

**RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE
(1991)**

SEVENTH REPORT

ON

**STAFF WELFARE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN
THE RAILWAYS**



Presented in Lok-Sabha on 23-8-1994

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 23-8-1994

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

August, 1994/Bhadra, 1916(S)

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RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE
(1991)

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* Shri Nitish Kumar, MP, nominated on 17 December, 1991 *vice* resignation of Shri Srikanta Jena w.e.f. 16 December, 1991.

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† S/Shri Manmohan Singh, Madhavsinh Solanki & Ajit P.K. Jogi, MPs nominated on 18 May, 1994 *vice* S/Shri Ramsinh Rathwa, Dayanand Sahay and Ch. Hari Singh, MPs, ceased to be Members of the Committee consequent upon their retirement from Rajya Sabha on 2 April, 1994.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of Railway Convention Committee (1991) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Seventh Report on the subject of 'Staff Welfare and Industrial Relations in the Railways'.

2. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) on 30.3.93 and 21.5.93. The Minutes of the sittings of the Committee from Part-II* of the Report. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry for placing before them the detailed written notes on the subject and for furnishing whatever information they desired in connection with the examination of the subject. The Committee also appreciate the frankness with which the officials/representatives shared their views, perceptions and constraints with the Committee.

3. The Committee in this connection took further evidence of the representatives of National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR), All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), Indian Railway Promotee Officers' Federation (IRPOF), and Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association (RBMSA) on 20-21 May, 1993 and 3 June, 1993. The Committee wish to express their thanks to all of them for placing before them various facts and candidly sharing their views on the subject. This enabled the Committee to come to right conclusions in the matter.

4. The Report was considered by the Committee at their sittings held on 30 June, 1994 and 15 July, 1994, and, thereupon adopted.

5. For facility of reference, the observations and recommendations have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in a consolidated form in Appendix-VI to the Report.

NEW DELHI;
August 23, 1994

M. BAGA REDDY,
Chairman,

Bhadra 1, 1916(S)

Railway Convention Committee.

* Not printed. A Copy laid on the Table of both the Houses of Parliament and five copies placed in Parliament Library.

CHAPTER I

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN THE INDIAN RAILWAYS

Brief history of Unions in the Railways

The history of Trade Union Movement in India is intimately connected with the Railways. The Railway companies were amongst the first large undertakings in the organised sector and provided a natural platform for the labour movement. As early as in 1897, an 'Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma' came up on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway as a sequel to a strike by the Guards of that company. Its membership was, however, limited to Anglo-Indian employees and it did not fit in with our present day concept of Unions as secular organisations which are open to all employees, irrespective of caste, creed, religion and race. Between 1897 and 1919, a large number of unions sprang up. Many of these unions cut across staff categories and, therefore, laid the framework of the broad labour fronts that were a healthy feature of work collectivisation in the Railways.

1.2 The earlier unions functioned in isolation, as there was a growing consciousness that labour was not unified enough to negotiate from a position of strength. With the take-over of Company Railways by the Government, conditions developed that were conducive to much greater contact and cooperation between various organisations. In 1925, all the unions came together to form the All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF).

1.3 Indian National Railway Workers Federation (INRWF) was formed in 1947 and it sought recognition immediately. The Ministry of Railways took some time in coming to a decision, but finally, in December 1949, the INRWF was granted facilities for consultation. In 1952, both the Federations were merged and this resulted in the emergence of a single federation for labour on the Railways which called itself the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR). However, this maturity of approach was shortlived. The controversy arising out of implementation of unity agreement between the two groups of the NFIR—one consisting of former constituent of INRWF and the other consisting of representatives of former AIRE—was referred to Justice Majumdar by a notification No. E-58-EO-8/3/RBI dated 30th April, 1958, and Justice Majumdar, in his judgement as Arbitrator, Railway Labour Disputes, dated 30th September, 1958, did not accept the contention to be operative and since the former INRWF and now NFIR did not agree to implement the unity agreement,

the unity move failed and the AIRF was revived and recognised by the Ministry of Railways. Considerable efforts were made, by the then Railway Minister, to bring about unity but his efforts were of no avail and, in 1959, the AIRF was re-recognised. The parent NFIR retained its name, and, subsequently, both these Federations have continued to be recognised. A move for unity was again made by the then Railway Minister in 1973-74. A conference of office-bearers of these two federations was held on 4th February, 1974, in which there was more or less a consensus on the principle of a single union for one industry, but no amalgamation was attempted in the face of highly polarised positions.

Structure of two Federations

1.4 At present, the two recognised Federations have their Zonal Affiliates in each of the 9 Zonal Railways, recognised by the respective Railway Administrations. At the apex level, the two Federations viz. All India Railwaymen's Federation and National Federation of Indian Railwaymen enjoy negotiating facilities with Railway Board and the affiliated Unions of both the Federations and their Divisional Branches enjoy negotiating facilities with the Zonal and Divisional Railway Administrations respectively.

Criteria for recognising a trade union

1.5 Chapter XXV of the Indian Railways Establishment Manual, Volume II, lays down the following conditions precedent to grant of recognition to any registered trade union:

- (i) it must consist of a distinct class of Railway servants and must not be formed on the basis of any caste, tribe or religious denomination or of any group within or section of such caste, tribe or religious denomination;
- (ii) all railway servants of the same class must be eligible for membership;
- (iii) it must be registered under the Trade Union Act, 1926;
- (iv) the rules of the Unions, subject to modifications, should be mutually agreed to between the Railway Administration and the Union;
- (v) government may require the regular submission of copies of the rules of any recognised unions or association, of its annual accounts and of its list of members;
- (vi) the register of members, both ordinary and honorary, shall be open for inspection during the office hours of the Union on not less than seven days' notice given in writing by any member or officer of the Union or by any person deputed for this purpose by the Railway Administration, etc.

1.6 In this connection, the Ministry of Railways clarified that:

“To be eligible for a trade union for recognition, its membership should not be less than 30% of the total number of non-gazetted staff employed on the railway concerned. The powers for granting recognition to the registered trade unions are vested in the General Managers of the Zonal Railways. The existing criteria have stood the test of time and are considered satisfactory”.

Salient features of the Industrial Relations Policy

1.7 When the Committee wanted to know the objectives of the Industrial Relations Policy followed by the Railways, the Ministry stated:

“Railways have been following a well-defined, coherent Industrial Relations Policy over the years. This policy aims at securing harmonious and peaceful Industrial Relations by maintaining contact with labour, having continuous dialogue with them through formal/informal meetings/discussions, with a view to resolve disputes and differences that may arise between them and administration, in an open, friendly and conciliatory environment.

The Indian Railways have been divided into nine Zones. Each Zone has two recognised trade unions—one affiliated to the All India Railwaymen’s Federation and the other to the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen. These two Unions represent the interests of all the categories of non-gazetted employees at the District, Divisional and Zonal Head Quarters levels. Both these federations enjoy the facility of negotiating at the apex level with the Ministry of Railways.

In Production Units, Staff Councils take up matters relating to service conditions and other issues of common interest connected with the working of the Unit with the Administration and these are resolved through mutual discussions”.

Facilities provided to the office bearers of the Unions

1.8 In reply to a question about the facilities provided to the office bearers of the Union/Federations for discharging their duties, the Ministry submitted the following:

“These facilities normally are: complimentary railway passes for office-bearers; passes for meetings; railway accommodation to house trade union offices; railway telephone in union offices; allowing railway workers in active service on deputation to trade unions as full-time workers; allotment of notice board for union purposes; and facilities for collection of subscription near the places of employment etc.”

The System of Collective Bargaining

1.9 (i) **Permanent Negotiating Machinery (PNM)**

By early 1930s the Railways had accepted the All India Railwaymen’s Federation (AIRF) as the single voice of the railwaymen and decided to

hold half-yearly meetings with AIRF at which important general topics proposed by the Federation were discussed. During the War Years, a system of regular consultations was adopted, owing to the anxiety of the Government to ensure that no disruption of the War efforts was allowed to take place. In a way, joint consultation had established itself on the Railways many years before Independence.

1.10 After Independence, Unions pressed for setting up of a Joint Consultative Committee. During 1951, consultations between the Government and the AIRF, led to an agreement for setting up of a Permanent Negotiating Machinery (PNM) which started functioning from 1 January, 1952. The following are the salient features of PNM.

“The machinery is envisaged in 3 tiers, one at the Divisional level second at the zonal headquarters level with General Managers, and at the apex at the Railway Board level where matters not settled at Railway level are taken up by the respective Federations with Railway Board.

At the Divisional level, meetings are to be held at least once in 2 months with each of the recognised unions. At the Railway Headquarters level, meetings are to be held once in 3 months with each of the recognised unions. At Railway Board level, meetings are to be held with each of the Federations once in 4 months.

In the meetings at all the levels, all disciplinary matters and subjects like promotion, transfer, etc. of the individual members of the staff are excluded from the scope of discussion. The question concerning pay scales, allowances are discussed by the federations at Railway Board level and not at lower levels. At Divisional and Zonal Railway level, the items discussed are only those which are within the powers of the officers concerned. The matter raised at the Divisional level but not settled may be raised at Railway level, and similarly matters not settled at the Railway level may be brought at the Board level for discussion between the Board and the Federations.”

1.11 The number of PNM meetings held with the various Federations at the Board level during the last two years are as follows:—

1992-93	—	4
1993-94	—	2

1.12 The Ministry of Railways also informed the Committee:

“If after discussion between Railway Board and the Federations agreement is not reached on any matter of importance, such matters may be referred to an adhoc Railway Tribunal which may be set up. This Tribunal when set up would consist of equal number of representatives from Railway labour and the Administration with a neutral Chairman. The detailed procedure which the Tribunal should adopt for conducting its proceedings and submit its decisions is normally drawn up, when such tribunals are set up. If the matters affect the workers in other Ministries, these Ministries are also consulted. It is open to the Government to accept, reject or modify the recommendation of the Tribunal. Matters which have been settled by agreement or on which Government ultimately accept the decision

of the Tribunal are not to be brought up by the Federations again for 2 years. However, in the cases in which Government have rejected or modified the decision of the Tribunal, issue may be raised again at the end of 1 year.

Up till now, from the time Permanent Negotiating Machinery started functioning, the adhoc Tribunal has been set up 3 times. The first adhoc Tribunal was set up in the late 1960s, second one in 1969 and third in 1971. All these Tribunals consisted of only one neutral Chairman, as both Railway Board and Federations waived their right of representation on the Tribunal. Recommendations of all these Tribunals were examined by Railway Board and generally accepted and implemented”.

1.13 The details regarding the above three adhoc Tribunals are given at Appendix-I.

1.14 The Committee pointed out the whereas in some of the Railways the PNM meetings are held at regular intervals, in others meetings are not held regularly. The Railway Board stated in this regard as under:—

“PNM meetings are arranged as and when the agenda for the meeting is received from the recognised unions/federations. At times, because of preoccupations of the recognised unions/federations in their multifarious trade union activities there is delay in receiving the agenda. However, as and when the agenda is received the meetings are organised promptly and efforts are always made to have these meetings regularly as per targets laid down. Some unavoidable circumstances like general law and order problem in the country, strikes, factions/disputes in the recognised unions or other unforeseen circumstances are also responsible for these meeting not being organised regularly at the divisional/zonal level.”

1.15 The two Federations often complain that the decisions taken at the PNM meetings are not implemented in letter and spirit. Asked as to how the Ministry monitor the implementation of the decision, the Railway Board in a written reply, submitted:

“A proper record is maintained for each division/zone as well as in Railway Board regarding the decisions taken in the PNM meetings. These decisions are also implemented in the letter and spirit by the Administration. In exceptional cases where these are left unimplemented either due to oversight or on account of some unavoidable problems, these are invariably discussed in the subsequent PNM meetings and measures are taken to have these implemented expeditiously. Besides PNM forum, implementation of PNM decisions is also taken up and discussed informally by the recognised unions at appropriate levels with the Management. In some railways the position is also reviewed at the level of AGM in the Zone and ADRM in the division one month after the PNM meeting with a view to expedite implementation of the decisions and disposal of pending items. It is possible that some of the demands may not be agreed to or the decision taken may not be entirely favourable to

the staff but whatever decisions are taken these are implemented and also monitored properly. In fact, this is largely responsible for the labour peace and good harmonious industrial relations prevailing in Indian Railways”.

1.16 Regarding non-implementation of the decisions of President, AIRF, during non-official evidence, stated:

“The question of agreement in the PNM and the implementation as far as at the lower level is concerned, these are just administrative matters. Here, at the national level, the question of agreement with Railway Board itself is hampered because what happens is that on a number of issues, before taking a decision with us, they would like to consult the DOP or the DOP will tell them that the Railway Board is not going to give us any right; we have been asked by the Finance Ministry or DOP to do it. That is one part of it. When you pose this question to the Railway Board, the Railway Board itself has to say that there are cases where they have got to refer to them. I will just give examples. DOP was, one fine morning issuing an order and saying that they should not take leave after a certain period. This is not applicable for them. This, as such, does not pose any problem in the civil services. But, certainly it goes against most of them who are working on the operating side. Then, the Railway had to tell and ask for cancelling the order. This is what happens.

1.17 The witness added:

Under the Joint Consultative Machinery, the agreement has been reached at, whereby when a matter is left to the arbitration, the decision of arbitration board is binding on both the parties. If the Government does not want the decision to be implemented, they want to be rejected or modified; they have to go to the Parliament for its approval”.

Redressal of grievances relating to disciplinary matters

1.18 Asked to state the mechanism by which the grievances relating to disciplinary matters of individual employees was being redressed, the Railway Board stated:

“A well established mechanism already exists on Indian Railways whereby an individual employee can get his grievance relating to disciplinary matters redressed by way of filing an Appeal or seeking a Review of the order passed by the Disciplinary/Appellate Authority under Railway Servant's (Discipline and Appeals) Rules 1968”.

1.19 In reply to another question whether the unions are permitted to take up such grievances, the Ministry stated:

“The recognised Unions generally take up policy issues having bearing on a number of employees in the formal PNM/JCM meetings. However, during informal discussions, they do take up

the grievances of individuals relating to seniority/promotion/fixation of pay at different tiers of administration."

(ii) *Joint Consultative Machinery*

While the Railways had gone ahead with setting up of a Consultative Machinery in 1952, little headway was made in the case of the remaining Central Government employees. In October, 1966 a scheme known as Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM), was inaugurated.

The Scheme was framed on a 3-tier basis, consisting of Joint National Council, Joint Departmental Council and a General Regional Office Council.

As the Railways had already set-up their own Consultative Machinery way back in 1952, the Railway Board decided to participate in the JCM Scheme in 1969 only at the two levels of National Council & Departmental Council. They do not participate in the Regional Office Council. In this Connection the Ministry of Railways have, in their Memorandum, submitted the following:—

"National Council deals with the matters affecting all Central Government employees. Member (Staff) and Financial Commissioner, Railway Board, represent Ministry of Railways on the official side of the National Council. Both the Federations of Indian Railways have 13 members each on the Staff side of the National Council. The scope of National Council includes all matters relating to condition of service and work, welfare of employees and improvement of efficiency and standard of work. Cabinet Secretary to the Government of India is the Chairman of the National Council.

Departmental Council consultations are held between the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) and staff side represented by both the two Federations. The Official side in the Departmental Council is represented by the Officers in the Ministry of Railways and the Staff Side by 15 members each of the two Federations. Member (Staff) Railway Board is the Chairman of the Departmental Council. The scheme also provides for compulsory arbitration on 3 subjects viz. pay and allowances, weekly hours of work and leave, of a class or grade of employees. In addition, 3 meetings of Permanent Negotiating Machinery at the Railway Board level with each Federation, described earlier, and 3 meetings of Departmental Council are to be held every year. The difference is that in Permanent Negotiating Machinery, meetings are to be held with each of the Federations separately and Departmental Council meetings are held jointly with representatives of both the Federations.

In the Production Units viz. Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, Chittaranjan, Diesel Locomotive Works, Varanasi and Integral Coach Factory, Perambur, as a matter of policy no union has been recognised. In these Production Units meetings are held with directly elected staff Councils. These Staff Councils discuss local problems periodically with General Managers of these Productions Units and once in 6 months, the Councils have the facility of discussion of their unresolved grievances with Railway Board."

1.23 It was further stated that:

"The JCM scheme, provides for reference of unresolved issues/demands to the Board of Arbitration provided these are arbitrable items. Otherwise these issues are referred to a Group of 3 Ministers for non-arbitrable items.

