with Railway employees for Bearers/Vendors who had been absorbed as regular employees. However, Commission Bearers/Vendors alone, and not their families, were entitled for medical benefits as outdoor patients.
- (ii) There existed promotional avenues for regular Commission Bearers/Vendors.
- (iii) At present, blue serge coats and pants were supplied to Managers and woollen jerseys were supplied to Bearers, Waiters,

**Servers and Cooks.** It was proposed to supply closed collar coats, serge ordinary navy blue trousers, serge ordinary navy blue cap from 1984 winter season onwards at the rate of two sets for three years.

- (iv) Sleeping accommodation was provided to Commission Bearers/Vendors after dinner and before morning tea in Pantry Cars.

It was explained that it was not feasible to provide Rest Rooms to Commission Bearers/Commission Vendors at out-stations, as there were many other various categories of railway employees who were not getting that facility and no exception could be made in the case of Commission Bearers/Vendors.

- (v) Total annual breakage on Southern Railway came to Rs.38,000/-. On an average it was Rs. 4/- per month for each worker.
- (vi) Losses were recovered from Bearers on the basis of the value depending upon 30 to 50 per cent of the value of the articles. Breakages had also been reduced with the provision of plastic tumblers/cups for supply of beverages and use of disposable cardboard containers for supply of breakfast.
- (vii) Southern Railway Catering Department was earning profit to the tune of Rs. 50 lakhs per annum. However, the Commission Bearers/Vendors were not entitled to any bonus as they were not regular employees of Railways.
- (viii) There were 850 Commission Bearers/Vendors. About 100 vacancies were going to be filled up soon. Financial implications were under examination and the Railway Board was being consulted for regularisation of some more posts of Bearers and Vendors on the Southern Railway.
- (ix) Pay Scale of Rs. 196-232 had since been raised to Rs. 200-250 since July, 1983 and in the course of next 2-3 months, these would be fully implemented on Southern Railway.

- (x) The question whether the past service rendered by Commission Bearers should be counted for the purpose of pension and other benefits on their absorption on regular basis, was under consideration of the Railway authorities.
- (xi) As regards payment of Commission to Bearers/Vendors, the Southern Railway officials agreed that the percentage of commission varied from Railway to Railway and that it was for the Railway Board to bring about uniformity in the matter.
- (xii) Opportunity was given to Bearers to explain their position with regard to any complaint. However, the weightage had to be given to the statements of Passengers/VIP Passengers. Bearers/Vendors were asked to improve their conduct with the travelling public and not to be rude with them.
- (xiii) On being pointed out, the Railway officials agreed that there should be a clause in the agreement with contractors for providing minimum wages and payment of compensation to their workers.
- (xiv) As per terms of the Agreement between the Railway Administration and the Contractors, the contractors were required to pay reasonable and fair wages fixed by the Government/approved by the State Government from time to time or at a rate not less than Rs. 5.25 p. per day per cleaner whichever was higher to the contract—Cleaners without fail in the presence of either the Chief Catering Inspector or the Unit Catering Inspector or in the presence of the authorised Railway official duly obtaining their signatures in token of having witnessed the payment.
- (xv) On being pointed out, the Southern Railway Officers admitted that the implementation of the above clause in the Agreement was not very effective nor had they any machinery to ensure full payment of wages to the Cleaners.
- (xvi) It was also agreed by the Southern Railway officers that there ought to be a clause in the Agreement with the Contractor for regularisation of working hours, provisions for minimum wages and payment of compensation to Cleaners etc,

12. After the discussion was over, the Chairman on behalf of the Committee thanked the Railway Officers for the hospitality extended to them and making their stay comfortable and for making other arrangements made for their informal discussion during the course of their visits to Bangalore and Madras.

The Committee also placed on record their appreciation to the Officers and staff members of the Southern Railway for the assistance rendered to them during the course of their informal discussion and stay at Bangalore and Madras.

The Chairman also thanked the members of the Committee for their kind cooperation extended by them during the course of informal discussions at Bangalore and Madras.

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