The arbitrable items are those relating to:

- i) Pay and Allowances;
- ii) Weekly hours of work; and
- iii) Leave

The Award of the Board of Arbitration is binding on both the sides subject of course, to the overriding authority of the Parliament."

1.24 Asked to state the level of Officers who held regular discussions with the two Federations, the Ministry of Railways stated:

"The consultative machinery at Board Level exists to hold regular discussions to resolve the staff grievances in the periodical meetings both under the Permanent Negotiating Machinery and under the Joint Consultative Machinery. These meetings are held under the chairmanship of Member (Staff) who is an ex-officio Secretary to the Government of India. At the Divisional and Zonal levels, discussions are held with the recognised unions under the Permanent Negotiating Machinery in the Periodical meetings. These meetings are held under the chairmanship of the General Manager (an officer in the pay scale of Rs 7300-8000/- at zonal levels and under the chairmanship of the Divisional Railway Manager Can officer in the pay scale of. Rs. 5900-6700, equivalent to Joint Secretaries in Government of India) at the Divisional level."

1.25 When the Committee wanted to know the process by which the issues which remain unresolved in such discussions were being dealt with, the Railway Board replied:

"When a matter, which is raised for discussion at the Divisional level is not settled/resolved there, it may be raised at the Zonal level for further discussion/negotiation. Similarly, a matter which is not settled at the Zonal railway level can be brought up by the

Federations to the Railway Board. Such matters could be discussed either in the meetings held under the PNM scheme or under the JCM scheme.

Under the PNM scheme, important cases in which agreement is not reached could be referred to an adhoc Tribunal, at the request of the Federation. The adhoc Tribunal has been set up 3 times. The first adhoc Tribunal was set up in the late 1960s, second one in 1969 and third in 1971. No such situation arose after 1971 and there had been no demand from either of the 2 Federation for setting up of such adhoc Tribunal.”

Another adhoc Tribunal—the Railway Workers’ Classification Tribunal 1976—was appointed by the Ministry of Railways in 1976.

Management—Trade Union Relationship

1.26 During the non-official evidence, the Committee wanted to know from the representatives of the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR) about their relationship with the Railway Management and the areas of dispute.

The representative of N.F.I.R. stated as under:—

“Relationship presently is mainly one-sided. That is only from the Trade Union’s side and there is no good response from the management side. I can establish these facts on the ground that the Trade Unions of the Rawilays have always tried to maintain peaceful atmosphere in the Railways. If I say that after 1974 there has been no mandays lost in the Railways, this is a very good sign. We have developed the relations in such a fashion that there have been no chance of any loss to the Railways on any occasion. The fact remains that we believe in negotiations failing which arbitration. As and when this agreement is recorded at the highest level in a national forum under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary, the matter is entrusted to the Labour Ministry and then it is sent to the Board of Arbitration where the judge is also appointed by the Government. Likewise if there is any discrimination at the Railway Board level, even then the disagreed items are sent to the Board of Arbitration as the award is given by the judge, who is appointed by the Government. Since we believe in Gandhian ideology, as and when an award is given by the Board of Arbitration, it should be acceptable to both the parties”.

1.27 The witness further added:

“But on the Railways and in the Government sector, another system has been evolved by certain bureaucrats that they do not accept the award because the award cannot be amended by any Minister or by the Railway Board or by any other Ministry official. So they take the award to the Parliament to get it rejected. This suppresses the

relationship between the management and the working class. Why I say this is, when the matter is discussed at a proper level and disagreement is recorded, and the disagreement is sent to the Labour Ministry, they examine it; and then, it is an arbitrable item. Then, it is sent to the Board of Arbitration. I particularly emphasise it because the judge who is chairing the Board of Arbitration is appointed by the Government and not by the trade unions. Then, after hearing both the parties, if an award is given, and even if it is against the workers, the workers accept that award; but, if the award goes against the Government or against the management, they refuse to implement the award. This is one thing which is very important and there is unrest in the working class on account of this fact. I want to bring this to your personal notice so that some remedy is found out. Otherwise, the alarming situation is there, not only in the railways, but amongst all the central Government employees. At present, what happens is that when we had the last meeting with the Chairman, Cabinet Secretary, at the national council level, there were two awards pending and the Government is not in a position either to accept it or to reject it. Now, it is being delayed and the awards are very important; not only very important, but there is a principle involved, as to whether the awards given by the Board of Arbitration are to be accepted or not. So these two awards which are not being implemented are creating a bad situation in the working class; and all the trade unions which are united under the national council, irrespective of any national trade union, all trade unions are under the banner of the national council. They are feeling very adverse about this and they are thinking of direct action to be taken in case the awards are not implemented. This is the thing that the non-implementation of the award is taken seriously by the trade unions”.

1.28 Elaborating the other areas of dispute with the Management which have a direct bearing on the morale of the Railway employees, the representative of NFIR submitted the following:

“When the RCF, Kapurthala was opened, it was opened with a clear vision; the Prime Minister has his own vision; the Government had its own vision. But, once it is started, they are trying to bring certain contractors inside it, that is, off-loading of work (is being given) to the contractors. We, the trade unions, fail to understand as to how they are developing more relationship with the contractors than that of the railwaymen who are working in the coach factories. In the coach factory, the staff has worked very well; they have produced according to the targets. But, still then, the contractors are being brought in; the contractors are brought in illegally and unlawfully. They enter along with their own men. In the railways, any worker a painter, a carpenter, mason or any other job which are coming under

the artisan category i.e. we take it from those who are duly qualified. That is, we take ITI qualified people, degree holders, diploma holders, etc. But, those contractors who have been appointed are bringing in raw-hands; they are not ITI qualified people; they are not trained people; they do not know the job. So, the entire work, whatever it is, done by them, is a sub-standard work which should be avoided; and at this very point, we want to emphasise upon your goodself that this privatisation and bringing in contractors in the working place should be stopped immediately, we have brought this to their notice and the trade unions are very much annoyed on this subject. This is one of the things on which they are thinking of taking some direct action to stop (such practices)".

1.29 When the Ministry of Railway were specifically asked about the major areas of disagreement with the trade unions, the Railway Board stated:

"As far as the Ministry of Railway is concerned, there are no major areas of disagreement.

The organised labour has, however, expressed certain reservations on the policy of 'privatisation'.

To explain the policy of privatisation of catering Services on the Railway, two meetings of the organised labour were held at the level of the Minister of Railways on 17.6.92 and 29.6.92 and position explained (to them).

There are, however, certain issues which concern Central Government Employees, as a whole, on which the railway labour is also agitated. Generally these issues are, parity in wages with the public sector undertakings, merger of D.A. with the pay, doing away the wage ceiling limit for bonus with Rs. 1600, grant of conveyance allowance, privatisation, setting up of a permanent wage review body, etc, etc. These issues have been taken up by the labour (Trade Unions) in the highest forum viz, the National Council set up under the Joint Consultative Machinery".

1.30 During evidence, the Chairman, Railway Board, when asked about the relationship between the Union & Management, states:

"We have a healthy relationship with our Unions. There is a great deal of understanding between the Management and the unions and a great deal of understanding for the benefits of the staff as well as for the system as a whole".

1.31 The representative of All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF) deposed the following before the Committee during another non-official evidence:—

"The Railway Ministry is dealing with such a big industry with a varied nature of work force. But, during the last decade or so a

system has been developing wherein for almost everything, the Railway Ministry has to go to the Ministry of Finance or the Railway Board has to make a reference to the Department of Personnel.

Now in this process, firstly, the things are not decided correctly and appropriately. I may submit to you an example about a case of switchmen. Switchmen are the one who deal with the operating and the despatch of trains. In that matter, the Finance Ministry intervened and a Committee was appointed headed by one of the Additional Secretaries of the Government of India. When the matter came up for discussion, the Finance Ministry and the Department of Personnel which had earlier intervened, they said in the meeting that they thought 'Switchman' to be a person who dealt with the electric switch. Then the matter was sent back to the Railway Ministry and the Railway Board to take its own decision. I was the man who had raised this issue. This is now the Finance Ministry and the Home Ministry perceive".

He added:

"In 1979, the All India Railwaymen's Federation took a decision for strike. After that, they were to decide about the date. One of the demands mentioned was that the Railways be turned into a corporation. The then Cabinet Secretary invited us for discussion and said, "why should there be such a demand from the Federation that the Railways be converted into a corporation?" It was mentioned then that it was because of the interference of the Finance Ministry and the DOP particularly. He realised that that was very bad and said, 'if such a big industry is to be interfered with every moment, then how can you run the industry?' Then the Chairman, Railway Board was personally told by him to stop that interference. But the things have not improved".

1.32 When asked by the Committee whether there were any disputes regarding service conditions, the president, AIRF stated:

"In the case of service conditions which are also gain related to industrial relationship, I tell You, how the things are decided and how the relations are spoiled. A decision was taken by the Department of Personnel about the hospital leave to be completely done with. Now the hospital leave is given to the employees who are injured in the discharge of their duties and are admitted to the hospital. During the period of treatment, they are treated as on hospital leave. Department of Personnel and the Finance Ministry do not deal with the persons who are working in the railways. Almost everyday (some) persons who are on operating duties got injured. Department of Personnel says that no leave should be given after 120 days which is the maximum limit. Beyond that, (even) if a person (is not fully recovered) he is not given leave. These are the types of

situations which are there because the decision is not taken at the appropriate level."

He added:

"There are certain things which again we would submit for the Committee to kindly take a very specific note of and help us at this juncture. This is with regard to the carriage and wagon and loco sheds where the maintenance staff is working. Quite a long ago, a Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha for amending the **Factory Act** from the point of view of giving protection to the carriage and wagon staff and loco shed staff and also to bring them at par with the workers in the factories. The Railway Minister then gave an assurance to the Parliament that the same facility would be extended to them. But unfortunately, its implementation is still not being done. I think, this Committee would be most appropriate authority to whom we can make a request that the assurance given with regard to the implementation of provisions of the Factory Act for the staff working in CAW and Loco sheds may kindly be ensured".

Dual Membership

1.33 Asked to state the membership of NFIR vis-a-vis total strength of railwaymen, the president, NFIR informed that the membership of NFIR was 1,50,000 and the total strength of railwaymen was 3,50,000.

1.34 When the Committee wanted to know the existence and extent of dual membership, the President, NFIR during evidence, state:

"The majority is not dual membership, the minority is dual membership. This can be judged from the total membership of each zonal Railways".

The witness gave the following reasons for this phenomenon:

"The point is that every railwayman is interested in trade union.....both are the recognised trade unions in the Railways and we have got a joint forum also. Jointly we are helping the Departmental Council meeting at the Railway Board level".

1.35 To a question whether any verification has been done to curb this menace of dual membership, the witness replied:

"The verification by the Central Government has already been taken up. We have also produced the records before the Chief Labour Commissioner and now, they are going in for a physical verification. For the last one-and-a-half month I am busy in the verification of the membership. They see every receipt issued for the membership. They see the register and from that register they check up some pages. After seeing the receipts they prepare their own report".

1.36 At this point, the Committee enquired whether physical verification was possible instead of this random checking.

The witness stated:

"It is not possible. The Government thought of this procedure and if the Government changes the procedure, that procedure will be binding on us. We believe in physical verification and independent agencies are doing that. We are not conducting that, but we simply produce our records".

1.37 Asked to state whether NFIR is agreeable to the concept of 'one union for one industry', the president, NFIR states:

"In this connection I want to point out that I was present at the time when SShri Jayaprakash Narayan, Khendobhai Desai and Hariharanath Shastri decided this issue. We decided that it must be there. You will be glad to know that the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen is the merger federation of those two federations. We did not part, but some of our friends parted. I am the General Secretary and this Uttariya Railway Mazdoor Union is the merger of these two Unions. So, nobody can blame us that we went aside. We went in the right direction because at that time Shri Jaya Prakash said that 'if there is one, you can do well' and we agreed to that. Hariharanath Shastri was the first president who took over the Union".

1.38 In this regard, the president of AIRF expressed the following views:

"Unfortunately, in our country, opportunism is spreading and this opportunism is a type of culture which comes from somewhere and percolates in all aspects of the society. Unfortunately, this fragmentation which has been taking place at some stage, the Government has played its own role. Then subsequently politics has come into it and then individualism has come into it. After all, these are unfortunate things. Those who are leading the country have to see that the workers are not exploited. Let there be a system of recognition of unions".

The witness added:

"First of all, in principle, we entirely agree that there should be something to know the strength of the union. But for that purpose, in our opinion, there could be no other method except secret ballot. The rest of the methods cannot be correct methods."

1.39 The Ministry of Railways submitted their views regarding the concept of 'one Union for one industry' as under.

"This concept of "one Union for one Industry" has to really flow from the trade unions themselves. Only in case this finds wider acceptability within the trade union cadres, it could be considered by the Government. The present industrial scenario which witnesses

multiplicity of trade unions, provides little scope for implementation of this concept.

Further, though *prima facie*, the concept appears to be good it has its own limitation. Unless the trade union cadres have really come up well and are mature enough, the leadership falling in undesirable hands, may create problems. Besides, in a democratic set-up like ours, two recognised unions in each zone appears to lead to satisfactory situation as this provides sound industrial relations. More than two recognised unions is also not desirable since the multiplicity of unions is neither conducive to healthy trade union movement nor good for the growth of the industry, its increased productivity and output'.

Industrial disputes and strikes

1.40 Asked to furnish data on mandays lost due to industrial disputes during the last three years, the Railway Board submitted the following:

Mandays lost during: 1988-89—6462
 1989-90—2712
 1990-91—33726
 1991-92—23787
 1992-93—18197
 1993-94—3299

1.41 When the Committee wanted to know as to whether there were any strikes in the Railways during the last 5 years, the Ministry stated:

“There has been no strike on the railways during the last five years except the illegal tool down strike in wheel and Axle Plant, Bangalore, from 15.3.91 to 24.5.91”.

1.42 The Committee desired to know the administrative action taken in regard to the tool down strike in Wheel & Axle Plant.

The Railway Board deposed:

“The strike in the Wheel and Axle Plant, Bangalore, was spearheaded by wheel and Axle Plant Karmika Sangha, an unrecognised union. In this strike 46,512 mandays were lost. There was an immediate estimated revenue loss to the extent of Rs. 20 crores (approximately). However, the same was more than made good by achieving much higher production levels in the post strike period. The additional cost of securing railway property during this strike has been estimated to be Rs. 4,61,367.03.

This strike was called off and the disciplinary action was taken by the Administration against an employee who was coming in the way of smooth production and who was also instigating other workers and preventing them from carrying out their duties”.

The Ministry further informed the Committee that:

"The following action was taken by the railway authorities to dissuade the employees from joining the strike:

(i) Appeals were made through the public address system in and around the colony and the plant to explain to the staff that the strike was illegal and they should resume duty to avoid facing consequences of participating in an illegal strike. It was also explained that participation would involve imposition of the Principle of 'no work no pay' besides suffering break in service, etc.

(ii) Hand-outs were distributed in the colony and in the Plant advising the staff not to join the illegal strike.

(iii) Announcements were made through Radio, Doordarshan and in the leading newspapers.

In view of the appeals, a few of the employees resumed duties and finally the strike was called off on 25.5.91 unconditionally, when all the employees resumed duty.

Employees mainly responsible for instigating the staff for participating in the illegal strike were identified. Three of them were removed from service (later reinstated and transferred out of WAP) and four other were transferred out of WAP. Besides, the principles of 'No work No pay' and 'break in service,' were followed wherever applicable.

Services of 125 trainees were also terminated. However, on subsequent consideration of their mercy appeals, 117 were later on reinstated".

1.43. Asked to state as to how many employees dismissed during the strike of 1974 have been reinstated after the assurance given by the Railway Minister in Parliament, the Railway Board in their reply stated:

"All the Railway employees who were removed/dismissed in the context of May 1974 strike, have been taken back to duty except 16 employees who could not be reinstated due to reasons beyond the control of the Railway administration such as retirement, death, conviction by Court, unwillingness and whereabouts not known".

Workers Participation in Management

1.44 The Committee wanted to know whether the Ministry of Railways have evolved any process for participation of workers in the Management. The Railway Board submitted as follows:

"The joint forum of management and labour titled 'Corporate Enterprise Group' (CEG) has been in existence since September, 1972. This forum provides for a free flow and exchange of ideas on the running and shaping of the enterprise of railways. Proper appreciation of the policies of the Management through discussions in this forum, also tends to dispel any possible aura of secrecy or

distrust generally attributed to the functioning of the top management. The basic objectives of CEG are:

- (a) Evaluate the functioning of the Railways and exchange data and ideas on ways and means for improving the efficiency and viability of the enterprise.
- (b) Appraise the investment programmes, particularly in regard to housing and welfare services.
- (c) Identify areas and devise action oriented methods for maximising organisational effectiveness use of new technological innovations and towards building up the image of the railways as a service organisation”.

The Ministry of Railways added in this regard:

“In 1977, these were extended to Zonal Railways and Corporate Enterprise Groups were set up in each zone as also in each division with a view to discuss matters involving improvement in the working of the railway system and recommending appropriate changes for improving efficiency and viability of the system.

CEG meetings are held once in every quarter, important policy aspects are discussed in the CEG meetings both at the Railway Board level as well as at Zonal and Divisional levels. Recently, a full-fledged discussion on ‘Gauge Conversion’ project was held in the CEG meeting.

At the Railway Board level the meeting is presided by Chairman, Railway Board while at the Zonal level by the General Manager personally and at the Divisional level by the Divisional Railway Manager. Instructions have been reiterated to hold these meetings regularly”.

1.45 When the Committee asked why meetings of CGE were not being held regularly or no agenda issued, the Chairman, Railway Board, during evidence, deposed:

“I have tried to do something about it. CGE at the Railway Board is quite active and I am happy to report that over the last three or four sittings, we have had a very positive and a very meaningful interaction. We have looked into the problems which relate to the programmes as a whole. We have interacted with them. We have appointed two sub-groups to go into specific areas. They have presented their reports. We have tried to act on their reports. All these things have started happening in the Railway Board. I am aware that CEG on the Zonal Railways are quite effective. We have two or three meetings on an average per year. I have written to the General Managers to mutually solve the problems”.

1.46 During evidence, the Committee suggested to the Ministry of Railways that if the Unions were not prepared to give the agenda, the

Administration could give three/four items from which the Unions could take up one or two items for their discussion. To this suggestion of the Committee the Chairman, Railway Board reacted as follows:

“I have recommended to the General Managers. There are some major issues. One is about broad-gauge. This is an essential item which they will discuss with the unions. Then, we are phasing out steam locomotives. there will be some surplus staff also and these surplus staff have to be trained and re-trained so as to get more production out of them. I have asked to initiate a dialogue with them and devise training programmes and resettlement programmes. We have picked up subjects like this and I have specifically asked the General Managers to include them in thier agenda for discussion”.

Staff Council in Production Units

1.47 The Ministry of Railways have stated in their Memorandum that:

“In Production Units, unlike the Zonal Railways, where the staff is scattered all over the territorial jurisdiction of the Railway and physical contact with the management is not possible (at times communications also get delayed), there is a concentrated labour force and all workers are located at one place. They are in constant touch with the Management to get their staff grievances redressed, either directly or through their representatives in the Staff Councils whom they directly elect. Most of the issues, being local in nature generally get resolved through the mechanism of Staff Council meetings with the General Manager. Very few issues which remain unresolved at local level are discussed in the periodical meetings of Staff Council with the Member (Staff), Railway Board. Whip arrangement has been working satisfactorily as it provides a direct and casier communication/linkage between workers and managment, thereby obviating the need for recognition of other staff Unions”.

1.48 When the Committee wanted to know as to why the Staff Councils of Production Units were not allowed to affiliate themselves with the two National Fedérations and whether the Staff Councils were being treated at par with the Federation, the Ministry of Railway stated:

“The system of Staff Councils was introduced in the Railways, including Production Units, as a result of the recommendations of the First Pay Commission. However, with the introduction of the Joint Consultative machinery (JCM) Scheme for Central Government employees in 1966, the system of Staff Councils was abolished on all the Zonal Railways but in so far as the Production Units are concerned, by a special dispensation, the Govt. approved the continuance of these Councils. It was felt that it would not be desirable to recognise any unions in the Production Units as that

was likely to interfere with the production targets. It was also felt that the Staff Councils should be deemed to provide necessary machinery to the staff for redressal of grievances.

In the Production Units, apart from the Staff Councils, few unions have also come into existence though not recognised by the Administration. A few of these unrecognised unions, also have their affiliation to certain central bodies like AIRF, NFIR, etc."

1.49 In this connection, the President, NFIR, submitted the following before the Committee during evidence:

"In regard to the working in the railways, we have tried our best to see that we, without increasing the staff, increase the production. For that, a central scheme was introduced, that means, the staff who are already on roll will work more and whatever target is fixed, they produced more than that target and thereafter, they get the incentives. This was the best procedure which was going on. But, now the management of the railways are trying to torpedo this system and the production units i.e. the Railway Coach Factory (RCF), Kapurthala, DCW, Patiala or other production units i.e. are not introducing the incentive scheme which is already existing in the railways. When we discussed this with the Railway Board, we told them that this incentive scheme is more in the interest of the railways than that of others. They do not try to understand this. Now, they want to change certain norms of the incentive scheme which are, already, duly, accepted. If at all they want to change the norms, immediate discussion should take place with both the trade unions which are recognised and they should change the norms. But, denial of incentive scheme to the production units mainly is not in the interest of the administration, nor is it in the interest of the railway industry and the Government."

1.50 The Committee also wanted to know the composition of such Staff Councils and periodicity of meetings with the respective General Managers of the Production Units. In this regard, the Railway Board submitted the following:

Staff Council consists of:

- (i) Elected members;
- (ii) Nominated members; and
- (iii) Co-opted members.

Both nominated as well as elected members can be the office bearers of the Staff Councils.

Meetings of the Staff Councils are not to be held more often than once every 2 months or less often than once every 4 months. It was pointed out that according to the Ministry of Railways, the issues

which remain unresolved at the local level were discussed in the periodical meetings of Staff Council with Member (Staff), Railway Board. Asked about the number of such meetings held during the last 3 years, the Railway Board replied in a written note:

"Generally, it has been possible for the Staff Council of each Production Unit to have a meeting with the Railway Board once in only a year. in DLW, such meetings were held in 1989 and 1991. In ICF, a meeting of the Staff Council was held in 1989. The functioning of the Staff Council in CLW and ICF has been stalled due to Court injunctions".

1.51 Details of some of the important issues negotiated and resolved are indicated in *Appendix-II*.

Category-wise Associations

1.52 Asked to state the reasons responsible for mushrooming of unrecognised Unions, the Railway Board replied:

"There has been a mushroom growth of unrecognised Associations/ Unions over the years. These mostly represent a particular category of staff, a particular class of employees based on caste/tribes or group of employees belonging to a section of category. These, obviously, do not represent interests of staff obviously, do not represent interests of staff belonging to all shades/categories on Indian Railways and their approach, therefore, is not broad based. The factors responsible are:

Patronage/support from political parties;

Disparities in promotional prospects.

Certain categories having more nuisance value thereby being in a better bargaining position *vis-a-vis* others".

1.53 When the Committee wanted to know the method adopted by the Railway Board for redressal of grievances of the unrecognised Unions, the Ministry of Railways submitted the following:

"As a matter of policy and with a view to maintain good industrial relations, Indian Railways deal with only two recognised trade unions and do not entertain any correspondence with the unrecognised unions/associations/group of employees by way of having a dialogue with them or entering into any correspondence with them. however, all staff grievances are looked into, on merits, irrespective of the source from which they emanate. In this context, memoranda handed over by the unrecognised unions/associations are considered and appropriate action taken, wherever required".

The Ministry elaborated the point further and stated:

"In a vast network like Indian Railways having a large workforce of more than sixteen lakh railway employees spreadover more than

seven hundred categories of staff upsurge of categorical associations/unions is inevitable resulting in mushroom growth. Some categories which are directly connected with the train operations pose potential dangers as compared to others. Their interests also clash *vis-a-vis* other categories, groups or associations and though these are unrecognised but form a powerful group. Dealing with these associations is a problem area and calls for tactful handling with them in the overall interest of maintaining labour peace and harmony.

As a matter of policy Indian Railways do not recognise or encourage any association of any one of the many categories of staff. While the administration is always alive and sensitive to the demands and also responsive to individual grievance of the staff, no formal dialogue/discussions/negotiations are held with any unrecognised associations/unions. Their memoranda are, however, received, processed, examined and decisions taken on merits in consultation with the recognised Unions wherever required.

Any formal dialogue/negotiation with these unrecognised unions/associations will be resented by the recognised unions and will lead to fissiparous leadership".

1.54 In a Memorandum received from All India Railway Employees Confederation (AIREC) it has been stated:

"In 1967 Justice Ganjendragadkar, Chairman Indian Labour Commission and again in 1969 Justice K.N. Wanchoo, Chairman Railway Accident Enquiry Committee had recommended that railwaymen Unions must be free from the political parties grip and the leadership of the Unions must be by the workers themselves. the Railway Board accepted these recommendations.

Taking clue from this and to remove the stigma of multicentricity of associations/unions the following major All India craft/departmental organisations registered under T.U. Act federated into one apex body called 'All India Railway Employees Confederation' (AIREC) under the sole leadership of the railwaymen and having no affiliation with any political party or Central Trade Union:

- * ALL INIDA CARRIAGE & WAGON STAFF COUNCIL
- *ALL INDIA RAILWAY COMMERCIAL CLERKS ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA LOCO RUNNING STAFF ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA STATION MASTER ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA ENGINEERING STAFF ASSOCIATION
- *INDIAN RAILWAY SIGNAL & TELECOM STAFF ASSOCIATION

- *INDIAN RAILWAY LOCO MECHANICAL STAFF ASSOCIATION
- *INDIAN RAILWAY TICKET CHECKING STAFF ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA CABIN SHUNTING & TRAFFIC STAFF ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA RAILWAY CANTEEN EMPLOYEE FEDERATION
- *ALL INDIA GUARD COUNCIL
- *ALL INDIA RAILWAY MINISTERIAL STAFF ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA TRACTION WORKERS ASSOCIATION
- *ALL INDIA TRAINS CLERK ASSOCIATION".

It was further stated in the memorandum:

It is noteworthy that all vital operational categories of staff (i.e. Running, Traffic, Mechanical, S&T Engineering, Commercial & Electrical) are the members and constituent Units of AIREC. To ignore and deny the negotiation channel to such vital section of staff was not in the interest of the railways. This reality was accepted by Government in 1978 when the Janata Government at centre accorded defacto-recognition by extending negotiating facility to settle the problems and demands of different constituent units of the confederation through bilateral talks. However, with the change of government at centre, this negotiation facility was withdrawn unilaterally in 1981 by Congress Govt. on political consideration. At the same time the administration adopted repressive measures to curb the trade union activities of unrecognised unions and associations. The two recognised unions who had lost their hold of the workers took shelter of the administration to rehabilitate themselves in the field by engineering large scale victimisation of the associations and AIREC activists. The administration as a measure of repression refused to honour even the court verdicts against victimisation and went in appeals in the Higher courts. These unfair labour practices on the part of the Government tell the story of violation of democratic and trade union right of the workers. So much so that all these organisation registered under the T.U. Act were not allowed to collect subscription and hold meetings in the railway premises".

1.55 The AIREC therefore submitted the following suggestion for consideration of the Committee:

"In all fairness, the railwaymen should be given full opportunity to select their union for the purpose of recognition and selecting sole bargaining agent through secret ballot even if it is once in 5 years or so. The method of verification of membership as demanded by some unions is full of manipulation and is unreliable. At present there is

large scale duplicity of membership in the unions. On declaration, the membership fee of union should be deducted from the salary.

All unions with representative character must be given proportionate representation in all negotiations such as PNM & JCM and equal opportunity to develop and function. Before conducting ballot, all unions should be derecognised or AIREC should also be recognised to bring on par and offered equal opportunity to contest the elections”.

Officers' Federations

1.56 With regard to relations with the Gazetted Officers in Indian Railway, the Ministry of Railways have stated that at the level of the Railway Board recognition has been accorded to two Associations representing gazetted officers of the Railways, namely the Federation of Railway Officers Associations and the Indian Railway Promotee Officers Federation representing Group 'B' Officers.

1.57 It has been prescribed that the Federation of Railway Officers Associations and the Indian Railway Promotee Officers Federation could meet the Board formally once in 6 months and informally whenever required. In these meetings, grievances including those relating to promotion policy, which are not of an individual nature can be brought up.

1.58 Similar pattern is adopted in respect of the constituent Associations on the Zonal Railways.

1.59 Elaborating the point further, the Ministry of Railways stated:

“In the meetings at all the levels, all disciplinary matters and subjects like promotion, transfer, etc. of the individual members of the staff are excluded from the scope of discussion. Questions concerning pay scales, allowances are discussed by the Federations at Railway Board level and not at lower levels. At Divisional and Zonal Railway level, the items discussed are only those which are within the powers of the officers concerned. The matter raised at the Divisional level but not settled may be raised at Railway level, and similarly matters not settled at the Railway level may be brought up at the Board level for discussion between the Board and the Federation”.

Indian Railway Promotee Officers' Federation (IRPOF)

1.60 The representative of IRPOF, during non-official evidence stated as under:

“In all the Central Government Departments, there are Class I and Class II Posts. There is a difference between the posts in the Central Government Departments and the Railways. The duties, responsibilities and power are different. Posts are different. Take the example of Superintendent of Post Office in Vizakhapatnam.

For a few days it remained vacant. It is a Class-I Post. So, here no Class-II Officer can be posted. But in Railways, there are no such two classifications.

In fact the Minister himself had agreed before the Parliament, while giving a reply to the Hon. Members that these posts are interchangeable because the powers, the responsibilities etc. are the same. This is in so far as the pay is concerned".

1.61 Clarifying the issue further, IRPOF have stated in their Memorandum submitted to the Committee as under:

"Group 'B' Officers, though they perform the same duties, shoulder the same responsibilities and exercise the same powers as that of Group 'A' Officers while holding the post of Assistant Officers, are granted a lower grade of Rs. 2000-3500. Group 'A' Officers on the other hand, are paid higher scale of Rs. 2200-4000.

More devastating situation is that a Senior subordinate in scale of Rs. 2375-3500 after working for a considerable period is promoted to gazetted cadre as Assistant Officer which is carrying a lower scale of pay i.e. Rs. 2000-3500. In other words a Supervisor is granted a lower scale than the supervised."

1.62 When the pay scale anomaly as pointed out by IRPOF was brought to the notice of the Chairman, Railway Board, he stated during evidence:

"We tried to give them a better grade. We had moved this. Unfortunately, we did not have success in it. We are now in the process of preparing papers for putting it before the Cabinet. We will suggest the scale of Rs. 2200-4000, which they are asking."

1.63 Regarding delay in finalisation of D.P.C., the IRPOF have, in the Memorandum also submitted:

"The average delay of 3-4 years in finalisation of DPC of Group 'B' Officers to Group 'A' has become a rule rather than an exception.

No compensation of this delay in finalisation of the DPC is being given to Group 'B' Officers, though the delay is always on Administrative account, whereas the Group 'B' Officers have to suffer in emoluments, status, seniority and thus promotional prospects are affected adversely. Majority of officers retire without clearance in Group 'A'. It takes the administration presently, to complete the DPC of Group 'B' Officers, about 6-7 years—from the date the vacancies are calculated—or 3-4 years—after the actual induction of direct recruits".

1.64 In the same Memorandum, IRPOF have stated that though Administrative Reforms Commission had recommended 50% quota for promotees, the Railway Administration had not accepted the same. They have, therefore, requested to increase their quota to at-least 50% if not

more, as this will ensure timely filling up of vacancies specially when the intake of direct recruits cannot be increased.

1.65 In this regard, Member (Staff), Railway Board while deposing before the Committee during evidence, explained as under:

"We have got figures of the number of Officers recruited in Group (A) and (B) category. By and large the ratio of 60:40 is being maintained. We have done more than 60 per cent recruitment in Group (B) category over and above whatever they were due to get on the basis of 60:40 ratio. You will find that in the years 1988-1989 induction has been slow. There had been problems of arrear also we have pooled together these arrears. Now, we have recruited almost double the intake of Group (A) and (B). As compared to past, in the first quarter of 1993, we have recruited almost the same as is our one year's requirement.

The shortfall was not only made good but another 463 officers were added in order to see that more and more Group (B) officers could go to Group (A) category".

He added in this regard:

"Suppose we have 100 vacancies. So far we were taking 60 percent of group A and 40 percent of Group B Officers. Now, we have changed our policy, it is going to be 50 and 50 viz. 50 percent of Group A and 50 percent of Group B Officers. Even before this change, which will come into effect after the recruitment rules get amended after inducting some people from Group B, we found still there were more Group 3 Officers waiting for a long time. Therefore, we have added another 463 vacancies."

1.66 When asked to comment on the career planning of Promotee Officers in Indian Railways, Member (Staff) Submitted as follows:

"In the past, a Group B Officer could not reach beyond senior scale. Now, he will be able to reach Administrative grades. Earlier, a person who had joined in the bottom rank used to become a gazetted officer at the age of 50 years or 55 years. Now, the promotion to a gazetted post is taking place at the age of 40 years or 45 years or even much earlier. They have not only got an opportunity to become a Group 'A' Officer but they also get an opportunity to go beyond the senior scale level."

1.67 A statement showing number of Group 'B' Officers inducted into Group 'A'/Jr. Scale of various organised services during the calendar years 1988 to 1993 as furnished by the Railway Board is at Appendix-III.

Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association (RBMSA)

1.68 Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association, are representing Group 'C' & 'D' (non-gazetted) staff of Railway Board Secretariat Services. Apart from this there are other unorganised services also, like

Telephone Operators, Hindi Assistants, Computer and Roneo Operators and other misc. categories of services.

During non-official evidence, the representative of RBMSA stated:

“This Association has got the privilege of representation in the joint scheme of consultation and negotiations. We are representing our staff side in the Office Councils of the Railway Board as well as representation of our Association is sponsored to the Departmental Council of the Department of Personnel and Training. Through DOP&T, we are being represented to the National Council.

In our Railways, organisations of the Railway Federations viz. AIRF, NFIR and Promotee Officers Class II Association and Federation of Railway Officers Class I Officers Association have the privilege for regular and periodical dialogue with the Railway Board. But this opportunity of having interaction at the Board level is not available to us and we have been provided the forum only at the level of the Secretary, Railway Board.

But there are certain issues, certain matters where the decision has only to be taken by the Board and in that case, we submit before yourself that our request for availability of the forum at the Board level may be considered”.

The representative of RBMSA added:

“Our services, though being the Secretariat services, are different from the Central Secretariat services in matters of functional and multi-disciplinary nature of the Railways.

Our Ministry is not only a technical, operational and commercial Ministry but also it performs the dual function of advising the Minister in respect of the policies coming up for consideration from time to time as also it administers and supervises the working of the Railways by giving technical guidance etc. It is also coordinating the working of the Zonal Railways. So, we have to monitor the working of the Railways also. It is quite distinct and different from the other Ministries. It has got its separate Financial Commissioner; separate budget and separate independent service both at the management level and at the subordinate secretariat level also.

In the Secretariat parlance, our services are considered the excellent services in the Secretariat hierarchy next only to the IFS. The candidates who are allotted to the Railway Board Secretariat Services (RBSS) rank the highest in the merit list next only to the candidates who are allotted to IFS. The candidates who get other ranks are allotted to the Central Secretariat Service and to other subordinate and attached offices. Regarding the management level also, the UPSC conducts examination for the post of Indian Railway

Engineering Service etc. Candidates who top the rank are allotted to this service. This is only to emphasise that the Railways has got the cream of the candidates coming from the respective examinations conducted by the UPSC or the Staff Selection Commission. This is considered very necessary and vital for keeping the life-line of the Railways going on”.

They further submitted:

“There has been a phenomenal growth in the Railways both at the organisational level and the working level. It is based upon these justifications that the work-load has increased correspondingly. But the posts have not been restructured. They have not been reviewed properly particularly in the RBSS. Therefore, a periodical cadre review should be there and the facility for a periodical, half-yearly dialogue with the Railway Board should be there. We want a forum at the Board-level. The holding of regular quarterly meeting of the Railway Board Office Council should be enforced. Now, it is not being held regularly.

1.69 The Committee pointed out that the RBMSA had stated in their Memorandum that some amendments may be brought in the RBSS rules and enquired what type of amendment is being sought. The representative of RBMSA stated:

“Amendments are required particularly in the case of recruitment rules. Our recruitment rules are based on the recruitment rules of CSS. The Central Secretariat Services are vast in nature. There are 71 Ministries/Departments and subordinate offices. They are maintaining a centralised seniority list and all that. But the Railway Board is a small organisation. We submit that since we have got the powers and the recruitment rules of the Railway Board are not dependent on the CSS, necessary amendments suiting to our requirements may be made. We have been requesting our administration to do this, but they always say that whatever instructions issued by the DOP only will be made applicable to us.”

1.70 The Committee further pointed out that the Association is demanding field-training for their cadre and asked how this is going to be beneficial. The RBMSA submitted:

“The Ministry of Railways being a techno-commercial organisation, we are not only supposed to deal with secretarial matters, but also to deal with the technical and engineering matters. So, until and unless we are exposed to the railway working as is done elsewhere, it is not possible for us to get acquainted with the terminology of the technical aspects of the Railways. Therefore, we can be sent for training to zonal offices. Our simple request is to have a crash course of training of seven to fifteen days in the workshops, so that we can be aware of the working of the Railways”.

1.71 When the Committee asked why the Railway Board Staff wants to opt for Railway Health Services instead of CGHS, the General Secretary, RBMSA deposed:

“Being the Secretariat staff we are entitled for CGHS facility. In some areas where CGHS facilities are not available and the Railway medical facilities are available—for example in NOIDA, Rohini, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, etc.—we should be allowed to avail ourselves of the Railway medical facilities. In some areas where CGHS facilities are not available, the Government has appointed some authorised medical attendants; but there are some places where even these authorised medical attendants are not appointed. Whatever deductions are being made for availing ourselves of the CGHS facility, can be made in this case also.”

1.72 During evidence, when it was asked by the Committee as to why the Railway Board Staff are not allowed to avail of the facilities at the Railway Hospitals, the Chairman, Railway Board, stated the following:

“Railway Board staff are governed by such rules as the other central services staff. They are treated through CGHS”.

1.73 In this connection, the Member (Staff) gave the following clarification:

“There are more CGHS hospital than the Railway hospitals. It is a problem which will have some kind of repercussion. A time may come when everybody would like to go to the nearest hospital. We will consult the Health Ministry”.

1.74 Lastly, the General Secretary of RBMSA submitted the following:

“There were orders for decentralisation of the DGS&D in 1990. The decentralisation was limited only to the POL products. Totally some 20% to 25% of the DGS&D staff was decentralised and out of that a major chunk was diverted towards the Railways. Ours is a very small cadre. So our ranks are very much affected if we have to absorb them”.

In this regard, their President added:

“First they were taken on deputation, but now they are being merged into the Railway Service. There will be problems with regard to seniority and it will affect our promotional chances”.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

1.75 From the history of evolution of Trade Unions in the Indian Railways, the Committee note that the Railway Companies provided a natural platform for the labour movement and as early as in 1897, an ‘Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma’, came up as a sequel to a strike by the guards of that Company. Between 1897 and 1919, a large number of unions sprang up and many of them cut across

staff categories and, therefore, laid the framework of the broad labour fronts. These unions were functioning in isolation and there was a growing consciousness that the labour was not unified enough to negotiate from a position of strength. However, in 1925, all the unions came together to form All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), which continues to exist even today.

1.76 Indian National Railway Workers' Federation (INRWF) was formed in 1947 and it was granted facilities for consultation in December, 1949. In 1952 both the federations were merged and this resulted in the emergence of a single federation for labour on the Railways which called itself the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR). This was perhaps the most noteworthy feature in the Indian Railways' labour movement. But unfortunately, during the subsequent years there came a phase of deterioration in the labour movement, thereby depriving the railway workers of having a unified labour representation. A maturity in approach was noticed subsequently during the first half of 1950s, but it was shortlived. In 1955, some former considerable efforts were made by the then Railway Ministers in 1957 and in 1973-74 to unite both the recognised Railway Federations viz. AIRF & NFIR but amalgamation could not materialise.

1.77 The Committee strongly feel that in the Indian Railways which have the most vital infrastructural system in the country with a work force of nearly 16 lakhs and with a multiplicity of about 740 categories, the principle of 'one union for one industry' is very much desirable.

1.78 A peculiar phenomenon which has come to the notice of the Committee is dual membership. During evidence, the Presidents of both the Federations admitted that the concept of dual membership very much existed in the system.

1.79 The Committee feel that apart from giving a wrong signal about the actual membership of each of the federations, the Railwaymen are also put to physical harassment at the time of collection of Membership fee.

1.80 The Committee, therefore, recommend that for achieving the principle of single union in the Indian Railways, the Railway Board should de-novo examine the norms for recognition of Unions. Though both the Federations are in favour of introducing a system of secret ballot for the railwaymen to choose one of the two existing Federations, the Committee feel that both these Federations should be persuaded to be amalgamated under one banner. In fact the initiative for a single union must come from the two Federations. The Ministry could start a dialogue with the Corporate Enterprise Group (CEG) for materializing the concept of one union for one industry. The Committee suggest that the membership of the new Federation must represent all classes of railwaymen.

1.81 The Committee further note that since early 1970s there has been a rise in category-wise unions and attempt is being made to form a third

Federation by bringing together all these unrecognised category-wise unions. The Railway Board had stated that they do not hold dialogue with these unions but accept their Memoranda and redress their grievances. The Committee feel that for an industry with 740 categories of workers performing diverse functions ranging from engineering, production, medical, catering, tourism, transportation etc., recognition of such sectional unions is not at all in their interest. The Committee observe that mushrooming of category-wise unions reflects a clear failure both on the part of the Federations and the Management. Perhaps, these categories did not have enough membership in either of the two Federations and the genuine demands of these workers seemed to have been over-looked both by the Federations and the Management.

1.82 The Committee, therefore, recommend that category-wise Unions should not have a legitimate place in the Railways' collective bargaining system, as this will lead to serious problems in the administration, thereby defeating the very concept of collective bargaining. The Committee hopes that the Federations will adequately reflect the interest of the category employees thereby rendering the very basis of category-wise Unions redundant.

1.83 The Committee have been informed that staff councils exist in Production Units to look after the welfare of the workers there and that a scheme of productivity-linked-incentive exists in the Railways whereby the staff of a Production Unit is entitled for incentive when the production exceeds the target. But no such scheme exists in the new Productions Units like the Wheel & Axle Plant, Bangalore, the Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala and the Diesel Component Works, Patiala. During non-official evidence of the two National Federations, the Union Leaders expressed apprehensions that the Administration was either trying to do away with the scheme or diluting the same. The Committee think that denial of such incentive scheme to employees of new Production Units is neither in the interest of Production Units nor in the interest of Railway Industry as a whole.

1.84 The problems of the staff of the Production Units are because of Railway Ministry's policy not to recognise the unions of the two recognised Federations in the Production Units. It is observed that the Staff Councils were abolished on introduction of Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) in all Departments and the two recognised Railway Federations are sole representatives of the Railwaymen at the National and Departmental levels. Therefore, continuance of the Staff Council, a legacy of the past, must end, with the recognition of the unions having affiliation to either of the two Federations in the Production Units. The Railway Ministry conceded that they have been receiving constructive cooperation from the two recognised Federations. Therefore, there is no force in their contention that the recognition of the unions in the Production Units will retard the production in the Production Units.

1.85 Under the present system of collective bargaining in the Indian Railways, a Permanent Negotiating Machinery (PNM) exists at three levels i.e. Board Level, Zonal Level and Division/Workshop level with a provision for reference of cases to a tribunal. Similarly, Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) functions at two levels i.e., National level and Departmental level with provision for compulsory arbitration. After reviewing the working of the PNM, the Committee feel that it has not been functioning as efficiently as it was expected to do and often leads to mutual suspicion resulting in acrimony. At lower level, it had been noticed that PNM has become a forum for dealing with individual cases and such cases constitute almost the entire agenda of their meetings. Even at zonal level, it has been noticed that due to lack of follow-up action, a particular item figures in the agenda more than once. During evidence, the Chairman, Railway Board, had admitted that there are some zonal Railways which have failed in holding regular PNM meetings. The Committee feel that the Indian Railways should appreciate that merely setting up of such fora for regular dialogue is not the end of their responsibility. Their effective functioning with utmost dedication and commitment is the continuous responsibility of the Ministry. After going into the areas of major disputes, the Committee observe that the problems are not of Railways only but of the entire Central Government employees and, hence, they feel that the Ministry of Railways can do away with the present system of duplication of this arrangement. As the sphere of two collective bargaining machineries i.e. PNM and JCM is the same, the system of JCM may be retained. PNM may be substituted by JCM at all the three levels. The Committee hope that this would help labour in the Railways to speak in one voice, thereby reducing the time involved in routine negotiations and provide adequate teeth to the whole process of consultation management. The Committee further recommend that a proper record of cases, grievances, proceedings and action taken thereon may be maintained. Target date for follow-up action may be fixed and action taken notes prepared and circulated to the Unions. It should also be ensured that action taken must be conveyed to the Unions in unambiguous and transparent terms.

1.86 The Committee note that the JCM Scheme provides for reference of unresolved issues/demands to the Board of Arbitration provided these are arbitrable items. The arbitrable items are those relating to pay and allowances weekly hours of work and leave. The award of the Board of Arbitration is binding on both the sides. The Committee disapprove the present attitude of the Government in delaying implementation of the Arbitration awards under one pretext or the other. They, therefore, recommend that any award given by the Board of Arbitration should invariably be implemented within a period of 3 months.

1.87 In regard to worker's participation in management, the Committee find that neither the Corporate Enterprise Group (now renamed as Group for Participation of Railway Employees in Management—PREM) meetings

are held regularly nor any agenda for these meetings is decided by both the management and Unions. Hence, the Committee stress the need to activate PREM. They, therefore, recommend that if the Unions do not come forward with agenda for discussion, the Railway management should prepare and circulate the agenda and give notice for the meeting as per rule. The Committee appreciate that Ministry of Railways have already moved in this direction and taken up some important items for dialogue such as the issue of re-deployment of surplus staff after phasing out of steam locomotives and issue of gauge conversion etc. in PREM.

1.88 The Committee are of the firm view that both Unions and management should show adequate commitment and must come up with such important items which have a direct bearing on the working of Indian Railways. For making this forum more meaningful, the Committee suggest that the issue of privatisation and one union for one Industry should also be discussed in PREM. Incidentally, there has been no meeting of the 'PREM' since an announcement was made about this in February, 1994.

1.89 From the Memorandum and the evidence of the Indian Railway Promotee Officers' Federation, the Committee find that a two-fold classification of gazetted cadre exists in the Railways. The Group 'B' Officers, though they perform the same duties, shoulder the same responsibilities and exercise the same powers as that of Group 'A' Officers, are granted a lower-grade pay scale of Rs. 2000-3500, while the Group 'A' Officers are paid a higher-scale of Rs. 2200-4000. The Committee further note that the First pay Commission recommended abolition of two-fold classification in the departments where differentiation between the two classes was not necessary or possible either because of the mode of recruitment or because of the difficulty of distinguishing between the importance and responsibility of the duties respectively performed by Class I and Class II Officers and two groups treated as one gazetted service. But this recommendation was not accepted by the Government and this issue of Railway Gazetted Services was not examined by the subsequent Pay Commissions. Though, during evidence, the Chairman, Railway Board, had assured the Committee that the Board was in the process of preparing papers for putting it before the Cabinet, the Committee strongly recommend that this two-fold classification should be done away with. However, till a final decision is taken by the Ministry of Railway on the abolition of the two-fold classification, the Group 'B' Officers of Indian Railways should be granted the scale of Rs. 2200-4000.

1.90 The Committee note that though the Group 'B' Officers are physically available and working in Jr. Scale/Sr. Scale of Group 'A' posts, they are not being inducted into Group 'A' as per their own quota of 40% (now 50%) at the appropriate time i.e. after 3 years as laid down in the rule No. 209 (b) of Indian Railways establishment code. Further, an inordinate delay of 3 to 4 years takes place in the induction of Group 'B' Officers into Group 'A'. The Committee are of the opinion that if the

Group 'B' Officers are inducted into Group 'A' based on the cadre and not on the vacancies, the legitimate representation of Group 'B' in Group 'A' will be ensured and the grievances of Group 'B' Officers regarding low percentage in Group 'A' will be mitigated. In this connection, the Committee learn that even the Fourth Pay Commission had recommended on similar lines.

1.91 With regard to fixation of pay, the Committee regret to note that while a Group 'A' direct recruit is granted higher scale of pay in the Assistant Officer Cadre and is given a further benefit of Rs. 600/- or more on his promotion to Senior Scale, a Group 'B' Officer holding the same post of Assistant Officer with long years of experience to his credit, gets Rs. 125 only on promotion to Senior Scale. The Committee find that the system of fixing up pay of Assistant Officers on their promotion to senior scale was being done under a special fixation formula based on 'Concordance Table' from time immemorial. Even the Third Pay Commission, while appreciating the rationale behind the special fixation formula in certain organised services like Railways etc., have recommended extension of such special fixation formula to other organisations also. Now, the Committee learn that though the Fourth Pay Commission have not mentioned about the Concordance table, the Railway Board have withdrawn this benefit on the plea that the Fourth Pay Commission had recommended the same. Further, it has come to the notice of the Committee that some categories of Officers have represented to the Pay Commission that the benefit of promotion to them is inadequate under FR 22(A) and, accordingly, the Pay Commission recommended that the formula of fixation of pay under FR 22 (C) may uniformly apply in such cases also. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Concordance table, which was in vogue for decades and withstood the test of the time, should be restored.

1.92 With regard to RDSO and other miscellaneous services, the Committee recommend that the Ministry of Railways being a model employer, should bring these unorganised services at par with the Zonal Railways' gazetted service and grant them similar facilities of promotion, scale of pay and other benefits.

1.93 From the evidence of Railway Board Secretariat Service (RBSS) Association, the Committee note that unlike the two Railway Officers' Federation, the Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association (RBMSA) and RBSS Class I & II Officers Association, do not have the privilege of periodical dialogue with Railway Board. However, they have been provided a forum to meet the management at the level of Secretary, Railway Board. As most of the issues/matters are decided at the Board's level, the Committee feel that the RBSS Associations should also be provided a forum at the Board's level with a provision for holding meetings/dialogue wherever necessary but atleast twice a year. This will create a healthy climate of industrial relations at the apex body of the Railways.

1.94 The Committee recommend that the Railways being a techno-commercial organisation, the RBSS staff may be exposed to some field training to have some basic knowledge about the working in the Railways.

1.95 The Committee note that the Railway Board Secretariat staff are entitled to CGHS facility. However, Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association have demanded that the Railway Board Staff should be allowed to avail of railway medical facilities at the places where CGHS facilities were not available. In this connection, the Member (Staff) stated, during evidence, that 'It is a problem which will have some kind of repercussion. A time may come when everybody would like to go to the nearest hospital. We will consult the Health Ministry'. The Committee recommend that the staff of the Railway Board be given a chance to opt for either CGHS or Railway Hospital facilities.

1.96 The Committee recommend that the Indian Railways being the biggest Industry of the Country, employing largest number of employees in a single unit, should have certain amount of autonomy to settle the problems and grievances of employees, without any reference to the Ministry of Finance and Department of Personnel. The Railway Board is a statutory Body with a Financial Commissioner holding the rank of Finance Secretary and Member Staff with the rank of Secretary, Services, and, therefore, the recommendation made should be accepted by the Government.

CHAPTER II

STAFF WELFARE IN INDIAN RAILWAYS

2.1 Indian Railways, which employs the largest Component staff in the country, gives specific importance to staff welfare. The concept of Welfare in Railways is defined to cover such services, facilities and amenities as adequate canteens, rest and recreational facilities, arrangement of travel to and from work, residential accommodation and such other facilities as contribute to improve the conditions under which the workers are employed.

2.2 The Ministry of Railways, in their reply have further stated that promotion of staff welfare and provision of opportunities for the full development of personality have been articles of faith with the Railways, as the largest single employer in the country. Railways are pioneers in this field among all the Departments of the Government. Introduction of welfare schemes on the Railways is as old as the Railway system itself. The welfare schemes on the Railways cover almost all spheres like medical, education, housing, recreation, etc. Liberal amenities and facilities have been provided to the Railway employees and their families under this spectra. The various welfare measures aid the Human Resource Development Programmes on the Railways in motivating, retaining and building up a committed and loyal work force. An amount of Rs. 537,26,09,000 has been allocated in the Budget of 1994-95 towards Staff Welfare and amenities.

2.3 Asked to state the organisational apparatus available to resolve problems relating to welfare of staff, the Ministry of Railways stated:

“On Railways, a separate machinery exist to resolve problems relating to welfare of staff, etc. This task has been entrusted to the officials of the Personnel Department working at various levels. At each Divisional and Zonal levels of the Railways, there are designated welfare officers, who are assisted by Welfare Inspectors to deal with matters relating to staff welfare. In addition, the various welfare activities are monitored by specific Committees constituted at different levels. The Committees have representatives from the recognised unions and meet periodically”.

They further added:

“Certain staff welfare measures are provided in terms of statutory provisions. As regards non-statutory welfare measures, these are provided voluntarily by the Railways. Some of the measures have

been in force from a very long time and new measures are introduced taking into account the views of recognised Labour Federations and subject to availability of funds”.

2.4 When asked by the Committee whether the Ministry of Railways feel the need for a separate Welfare Department under an independent head outside the Personnel Department, the Railway Board submitted the following:

“Welfare of the staff is a integral part of Industrial Relations Policy and personnel function and welfare activities are closely inter-linked. They cannot, therefore, be isolated and dealt with as an independent organisation. Hence it is considered that the welfare activities should continue to form part of the Personnel Department. The welfare wing functions separately under the respective Personnel Officers”.

Appointments on Compassionate Grounds

2.5 The present instructions for recruitment on compassionate grounds in the Ministry of Railways provide *inter-alia* that upto 5 years after death of an employee, General Managers can finally decide the case at their level. After 5 years, and upto 10 years General Managers can still decide the cases finally, provided the application is for the first child and the same is made within one year of attainment of majority by the child. In cases not falling within the above stipulation *i.e.* where the application is for other than the first child, or the case is beyond 10 years or the application has been made after more than one year after attainment of the majority the same may be referred to Railway Board with personal recommendation of General Manager seeking relaxation of time limit/criteria laid down. On receipt of the recommendation of the General Manager, in such cases, the same are considered in Board's office and necessary relaxation accorded as justified.

2.6 On being asked how long it takes to provide appointment on compassionate ground and whether such candidates are required to qualify certain examination/interview, the Railway Board stated:

“Employment on compassionate ground is provided immediately subject to fulfilment of certain conditions. Delays occur in the case of illiterate widows for whom the job opportunities are limited. However, to accommodate as many as possible, the Ministry of Railways have already identified certain categories of jobs for them in various departments. It is difficult to fix any time limit as the same depends *inter-alia* upon the availability of suitable vacancies”.

The Railway Board further added:

“The candidates are given employment on the basis of their educational qualification subject to adjudgement of suitability by the screening Committee for the particular posts.”

2.7 The Committee wanted to know the number of persons who were appointed on Compassionate grounds. The Ministry of Railways furnished the following statement showing appointments made on compassionate grounds during the last 3 yrs:

ZONAL RAILWAY	NUMBER OF PERSONS APPOINTED DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS ON COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS		
	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92
1. Central	971	1061	1139
2. Eastern	1213	1185	1492
3. Northern	1110	1135	1611
4. North Eastern	364	400	462
5. Northeast Frontier	323	404	435
6. Southern	664	1514	814
7. South Central	584	976	812
8. South Eastern	1272	1539	1523
9. Western	1116	829	1030
Total:	7622	9043	9318

2.8 It was also added that on an average 9000 compassionate appointments are made every year—6000 in Group 'D' and 3000 in Group 'C' on the Zonal Railways and Production Units. This works out to approximately 20% of direct recruitment vacancies in Group 'C' and about 30% in Group 'D' of direct recruitment vacancies.

2.9 The Committee observed that it was a matter of common knowledge that the appointment on compassionate grounds generally takes considerable time and therefore asked the Ministry to state the reasons.

The Ministry responded as follows:

"Appointment on compassionate grounds is a continuous process. All applications for such appointments are duly examined and processed and appointments are given. In some cases, however, difficulties arise and cases have to be kept pending due to one or other of the following reasons:

- (i) Ward of deceased employee is a minor.
- (ii) Widow is illiterate.
- (iii) Legal issues are pending in Courts.
- (iv) Suitable vacancies are not available.
- (v) There are dual claims.
- (vi) Adoption certificates has not been received.
- (vii) Candidate has not reported for medical examination.

(viii) Evidence of age and qualification is not forthcoming.

(ix) Investigation of fraudulent/fictitious claims is in progress.

2.10 While elaborating the issue, the Chairman, Railway Board stated during evidence:

“On any railway the system is that compassionate appointment in the case of death in service are dealt with by the Divisional Personnel Officer. The file goes to him at his level and he takes it to DRM for decision for appointment. In the normal course, we have laid down the guidelines under which the Divisional Officer will take the decision for appointment. There may be some cases where the circumstances may be such that it requires discretion at higher level. Mostly the cases are that where it is not possible to give appointment for five years time limit being exceeded. In that case it should go to the Headquarters office where the decision is taken by the General Manager or there may be other relaxations required. That is the system. It is the Divisional Personnel Officer who is the one Officer on the Division who handles compassionate appointments on behalf of the Divisional Rail Manager and the other is the Chief Personnel Officer who does so on behalf of the General Manager. These cases are reviewed regularly by the Divisional Railway Managers or by the General Managers.”

2.11 In this connection, the Committee enquired about the action taken by the Railways in cases where a deceased employee is survived by an illiterate wife and minor children. The Railway Board replied:

“With a view to accommodate illiterate widows, the Ministry of Railways have already identified certain categories of jobs for them in various Departments. The Railway administrations have also been directed to identify additional categories for them.

In the case of minor children, cases are kept pending till the first child/son attains the age.”

2.12 On being asked by the Committee to supply a list of such pending cases with Zonal Railways and Production Units as on 31.3.1993, the Ministry of Railways Furnished the following figures:

(a) ZONAL RAILWAYS/PRODUCTION UNIT-WISE FIGURES OF PENDING CASES OF COMPASSIONATE APPOINTMENT AS ON 31.3.1993

S.No.	ZONAL RAILWAYS/PRODUCTION UNITS	THE NUMBER OF CASES PENDING
1.	Central Railway	628
2.	Eastern Railway	1252
3.	Northern Railway	306
4.	North Eastern Railway	493
5.	Northeast Frontier Railway	1650

S.No.	ZONAL RAILWAYS/PRODUCTION UNITS	THE NUMBER OF CASES PENDING
6.	Southern Railway	714
7.	South Central Railway	1359
8.	South Eastern Railway	955
9.	Western Railway	185
10.	Chittaranjan Locomotive Works	30
11.	Diesel Locomotive Works	30
12.	Integral Coach Factory	94
13.	Wheel and Axle Plant	Nil
14.	Diesel Component Works	1
15.	Rail Coach Factory	3
Total:		7700

2.13 When it was pointed out that it has come to the notice of the Committee that generally the next kith and kin of the deceased employee is called a number of times before his appointment, the Chairman, Railway Board, stated as follows during evidence:

“Sometimes it so happens that the application form is incomplete and the person is called for further questions.”

2.14 On this issue, the Committee suggested that once the application is received that should be immediately scrutinised so that the applicant is satisfied that he has completed all the formalities. The Member (Staff), Railway Board submitted the following:

“Certainly we will look into this and see how best we can refine it. We are open to improvement. There are occasions where we get an application from a widow saying that her son is not employed and we verify this fact, because this opportunity should not be used for getting wrongful employment. Sometimes, we do find that the information which is given in the application does not tally with the information which we have about the family composition. We have to make sure that no wrongful employment is given.”

2.15 With regard to time-barred applications, the Committee enquired whether the Ministry of Railways have set a time limit for disposal of such applications. The Member (Staff), Railway Board submitted the following during evidence:

“There must be a time limit for everything. However, what we have is time limit laid down for submitting the application which is one year, say in the case of widows who have minor children at the time of the death of the employee, they must come saying that the child is ready for employment within a year of attaining eligible age.”

2.16 The number of cases of compassionate appointments rejected on the ground of being time-barred during the last three years, are as under:

ZONAL RAILWAYS	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
Central Railway	57	69	47		
Eastern Railway	37	19	5		
Northern Railway	91	93	92		
North Eastern Railway	22	34	26		
Northeast Frontier Railway*	26	14	15		
Southern Railway*	33	15	30		
South Central Railway	59	56	60		
South Eastern Railway	13	26	23		
Western Railway*	97	78	107		
Total:	435	404	405		

(*) Figures relate to financial years.

2.17 When the Committee wanted to know the various problems faced by the Ministry regarding compassionate appointments, the Railway Board stated:

“Normally there are no difficulties in giving compassionate appointment. However, difficulties arise when the ward of deceased employee is a minor, widow is illiterate, legal issues are pending in Courts, and suitable vacancies are not available, etc.

In this context, the Railway Board have also stated:

“The Ministry of Railways have already identified certain categories of jobs to accommodate illiterate widows in various departments. Moreover the Railway administrations have also been directed to identify additional categories for them.”

Housing Facilities:

2.18 The policy of the Railway is to provide quarters on a programmed basis for all essential staff, who are likely to be called on duty at any time during day and night and also for non-essential staff at way side stations and other places where housing is difficult. At present, the housing satisfaction on the Indian Railways is about 40% as per details given below:—

Zone	Percentage of employees Provided with quarters
Central	31
Eastern	40
Nothern	45
North-Eastern	42
Northeast Frontier	63
Southern	28
South Central	36
South Eastern	47
Western	39

2.19 With a view to raising the housing satisfaction further, increased outlays have been provided over successive plans. Details of the average annual expenditure during VIth to VIIIth Plan period are at Appendix IV. It may be seen that average annual expenditure in VI plan was Rs. 12.1 crore while it was Rs. 26.3 crore during VII plan. Allocation for 1993-94 has been made to the tune of Rs. 27.53 crore.

2.20 Funds for construction of the quarters not only come from the Plan Head "Staff Quarters" but sizeable contribution is made from the various other sources. Details of expenditure under the Plan Head-Staff Quarters and the number of quarters constructed during 1987-92 are given below:—

Year	No. of Quarters *constructed	Expenditure under Plan Head Staff Quarters (Rs. in crore)
1987-88	5474	29.70
1988-89	7904	26.45
1989-90	6814	34.13
1990-91	9526	32.53
1991-92	5600	33.30

(*) Quarters shown in this column are from funds Plan Head "Staff Quarters" as well as from funds of various projects like Gauge Conversions, New Lines, Doubling, workshops etc.

2.21 Although no programme has been drawn up in terms of number of units of quarters to be constructed for use of the Railwaymen, Railway Administrations include the work of construction of various types of staff quarters in their annual works programme to the extent of the amount allotted every year under the Plan Head "Staff Quarters". It may be stated that whole of the amount (Rs. 27.53 crore) allotted for 1993-94 under Plan Head "Staff Quarters" is for on-going works which are at various stages of progress. To improve housing satisfaction on Southern Railway (which is lowest among all Zonal Railways), allocation has been increased by 70% during 1993-94 as compared to 1992-93.

2.22 Asked to state whether any Plan has been chalked out to construct the required number of houses, the Chairman, Railway Board stated during evidence:—

"We do provide for a special allocation in each year's budget for the construction of new quarters and the provision has been going up every year. We have been trying to earmark as much as possible. I would like to mention that our work force has been more or less static over the last few years and as we are providing more and more money for the construction of new quarters, we are trying to increase the percentage of employees who will be having quarters in the years to come."

2.23 Regarding housing satisfaction in Railways, the Member (Engineering), Railway Board explained as under:—

“The average provision for the construction of new quarters in the Sixth Plan was about Rs. 12 crores per year which we increased to Rs. 26 crores during the Seventh Plan. The number of houses which we have been constructing ranges between 5,500 to 9,500 per year which, in our opinion, is quite a substantial number considering the financial situation of the Railways.

As far as Southern railway is concerned, this year we have increased their outlay by about 70 per cent and considering the size of the railway, we have given them the second highest allotment during the current year and that shows our concern for that particular Railways where housing satisfaction is the lowest and we are trying to bring it up.”

2.24 When asked to state the reasons for decline in allotment of quarters, the witness stated:—

“These are the figures of new quarters. In addition, every year we are building quarters under new lines, doubling and other expansion projects like workshop modernisation, But during the last year when we took up this construction programme, the staff strength remained the same. Therefore, the number of quarters coming under that programme is almost nil. That is why it has marginally come down during last year.”

2.25 On this issue, the AIRF, in their Memorandum, stated the following:—

“Railways have not been able to provide houses for most of its employees. The percentage occupation of quarters today is in the neighbourhood of 39, which has remained more or less the same since independence. As Railway employees are subject to frequent transfers, they are put to great hardship and financial difficulties when residential accommodation is not provided to them by the Railway. This is due to the exorbitant rise in the rents prevailing in all parts of the country. Employees are also finding it difficult to attend to their duties by coming from far-off places. It is therefore, in the interest of the Railways themselves that their employees are provided residential accommodation preferably near the place of their work. For this, adequate funds should be provided and the percentage of staff to be provided with railway quarters should be targetted to reach the 45% limit within the next 5 years.”

It was further stated in the Memorandum:—

“Gangmen on Railways, whose lot is perhaps the hardest, are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the Indian Railways but not more than 10% to 60% of them are provided with

residential accommodation of some sort or the other by the Railways. Most of them have to live in places far away from their homes. They are compelled to live in tents, barracks, wagon bodies sleeper huts and mud huts. As a result of representation by this Federation the Railway Board issued instructions that the staff living in sleeper huts, tents, barracks and wagon bodies should be granted full house rent allowance at the rates which would otherwise have been admissible to them under normal rules provided the railway servants concerned are compelled to live in their adequate accommodation in the exigencies of the public service and also incur extra expenditure on engaging separate accommodation for their families. Our demand that Gangmen and Gatemen and others living in huts and mud huts may also be similarly allowed to draw full house rent allowance and nominal rent should be fixed for such gang huts and mud huts is pending in the departmental council of the Joint Consultative Machinery”.

2.26 The NFIR, in their memorandum submitted the following before the Committee in regard to providing housing facilities:

“Nearly 40% of serving railway employees are accommodated in railway staff quarters. The present bulk of quarters is a mixture of old and new. Old quarters again are a mixture of quarters which were built up during Company Management and those which were built after the dawn of Independence. Every year, 200 to 300 new quarters are added to the existing number of staff quarters.

Type I quarters during the Company Management days have not so far been fully remodded although there were several agreements made with the organised labour at different levels and on different occasions. Presently, it appears the old policy of remodelling of staff quarters which were constructed by the Company management and making them habitable had been abandoned by the Railway Ministry. As a result those employees who are residing in such quarters are passing through “Veritable Hell”. For reasons of financial difficulties those staff cannot run away those quarters. They always hope wood work would be undertaken by the Railways. Often such hopes are belied and suffering of employees and their families continue for years together till the time such employees get a chance for allotment of better quarters than the ones in which they are residing or staying. Old type I quarters do not have the basic facilities of toilet, Kitchen, even electricity at many places. This one subject which often stand as a major irritant for the working personnel and their families and the Management gets brickbats in place of compliments. The rent recovered from the occupants of staff quarters is 10% of the pay of the pooled rent fixed for the quarters whichever is less. This recovery of rent continues from the time the staff were allotted the same and till

such time these are abandoned by the Management on account of irreparable cracks, damages etc. caused by weather conditions etc. In this process, the Management stand to gain and not lose. It may be interesting to note here that wherever house rent allowance is admissible, employees who are not provided with staff quarters are paid the said allowance. When the staff quarters is allotted the employees loses the payment of HRA and the pooled rent of the quarters is recovered from the employee concerned. Thus, he loses HRA and pays pooled rent which is recovered from his salary through the salary bill L.P. Sheet. It is learnt that the State Governments of A.P. and West Bengal had taken policy decisions long ago that the staff could continue to be paid HRA inspite of the allotment of staff quarters for which rent is charged by the Governments. Thus, the staff of these two State Governments got a very bit relief. We wonder why the Central Government and other State Govts. should not follow suit and help the employees by continuing payment of HRA inspite of allotment of quarters.

2.27 When the Committee wanted to know the position regarding housing facilities as existed at the time of independence and the percentage as at present the Railway Board submitted the following figures:

“Prior to 1972-73 data regarding percentage housing satisfaction was not being collected. Housing satisfaction during 1972-73 was 37.4% and now it is about 40%.”

2.28 No railway land is given to individual employees or Railwaymen's Housing Societies for construction of private houses. A policy decision in this regard was taken at the Ministers' level in 1985 on the ground that allotment of land to Housing Societies is a subject within the pruvieu of the State Governments. It was also felt that allotment of railway land to Employees' Housing Societies will create problems in future. This policy was further reviewed by the Board in the context of requests received from Indian Railway Welfare Organisation (IRWO) for allotment of surplus railway land for their housing projects, but it was decided that no departure from the extant policy should be made. Accordingly, the ban on allotment of railway land to Housing Societies has been made applicable to IRWO also.

2.29 In this connection, the Chairman, Railway Board stated as follows:

“In addition to building houses, we have also set up the Indian Railway Welfare Organisation where we are trying to encourage the employees to own their own houses and building houses for them and the houses are paid for in instalments. That is another big effort we are making to help solve the housing shortage.”

Elaborating the point further, the Member (Staff) stated:

“When we acquire the land, we do it under the Land Acquisition Act, 1890. The purpose for which the land is to be acquired is

required to be stated and in most of the cases, it is for the purpose of the railway. The rules lay down that as and when land becomes surplus, we hand it over to the State Government. Where the railway wants to build a quarter, that is regarded as if it is for the purpose of the railway. But wherever we want to give it to housing society, the legal opinion is that it is not for railway purpose”

2.30 When the Committee wanted to know the approach of the railways to encourage house building by the railway employees, the Railway Board deposed as follows:

“Railway Ministry is encouraging railway employees in house building by granting them loans under the House Building Advance Scheme of the Ministry of Urban Development. The extent of assistance provided the applicant Railway employee is dependent on the allotment of funds under HBA permitted by Ministry of Urban Development. During the last three years, the position of allotment of funds has been as under:

Year	Funds asked for by Ministry of Railways	Allotment	Column 3 as % age of col. 2
1	2	3	4
1990-91	41.98 crore (RE)	18.50 cr.	44.06
1991-92	43.46 crore	22.95 cr.	52.80
1992-93	43.50 crore	27.50 cr.	63.20

In addition, Railway employees are being granted withdrawals from their Provident Fund in accordance with Rules framed by Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare to meet expenses for the purpose of constructing/acquiring houses.”

It was further added:

“An organisation known as Indian Railway Welfare Organisation (IRWO) has been set up under the patronage of Ministry of Railways for providing houses/flats to serving/retired Railway employees on self-financing and ‘No-profit No-loss’ basis. This organisation has been registered on 25.9.89 under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1960. IRWO has acquired land of Noida, Gorakhpur, Calcutta, Gurgaon, Ghaziabad, Madras, Hyderabad, Meerut, Panchkula, Jaipur, Faridabad, Allahabad and Bombay. At present, there are about 48,000 primary members who have registered under housing scheme of IRWO. Schemes for Noida,

Gorakhpur, Gurgaon, Calcutta, Madras and Ghaziabad have been finalised and are at various stages of progress. For Hyderabad, applications have been called for w.e.f. 15.3.1993. Schemes in respect of other stations are being finalised and applications for the same will be called for in due course. At present, over 3000 houses are under construction under self-financing scheme of IRWO".

Improvements to sub-standard quarters

2.31 At present, there are about 70,000 sub-standard quarters on the Railways. These quarters lack basic amenities like kitchen, bath-room, latrines, etc. A concerted effort is being made to provide the necessary facilities in these quarters at the earliest possible. The scope of work as on 1.4.1990 was identified and it has been planned to eliminate the deficiencies by the end of the VIIIth Plan. Itemwise details are as under:

Amenities	Scope of work as on 1.4.90	Work done upto 31.3.1992	Balance
Improvements to sub-standard quarters.	96,000	28,000	68,000
Electrification	21,000	9,000	12,000
Provision of fans.	2,00,000	80,000	1,20,000

2.32 There are about 31,000 quarters on Indian Railways which have become so old that repairing them is neither feasible nor cost effective. These quarters are being replaced in a phased manner depending on the availability of funds and comparative needs at different places.

2.33 Asked as to how many quarters have become so old where neither repairing was possible nor it was cost effective, the Ministry stated:

"There are 31046 quarters available on Indian Railways which have become so old that repairing them is neither possible nor cost effective."

2.34 In this connection, the Member (Engineering) stated during evidence:

"We have 31,000 sub-standard quarters. Every year in our works programme, we provide for replacement of these quarters by new ones but those quarters are never dismantled."

2.35 When asked whether there was any plan to demolish these very old quarters and build multi-storied buildings, the witness stated:

"We are doing it in Delhi and Ahmedabad."

Maintenance of Railway Quarters

2.36 Adequate strength of maintenance staff has been provided for promptly attending to the complaints received from the staff. The complaints are entered in petty repair book maintained in the offices of the concerned supervisors and station managers. These complaints are attended to quickly in the order of priority and periodical checks are exercised by the higher officials. Allottees are also encouraged to see Senior Officers in case they face any problem in getting their quarters attended to at the supervisory level.

2.37 Details of expenditure on repairs and maintenance, water supply and sanitation, improvements in Railway colonies and power/lighting etc. during 1990-94 are given in Appendix V.

Besides this, Railways have also planned to sanitise latrines by March, 1994 in the following order of priority:

	Priority	No. of units to be tackled as on 1.4.91
I.	Quarters not having latrines to be provided with individual bio-latrines.	22,000
II.	Quarters with individual dry type latrines to be replaced by bio-latrines.	36,000
III.	Replacement of community latrines with individual bio-latrines.	23,000

2.38 When the Committee pointed out that it was a matter of common knowledge that most of the railway quarters were in very bad shape and the General complaint of the residents was that unions did not bother about it, the President, AIRF deposed the following during evidence:

“We would like you to impress upon the Ministry of Railways to allot some more fund for this activity. Maintenance work is looked after out of the funds allotted by the Ministry and the allocation in this regard is very very poor. For many decades we have not made any improvement in this regard. The Ministry of Railways say that in the next 10 years they will be able to provide houses to all the railwaymen. If this can be done even at the cost of some sacrifice on our part, we can think of it but funds will have to be provided for

construction of houses. I would like to submit that previously whenever a new line was sanctioned they used to provide for ganghuts also. Once upon a time it was considered hundred per cent necessary. From hundred per cent it came down to 75%, 60%, 50% and now it is considered not even one per cent necessary. We will be very much obliged if something is done in this regard”.

2.39 As regards the amount ear-marked by the Railways for maintenance and up-keep of Railway quarters, AIRF in their Memorandum submitted to the Committee stated as follows:

“The funds provided for the repair and maintenance of quarters for railway employees are quite inadequate looking to the size of the railways. Moreover the increase in the allocation of funds on this item has been only slight as will be seen from the figures for the last 5 years given below. The increase may be considered to have been neutralised by the rise in the costs:

(Figures in thousands)				
Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Revised	Budget
1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94
77,57,93	83,15,35	93,34,57	1,02,77,99	1,16,35,50

It is necessary to provide more funds so as to improve the conditions of railway quarters”.

2.40 On this issue, the NFIR, in their Memorandum stated:

“The maintenance of railway quarters is anything but satisfactory. The maintenance of railway quarters and colonies was once upon a time considered as superb. But over the years, it has awefully been neglected in the name of economy. Most of the quarters are in a dilapidated conditions, most ugly and having proper chaukhats, doors, windows etc. Roads and gutters are not properly maintained and wherever repairs are required they are not attended to promptly. We contend that economy should not stand in the way of maintenance of quarters and colonies of railway employees in view of the fact that they are tenants and requirements of tenants have got to be, morally and physically, met with”.

2.41 In this connection, the Member (Engineering) submitted the following before the Committee:

“We do admit that the level of satisfaction which we should achieve in maintenance of our colonies is not there. But it is also a fact that over the years, we have been spending large amounts in maintenance. This year, the amount allocated for this purpose is about Rs. 175 crores for the whole Indian Railways. Another problem which we have been encountering is that over a period of time, the number of assets which the Railways have, have gone up very substantially for the last 40 years. Therefore, to that extent,

there is a fall in the level of satisfaction. We are working on two fronts; one, we have given instructions to the various Zonal Railways stating that each IOW field unit should take up direct maintenance in the worst possible colonies. Each IOW has been asked to identify two such colonies every year where defects can be identified. Then, contract will be awarded. During the period when the work is in progress, the IOW and his staff concerned will be camping in that colony; they are available for any assistance. This way we hope to solve the colony; they will be available for any assistance. This way, we hope to solve the problems in the worst possible colonies.

Secondly, we want to use our money on maintenance more effectively. At present an employee writes in the complaint book about the defects. The IOW sends the staff there. The person concerned checks what is required to be done. He goes back to the Store and takes the things and rectifies the defects. But we want to end this two-way affair. We want to have a system whereby during the first visit itself, the supervisory staff or the mechanic is able to do that. We hope that in this way we can solve the problem in a better way”.

2.42 However, the Ministry of Railways, in a written communication added as under:

“Staff quarters are maintained regularly under the guidance of Divisional Engineers and supervision of I.O.W.

The essential amenities like water supply, sewerage etc. are maintained by Inspectorial staff of Civil Engineering and Medical Department.

The complaints received from the staff are entered in the petty repair book maintained in the offices of concerned supervisors [as stated at (a) & (b) above]. These complaints are attended quickly in the order of priority. Periodical checks are exercised by the concerned higher officials to ensure prompt disposal of complaints”.

To look after and monitor maintenance and the standard of cleanliness of the Railway colonies, colony care committees have been set up. These Committees are represented by Welfare Inspector,— Inspector of Works, Health Inspector, Electrical Chageman/Foreman, R.P.F. Inspector and representatives of the recognised unions.

Encroachment on railway land

2.43 As per the latest estimates available with the Ministry of Railways, there are about 1.85 lakh encroachments on railway land. As railway land is spread all along the railway track, it is mostly unfenced and unprotected and is an easy target for encroachments. A number of factors like growing

pressure on land particularly in metropolitan and major cities due to urbanisation and industrialisation, general deterioration in law and order, lack of assistance from the local Civil and Police authorities, etc. have contributed to the rise in encroachments over the years.

2.44 Encroachment on railway land is dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971. Action under this Act has been initiated in about 42,000 cases all over the Railways. Progress in this regard is, however, slow in view of the lengthy legal procedure involved and also lack of machinery available with the Railways for enforcing eviction. Prompt assistance from State Governments in the form of police and magistrates is not forthcoming.

2.45 For a large number of encroachments which have come up in the form of jhuggis in various places especially in metropolitan cities, it is necessary that the concerned State Governments/Union Territory administrations take action to remove the encroachments and abstain from giving civic amenities to the jhuggi dwellers on railway land as this further encourages encroachment on public lands.

2.46 Apart from action under the PPE Act for removal of encroachments, the Railways have also adopted various measures to prevent encroachment of railway land. These include construction of boundary walls at locations vulnerable to encroachments, plantation of trees and bushes on vacant land, greater vigilance against trespassers and fixing accountability of railway staff for any new encroachments in areas under their jurisdiction.

Commercial exploitation of railway land

2.47 In view of the steep rise in the value of land and the need to generate internal resources for Railways' developmental activities, Railways are considering measures to improve the management of its vast land resources including commercial exploitation. An Expert Committee has been set up to go into all the aspects of land management and commercial exploitation. A Sub-Group of the Consultative Committee of Members of Parliament for the Ministry of Railways has also been entrusted with examination of this proposal.

2.48 On this point of commercial exploitation of surplus railway land the Member (Engineering) stated the following during evidence:

“Whenever we build any multi-storey structure in this area the ground floor will remain with the Railways and the upper portion will be leased out. The Ministry of Law has opined that in such a situation the purpose for which the land was acquired remains the same”.

Medical Facilities

2.49 Railway beneficiaries are being provided all medicines as required by them through various Health Units and Hospitals. Latest medicines are

also available for their treatment. Railway Hospitals provide comprehensive medical care to the Railway employees as compared to Civil Hospitals. The maintenance of the Railway Hospitals and the medicare provided are far better. There are 112 Hospitals and 670 Health Units including Lock-up dispensaries on Indian Railways. All the Hospitals and Health Units are adequately staffed.

2.50 All the Zonal and Divisional Hospitals are equipped with modern aids, latest equipments and other facilities. Major Health Units have been provided investigation and X-ray facilities. The purchases/import of equipments are being made through M&P Programme by the Ministry of Railways. Life Saving Drugs are purchased at Zonal level by floating tenders.

The Railway Board added:

“There are no problems relating to availability of medicine in hospitals/health units. Supply of medicine in hospitals/health units is properly monitored by maintaining proper supply register, stock register. During the last five years amount spent on purchase of medicines on the Indian Railways is as under:

1987-88	Rs. 169856000/-
1988-89	Rs. 183493000/-
1989-90	Rs. 245246000/-
1990-91	Rs. 288018000/-
1991-92	Rs. 280082000/-

Pathological investigations in Railway Hospital are done on large scale. Sophisticated investigations are also done. All efforts are made to monitor the quality control of pathological investigations.

All common speciality services are available in Divisional and Zonal Hospitals. Railways also provide super-specialist services in the following hospitals:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Cardio Vascular Services | — | Perambur Hospital, Madras |
| (2) Micro Vascular Surgery | — | Northern Railway, Central Hospital, New Delhi. |
| (3) Plastic Surgery | — | Byculla, Central Hospital, Bombay. |
| (4) Super-specialised Orthopaedic Surgery | — | Orthopaedic Hospital, Howrah |
| (5) Cancer | — | Indian Railway Cancer Research Institute, Varanasi. |
| (6) Gastro Entrology | — | Jagjeevan Ram Hospital, Western Railway, Bombay. |
| (7) Nephrology | — | Garden Reach Hospital, Perambur Hospital. |

2.51 Commenting on this point, the AIRF, in their Memorandum, submitted the following:

“The policy pursued by the Railway Ministry for extending medical facilities to Railwaymen is highly frustrating. It may be said that the railways today have their own zonal headquarters hospitals and divisional headquarters hospitals besides health units and dispensaries. But the fact remains that the recognised unions are constantly discussing the vital issue of inadequacy of medical facilities in their PNM meetings at the divisional, zonal and Railway Board levels. Serious grievances of the railwaymen with regard to medical facilities are inadequate number of doctors and non-availability of medicines. A lot of money is spent on construction of hospital buildings and purchase of plant and equipment but the doctors, para-medical staff and technicians are unable to handle ECG, X-ray and other equipments as men are not provided in the name of economy. This policy of the Railways displays no wisdom and there should be no principle of matching surrender brought in this area if it is the intention that the infrastructure provided by them is put to use for the benefit of the ailing railwaymen and their families.

The arrangement made for the gangmen and others working in way-side stations and mid-sections is not at all satisfactory as, in many cases, they have to travel long distances, spending more than 12 hours to obtain medical aid. In case of emergencies they have to seek aid from private doctors, spending huge money, which is not re-imbursed.”

It was further added by them:

“To improve the system, this Federation suggests that, in each and every station, a board should be displayed in a place near the duty room of the Assistant Station Master, showing the names of doctors who are authorised medical attendants for the Railway in case of any accident and other emergencies. The Railway employees who are unable to reach the railway doctor by travelling long distances to secure immediate facilities and where, despite a message from the station master for the doctor to come to the station and attend the patient who is an employee or the members of his family, the doctor is unable to rush to the station, the Station Master/Dy. Station Supdt. should authorise such patient to secure medical attention from the authorised medical attendant available within a few kilometres from the station, the cost of the same being paid by the railway. This will go a long way in removing the frustration among the employees working in remote places.

The non-availability of medicines is also agitating the minds of railway employees. Medicines prescribed by the railway doctors are

not made available in required quantities and, since replenishment is not done in the railway hospitals, local purchase is resorted to. The policy of going in for the cheapest medicines through the lowest quotation should be given a go by for the reasons of protecting the health of the employees for the railways' own benefit. A drive should be undertaken by the Ministry of Railways as also by the zonal railways to monitor the adequacy of medicines and purchasing standard medicines."

2.52 The NFIR have in their Memorandum also submitted the following points for the consideration of the Committee:

"Medi-care in rail industry has very much developed with a network of hospitals, health units, dispensaries, lock ups, etc. By and large, the maintenance of these units is satisfactory. But supply of medicines to most of the Health Units and Dispensaries is always complained to be inadequate. Ambulance facilities also are not available at all the places. When the Ambulance car goes to the garage, there is no second Ambulance car to function in its place. Till it comes back, whatever may be the time, the local workers and their families are deprived of this important facility. Where there is one Ambulance car, the Management should provide one more Ambulance car so that the difficulties of the workers and their families would not be causing worry and anxiety to the Medical Authorities.

The medi-care for the road-side staff and families is not at all satisfactory. The present system of a Line doctor covering a distance of 100-120 kms. from morning till evening by a passenger train catering medicines enroute at every stoppage create unfriendly scenes; the medical staff are subjected to ridicule by the suffering personnel and the travelling public for the reason that within 2-5 minutes stoppage the the doctor is to listen to the patient and he cannot examine and give the medicine. The medicines are already prepared and are in big bottled alongwith tablets in two-three bottles. These mixtures and tablets are meant for some common ailments. The doctor's peon will be catering the medicines on hearing the doctor, what should be given to a particular patient. This scenario instead of getting compliments and laurels to the Administration, brings bad name and ridicule from the public. Money is spent, doctor is sent, doctor's accompanies the doctor, medicines are used but yet no praise for the Administration."

2.53 It has also been pointed out that with a sincere intention of serving the railway employees and children who are sick and working in various forlorn sectors cut off from the main stream of human civilisation, the age old practice does not help the patients to get over their sickness. The whole scheme, therefore, requires to be reviewed. In its place, a doctor

and his staff with effective modern medicines should undertake a journey by an Ambulance Car or a rail car in certain sections, stop at every station for nearly an hour or so to examine the patients thoroughly and give medicines. In this process, a section of 150 kms may be covered in two days instead of one day.

2.54 Asked to state whether there were any concrete proposals in hand for modernising railway hospitals so as to bring them at par with major hospitals in metropolitan cities, the Railway Board furnished the following reply to the Committee:

“All the Zonal Hospitals situated in Metropolitan cities like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta & Madras are being modernised at par with major hospitals in these cities in phased manner. Proposal for opening a wing of Neuro Sciences in Northern Railways’ Central Hospital is under consideration. Proposal for purchase of modern medical equipment like Liphotripter, Auto Gas Analyser, Foetal Monitor, Defibrillator etc. have been sanctioned for various Railways under the M&P Programme 1992-93.”

2.55 When asked to state about the conditions of hospitals and medical facilities, the President AIRF, during evidence submitted the following:

“I think we seek your strong support on this. We have good model hospitals but they are good for ailment of serious diseases. Our main endeavour is to provide medical facilities for the basic ailments to those who are posted at isolated places such as a gangman. In some cases a person may have to travel for 24 hours for going and coming back to his home in order to take the treatment from these hospitals. Our suggestion is that if a person is entitled for getting treatment from a railway dispensary then the dispensary should be so situated so that he can go to the dispensary and come back to his home within four hours’ time. Some time limit has to be fixed and if a dispensary falls within that time limit then it is all right. I am sure you will appreciate our suggestion.”

2.56 During evidence when the Committee pointed out that though the condition of Railway Hospitals was generally good but the common complaints received by the Committee was non-availability of specialists and drug-shortage, the Member (Staff) clarified as under:—

“We have serious problems in respect of doctors reporting to join the service. Doctors are selected through the UPSC. We have got a big panel of 500 doctors. We would ask them to join. When we ask them to join, a large number do not wish to join the Railway Service because they find the places very remote. Out of the 500 doctors selected hardly 150 may join the service. This problem is there. We do not get doctors to join our service.

The moment they get a better offer elsewhere, they leave the Railway Service and go away. Therefore, we are trying to combat this problem by getting some kind of contract doctors who are locally available. We have engaged the doctors who are locally available, we have asked them whether they are interested in the job and we have offered them very good emoluments. We are trying to meet the problem of shortage of doctors by utilising the services of those who are locally available."

2.57 Explaining the position further, the Director-General, Railway Health Service (DG, RHS), stated:

"About specialists, we find the common specialists in the zonal hospitals. We have all the common specialists, may be that certain posts are not filled up because of the availability of the proper persons. But facilities do exist. Some of the zonal hospitals have got super specialities which are one of the best in the country. I would like to mention some of these hospitals. Cardio Vascular Services at Perambur Hospital, Madras, Micro Vascular Surgery, Northern Railway Central Hospital, New Delhi, Plastic Surgery, Byculia Central Hospital, Bombay Super Specialised Orthopaedic Surgery, Orthopaedic Hospital, Howraw; Indian Railway Cancer Research Institute, Varanasi; Gastro Entrology in Jagjeevan Ram Hospital, Western Railway, Bombay; Nephrology in Garden Reach Hospital, Perambur Hospital, Madras. I feel the services are second to none in these hospitals in the country."

2.58 When pointed out by the Committee that the drugs were not adequately available in the Railway Hospitals, the witness stated the following:

"About the drugs, we have adequate provision of providing the latest drugs. If the drugs are not available, then the Medical Superintendents are empowered to purchase the drugs. I can tell you that patients who are admitted to the hospitals, they get whatever is available. We may have lapses so far as out patients are concerned. These are few and far between. It becomes difficult to satisfy everyone because our clientele is very large. Since treatment is free, more and more people come to us for minor ailments. Out of 100 persons attending, 75 of them do not know about any medicine. What they need is sympathy and proper advice. Then we are trying to give some simple medicines like vitamins. We do not lag behind in providing treatment."

2.59 The Committee wanted to know that as the specialised railway hospitals were at far off places, whether any arrangement with the local hospitals had been made to use their specialised services at the time of emergency. The DG, RHS deposed the following:

"All the Government hospitals are recognised for treatment in the country. Even the highly specialised hospitals like the Escorts,

Ganga Ram Hospital, Jaslok Hospital in Bombay, Appollo Hospital of Madras etc., are all private hospitals which have also been recognised. In case a person is not able to go to a recognised hospital, there is emergency, they can go to some private hospitals. Such cases are also considered and medical reimbursement is made."

2.60 Asked whether any complaints were received regarding pilferage of medicines and misbehaviour with patients in Railway Hospitals, the Railway Board submitted the following:

"No such complaint regarding consumption pilferage of medicines, misbehaviour with the patient in Railway Hospitals/Health Units have been received in Ministry of Railways. However, as and when individual complaint are received in the Ministry of Railways or in the Zonal/Divisional Headquarters these are dealt with promptly."

2.61 Asked to state the various medicare preventive measures taken by the Railways for the health of Railwaymen and their families, the Ministry of Railways stated:

"Indian Railways Medical Department provide comprehensive medicare preventive as well as promotive to the Railway Employees and their families. Following preventive measures are being taken for maintaining the Health of Railwaymen and members of their family:

- (i) *Maternal and Child Health Care*: Under this programme for expectant mothers Anti Natal check-ups, Immunisation against Tetanus and also Anaemia treatment are being undertaken. Under Universal Immunisation programme, preventive vaccination like BCG, DPT, Polio & Measles are being given to ensure 100% coverage of infants and children in Railway Colonies. Prevention of Anaemia and Night Blindness in children is also being specially taken care of. Apart from this school health care, Environment, Hygiene, Chlorination of water, prevention of food adulteration and preventive aspects of Industrial Hazards are also being taken care of. During the year 1991 a sum of rupees 127.37 crores was spent on preventive measures.

2.62 About the arrangements made for attending to the sickness of gangmen who were working between stations/road-side stations, the Ministry of Railways deposed the following:—

"For attending to the sickness of the Gangmen who are working between stations and those who are employed at roadside stations the following arrangements have been made by the Indian Railways:—

AIMO/Line: AIMO/Line visits the side stations on programme basis as well as he attends the patients at these places whenever

called from Headquarters stations. Such staff can avail medical facilities from the nearby government hospitals in emergencies if required. In such events they are allowed to take reimbursement of their medical expenditure. In grave emergencies Railway Staff can get reimbursement for such treatment subject to the proper justification."

2.63 During evidence, the General Secretary, NFIR submitted the following with regard to medical treatment:—

"I want to mention only one point. I may submit that there are 7,000 railway stations all over the country. And then thousands of railwaymen are spread over in jungle areas also with their families. The present medical treatment meant for them is only a farce; it is not medical treatment in its true sense. Therefore, it has got to be rectified. They must introduce ambulance squad."

2.64 During evidence, the Member (Staff), Railway Board deposed the following:—

"The point about the mobile line was raised. We have doctors at various places, health units who are given two days or three days line duty to go and serve the stations. This we do find, is not satisfactory. Trains stop for a short duration and during this five to ten minutes, it is difficult to give treatment. Therefore, we are now liberal in recognising some of the hospitals which are locally available for availing treatment by the railway employees. It is far more easy to give a mobile road van rather than rail van. We are examining that. We are identifying which are the really hard and remote places where you cannot send doctors. We are trying to see whether that suggestions can be implemented."

2.65 However, the Railway Board, in written reply, stated as under on this issue:—

"Way side stations on the Railways are covered by Railway line doctors by programmed visits. At few places mobile medical vans are running. So far as provision of mobile medical services to cater to the needs of such Railwaymen is concerned, the same is not feasible and not considered economical keeping in view the vast network of Railway Health Units and Hospitals comprising of 114 hospitals and 645 Health Units and the existence of large number of local government hospitals at other places."

Educational Facilities

2.66 The Ministry of Railways have stated that provision of educational facilities is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. However, Railways have provided educational facilities to the extent

feasible at places where such facilities were not in existence or were found inadequate, to meet the needs of the Railway employees, purely as a measure of staff welfare. However, as a policy, the educational facilities provided by the Railways are not being expanded to cover other places.

2.67 At present, Railways have 629 educational institutions, comprising a Degree college, Intermediate colleges and Higher Secondary/High/Middle/Primary schools. Though these schools are administered by the Railways, they are recognised by the respective State Government/CBSE. These institutions follow the prescribed curriculum.

2.68 Railways have incurred an expenditure of about Rs. 29.23 crores during the year 1990-91 on provision of educational facilities to the wards of Railway Employees.

2.69 An amount of Rs. 26.66 crores has been allocated for expenditure on Railway schools and colleges, which includes expenditure for developmental purpose like laboratories, libraries, etc. during the year 1991-92.

2.70 A statement showing the number of Railway schools and total number of students is as under:

Railway	Degree Col.	Inter Col.	Hr. Sec. Sch.	High Sch.	Middle Sch.	Primary Sch.	Atp Sch.	Tot. No. of Sch.	Total No. of Students
Central	—	—	4	2	1	10	35	52	11097
Eastern	—	1	3	6	8	11	99	128	22362
Northern	—	1	1	1	2	5	75	85	7024
N.E.	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	4	6506
N.F.	—	—	6	1	—	4	28	39	12042
Southern	—	—	3	8	—	6	8	25	10817
South									
Central South	11	—	1	17	7	10	23	60	29397
Eastern	—	—	11	8	8	28	60	115	52454
Western	—	—	4	2	3	31	53	93	17192
PRODUCTION UNITS									
C.L.W.	—	—	2	4	—	17	—	23	10526
D.C.W.	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	128
D.L.W.	—	1	—	—	—	3	—	4	6110
Total	1	8	35	49	29	126	381	629	185655

2.71 Asked to state whether there was any proposal to get the Railway Schools affiliated with CBSE (like Kendriya Vidyalayas) to have uniform standard of education, the Ministry stated:

“5 Railway Senior Secondary Schools are already affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education. At other places, Kendriya

Vidyalayas set up in Railway colonies are catering to the needs of transferable employees”.

2.72 In their Memorandum submitted to the Committee, the NFIR have stated the following regarding educational facilities provided by the Indian Railways:

“The number of primary schools is inadequate and does not cover many areas in the jurisdiction of each zone. As a result, the children of Group ‘D’ employees, namely, TPMs, Gangman etc. are not able to travel long distances for getting primary education; travel facilities do not exist at all the places; for want of accommodation and other facilities, these children are not able to secure seats in the primary schools situated in the villages; the thrust there is more for the local children rather than the children going from outside.

The railway employees in low income groups cannot afford to keep their children at distant places for education; younger children cannot remain aloof from their parents and they cannot be left at the place of the school for want of boarding facilities. All these difficulties stand in the way of these employees’ children securing education. It is a pity that inspite of advancement of the industry and enlightenment of the workers, most of the children of Group ‘D’ employees remain illiterate or literate to the extent of putting the signature.

Most of these primary schools run by the rail industry do not have adequate furniture for the teaching staff and also for the students. Students carry small pieces of jute cloth for using as mats for squatting on the floor. This position does not behove the Railway Administration which is considered to be modern and highly enlightened”.

Further, the Memorandum stated:

“Whenever the subject of education is discussed in the scheduled Negotiation meetings, a ready reply comes from the Railway Administration that, “Education is not the responsibility of rail industry and it is the responsibility of the State Governments”. With this mental reservation, the Administration deprives the railway employees’ children of not only higher education but even the primary education. This outlook requires a basic change. The worker is not concerned whose responsibility it is for education of his children. He is a citizen of the country alongwith other citizens. As a citizen, he is rendering his services to the Nation through the rail industry in conformity with the rules and regulations laid down for various classes of workers. Railwayman desires that his children should be educated and the education should be available near the place of his residence. There should be a network of primary

schools, middle schools, high schools, and colleges. It is, therefore, essential that the education policy of the Railway Ministry should be reviewed and reoriented suiting the present day sentiments and requirements of employees at large. Colleges to impart education on major degree courses, viz. MBBS; Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Signal and Telecom Engineering, etc. should be taken up at the rate of one college per zone so as to cover all the important streams of education by opening these colleges in different Zonal Railways which should have the required boarding facilities and the students would be drawn from all the Zones on the basis of merit and boarding facilities should be subsidised. This we consider is ideal for the Railway Ministry to take up”.

2.73 During evidence, the representative of NFIR deposed before the Committee as under:

“We suggested that one degree college should be introduced in one Zonal railway for all important streams of education, viz, medical in one zone, civil engineering in one zone, mechanical engineering in one zone, like that, so that the railway employees’ children can have easy access for getting seats and they will be useful after getting the degree to work in the rail industry itself”.

2.74 The AIRF, in their Memorandum submitted the following:

“The Railwaymen are scattered all over the country—most of them working in remote localities where facilities for the education of their children are not available. They have to send their children to far away places for education. Many difficulties are experienced by them in the matter of accommodation. It is very necessary to provide attached hostels to the schools to facilitate their education. The Railways do not take full responsibility for running educational institutions and the facilities provided by the state governments are most inadequate. This Federation feels that the Ministry of Railways should continue to enhance the educational facilities for primary, secondary and higher education for the children of railway employees. It is time now for railways to start industrial training institutes at least one for each of the 65 divisions on the Indian Railways. This will go a long way in securing admissions to the employees’ children and imparting them training for jobs on the railways to fill the need for technically skilled manpower for diesel and electric loco sheds, workshops and open line. The present redundant infrastructure in the closed steam loco sheds and also the retired technical supervisors and staff will come handy to run the ITIs to produce the best of the boys required for the need of the railways and providing them job opportunities.”

2.75 In regard to education of facilities provided by the Indian Railways, the Member (Staff), Railway Board further submitted the following:

“In addition to the schools being run by the Railways, we have also schools run by non-Railway organisations in the Railway Colonies. I have got the details of the schools being run by non-Railway organisations in the Railway Colonies. There are many schools which get reimbursement from the State Government because for primary schools reimbursement is possible from the State Government. The money is allocated by them (non-Railway Organisation/State Governments) for these schools, whereas if we start, we will pay from our Budget without any reimbursement from the State Government. Therefore, we are not able to undertake this task in the whole country. We would like to encourage any non-Railway Organisation to start a school and they get the reimbursement from the State Government.”

The witness added:

“Where the State Government is not starting the school, where the non-Railway Organisation is not starting the school and where the Railways are not able to start a new school, we had encouraged Railway Women’s Organisations and such other Organisations to run Nursery Schools and Primary Schools upto Class V. That was an additional responsibility taken up by the Railways as a welfare activity. Our Railway Women’s Organisations run these schools and they supervise the entire functioning. In the Women’s Organisations they have Committees and they run these schools as a welfare activity. It is quite a bit of responsibility which we are undertaking on primary education which, as I mentioned, is essentially the responsibility of the State Governments and the State Governments should be doing it because they have the resources. Since they are not able to do it, we are doing it. But, expansion is becoming more and more difficult for us. However, I must say that the situation is very satisfactory. I will come to the equipment part later. The availability of schools in major Railway Colonies is not a constraint. Railway Colonies have private schools and if there is none organised by either Railways, the Government or the non-Railway Organisations then, as a last resort we are requesting the Women’s Organisations to start them.”

2.76 In this connection, the Committee enquired whether the Railways could provide accommodation for schools and ask the State Governments or Municipalities to start primary schools. The witness replied as under:

“In fact, we are doing it. We are meeting the expenditure as a non-recurring expenditure. Recently, in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant Railway Colony, we built a building there and requested the State

Government to start a school. They were not able to do it and we had to find a non-Railway Organisation to do it”.

He added:

“I would like to assure the Committee that we are taking it as our responsibility to see that primary education is available to the children of all our employees. I also mentioned by saying that if nothing is available, the Railway Women’s Organisation is there to start the school. It means that we have ensured that all the children of railway employees are provided with primary education. The point that I made was that the State Government was to start these schools at various places and wherever they were unable to start, we are doing that. I do not think we are doing any favour. We are doing it as our duty. We are part of the Government and it is our duty to provide free education”.

2.77 The Committee also wanted to know from the Ministry whether they contemplated to review their policy of not opening more schools keeping in view the popularity of Railway schools. The Ministry submitted the following:

“Although the Ministry of Railways do not propose to expand educational facilities due to far-reaching financial and administrative implications, certain steps as mentioned below have been taken to facilitate the Railway employees for providing education in schools to their children:

(i) Of the total number of schools provided by the Railways, almost 80% of the schools are of Primary Standard, so that the children of the younger age group could avail of the facility.

(ii) Ministry of Railways do consider proposals for upgradation of the existing schools to higher standards, subject to justification and availability of funds, etc.

(iii) A few proposals for opening of Kendriya Vidyalayas in Railway colonies are still pending with the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and expected to materialise in due course.

(iv) Railways are also collaborating with a reputed educational agency, to set up schools in Railway colonies at two places, as an experimental measure.

(v) Mahila Samities and Staff representatives are encouraged to set up schools in Railway Colonies and provide requisite assistance to the extent feasible”.

2.78 Asked to state the mechanism to ensure that staff strength in each college/school was adequate and qualified as per prescribed norms, the Ministry submitted as follows:

“All schools on the Railways except 5 schools (affiliated to CBSE) are affiliated to the respective state Education Boards. Hence, the

schools follow, as far as possible, the norms laid down by the respective State Boards in regard to staff strength. The strength of teachers in Railway schools is also reviewed by the Railway Administration and necessary remedial measures taken. As regards qualifications prescribed for the posts of teachers. These have been laid down by the Ministry of Railways keeping in view the qualifications prescribed by the Central Government. The teachers are recruited through Employment Exchange/Railway Recruitment Boards”.

2.79 Asked to state the educational facilities provided to the children of Gangmen who generally work between the stations or at small road side stations, the Ministry of Railways stated:

“Educational facilities provided by the Railway cater to the needs of children of all Railway employees irrespective of the categories to which they belong, including Gangmen. They are also encouraged to avail of the local facilities provided by State/Private Agencies. Railways have provided Primary/Austerity Type Primary schools at various stations to meet such needs”.

2.80 When the Committee enquired whether the Ministry of Railways had any cell to monitor the problems of such schools which impart education for linguistic minorities, the Member (Staff) replied:

“We have a welfare cell and we do consider giving grant-in-aid to these private schools”.

2.81 To a question whether the number of Kendriya Vidyalayas in the Railway colonies is adequate to cater to the needs of all transferable employees, the Ministry replied:

“Railways have set up Kendriya Vidyalayas at places where there is a concentration of transferable Railway employees and where adequate education facilities are not available. The number of such Kendriya Vidyalayas set up are meeting the needs of all transferable employees. Proposals have been sent to the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to set up 5 more Kendriya Vidyalayas.”

2.82 In this connection, the Member (Staff), Railway Board stated during evidence:

“We have got central schools in Railway Colonies. They are project schools. We have persuaded the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan to start the schools. 70 per cent of the children of our railwaymen are getting admitted in them. We have got some problems where we request your help particularly, in Kendriya Vidyalayas started in the produced units like the CLW. There the Kendriya Vidyalaya schools are there. They have been kind enough to start a school there. But, the demand for all the Kendriya Vidyalayas is always high and one

of the conditions is that the transferable employees should be given priority. But, as you know, in the production units, the employees remain there only. They start their life there, live there and they retire at the same place. We have been taking up them matter with the Education Ministry. Our Ministry has written a number of letters to the Education Ministry to kindly treat these Kendriya Vidyalayas located in production units in a different manner and to give a different formula of admission to these schools so that our children get a much higher percentage of admission”.

2.83 Asked to state about the admission policy of Kendriya Vidyalayas and the steps taken by the Railways to strengthen their own schools where there were no Kendriya Vidyalaya, the Railway Board stated:

“Admission Policy, Kendriya Vidyalayas are set up in two sectors, viz. ‘Civil’ and ‘Project’. In Civil Sector schools priority in admission is given to children of transferable Central Government employees. In ‘Project Sector’ schools, priority in admission is given to children of the employees of the unit concerned which is meeting all the expenditure . It will be thus noted that while transferable Railway employees get priority in admission in the schools of both the sectors, non-transferable Railway employees who constitute a sizeable strength do not get priority in the former, but in the latter”.

They added:

“There are 66 Kendriya Vidyalayas functioning in Railway colonies, of which six are in ‘Project Sector’ and the rest in ‘Civil Sector’. The total number of children of Railway employees who get admission in Kendriya Vidyalayas in Railway colonies works out approximately to 70 per cent, which is considered to be an appreciable figure. Railways have generally, set up Kendriya Vidyalayas specifically in such places where there is a concentration of transferable Railway employees.

It is quite possible that in certain Kendriya Vidyalayas, non-transferable Railway employees may not have got priority in admission due to the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan’s existing admission policy. However, the matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Human Resource Development at the highest level to review the admission policy and the matter is being pursued.”

Hostel Facilities

2.84 The Indian Railways have provided 29 hostels for the ward of the Railwa employees. Normally, the Railways provide these subsidized hostels in such places where educational facilities inadequate and

employees are at on eplace and there is a need to put the children in hostel.

2.85 Asked to state whether 29 hostels are adequate, the Member (Staff) deposed the following during evidence:

“In 29 out of 59 divisions Railways have provided them because those are the divisions where educational facilities are not available. Many of the divisions otherwise are located in metropolitan cities and employees also live there where educational facilities are already available. However, we will examine the proposal to open more schools in other divisions”.

Grant-in-aid

2.86 Apart from providing educational facilities, Railways also extend financial assistance of the following types for the education of the children of Railway Employees:

- (a) Grant-in-aid to limited number of privately managed schools which cater to the needs of the children of Railway employees.
- (b) Reimbursement of tuition fees.
- (c) Supply of free uniforms to the children of Railway employees (whose pay is below a prescribed level). Who are studying in Railway Schools.
- (d) Educational assistance to needy employees who are compelled to send their children far away for education because of non-availability of schools at the place of their posting.
- (e) Hostel Sussidy.
- (f) Scholarships to a limited number of children of Railway employees for education in Medicine, Engineering, C.A., M.B.A. etc.
- (g) Establishment of 20 subsidised hostels by the Railways where boarding and lodging are provided at subsidised rates to the children of Railway employees posted at way-side stations without adequate educational facilities”.

2.87 In this connection the Railway Board further added:

“Children of Railway employees irrespective of their place of posting are eligible for educational assistance as admissible under the rules. Educational assistance given in the shape of educational allowance, reimbursement of tuition fee and hostel subsidy. To avail of the such assistance, Railway employees have to fulfil the prescribed criteria/norms. The rates for reimbursement of tuition fee are Rs.20/- per month, per child from Class I to X and Rs. 25/- per month per child (plus Rs.5/- per month per child as Science fees for science students) for class XI and XII. Educational

allowance @ Rs.50/- per month per child is admissible to all employees provided they are compelled to keep their children away from the place of posting due to absence of schools of requisite standard. Similarly, the hostel subsidy @ Rs.150/- per month per child is admissible to employees on their transfer, when they are obliged to keep their children in a hostel or in a residential school away from the Headquarters. Educational Allowance is admissible only when the employees do not draw either tuition fee or hostel subsidy, as per existing orders framed by the DOP and adopted by the Ministry of Railways. Besides, scholarships for prosecution of technical education could also be availed of by the children of Railway employees at the prescribed rate”.

2.88 In this regard, the Committee wanted to know the authority responsible to oversee the decision to accord grant to non-Railway schools functioning in Railway colonies and the guiding Principles for giving such grants. The Ministry of Railways in a written note stated as follows:

“The local Railway authorities are competent to sanction grant-in-aid of recurring nature to a non-Railway school subject to fulfilment of prescribed conditions. As regards non-Recurring grant, proposals are piloted by the respective Zonal Railways and sent to the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) for their consideration, and the latter consider such proposals on merit and justification in conformity with the existing norms and subject to availability of funds.

For giving grant-in-aid to non-Railway schools in Railway colonies, various factors, like the stature of the school, whether the school is being run by a properly constituted Managing Committee with representatives of Railway employees, financial status, whether recognised by the concerned State Education Boards, whether the local Managing Committee could meet a portion of the estimated expenditure, etc. are also taken into consideration”.

The Ministry further added:

“Recurring grant-in-aid at the prescribed rates, viz. Rs.2/-, Rs.3/- and Rs.4/- per child per month for primary, middle and high/higher secondary schools respectively is given subject to the condition that a minimum one third of the total strength or 100 students should be children of Railway employees, Railway officials should be represented in the Managing Committee of the School and the school is sustaining financial loss. Subject to the fulfilment of the prescribed conditions, the local Railway Administration sanction recurring grant-in-aid to non-Railway schools. The amount of grant-in-aid of recurring nature may vary from year to year due to the

variation in the strength of wards of Railway employees and the extent of deficit.

As regards the admission policy in non-Railway schools functioning in Railway colonies, generally the wards of Railway employees are the major beneficiary because of the very nature of its location and other facilities made available by the Railways”.

2.89 The Committee also wanted to know the type of educational assistance extended to needy employees who were compelled to send their children far away for education because of non-availability of schools at the place of their posting and how it was ensured that all the needy employees got the requisite assistance. The Railway Board, in their reply, stated as follows:

“In certain limited sections, the children of Railway employees are given School Card Passes for commuting by train between the place of residence and the School. It is difficult to enlarge the scope of the existing facilities in view of the far-reaching implications”.

2.90 It has been stated in the Memorandum that the Railways extend grant-in-aid to a limited number of privately managed schools which cater to the needs of the children of the Railway employees. Asked to state the criteria adopted for selection of such schools and the amount of aid provided to them annually, the Ministry replied:

“An amount of Rs.93.52 lakhs was sanctioned during 1991-92 as grant-in-aid to the non-railway schools catering to the needs of the children of railway employees. Grant-in-aid to such schools is given on a recurring as well as non-recurring basis. According to the extant orders, recurring grant-in-aid is given to non-railway schools which is fixed on an *ad hoc* manner not exceeding the amount shown as loss, subject to the prescribed ceiling limit.

As regards non-recurring one time grant, it is provided subject to the Managing Committee of the school being in a position to raise a portion of the sum required so that they have a financial stake in the venture, financial assistance being given from the Railway being in the nature of a subsidy, subject to fulfilment of other prescribed conditions. The number of such schools to which grant-in-aid have been given vary from year to year. They are of course very limited. Such schools are managed by a Managing Committee in which the serving railway employees are represented. Financial assistance is given to such schools based on the justification-cum-merit of each case, the number of children of Railway employees studying in the school, the nature of composition of the Managing Committee, the financial position of the school etc.

2.91 Asked to state the criteria for awarding scholarships for higher education to the children of the Railway employees and whether it was strictly based on merit, the Ministry replied:

"Applications are called for annually by the Railway Administration and such applications are scrutinised by a Committee of the Staff Benefit Fund at the headquarter Division of the Railway Administration concerned. The Committee take into account the scholastic record of the students, etc., for awarding the scholarship. No preference is shown in the allotment of the scholarship either on the basis of pay scale or class of service of the employee concerned. 5% of the scholarships, subject to a minimum of one, is reserved for children of Cl.IV employees. "Barring the aforesaid reservations, the scholarships are awarded on merit. The details of beneficiaries relating to parentage of the children to whom the scholarships have been given is not centrally maintained."

Literacy Mission

2.92 The Scheme for National Literacy Mission for Railway employees was introduced on the Railways in August, 1988 and since then 1984 courses were conducted and 27462 employees and their family members were taught upto the period ending 31st March, 1991 in various centres.

2.93 When the Committee wanted to know whether the Literacy Mission was only meant for the Railway employees or it was a part of National Literacy Mission, the Ministry stated:

"The Adult Literacy Mission on the Railway is meant not only for imparting literacy to the Railway employees but also for the members of their families. The scheme on the Railways is a part of the National Literacy Mission sponsored by the Government".

2.94 When asked about the type of courses conducted under this Mission and the number of beneficiaries from the scheme, the Ministry replied:

"The course consists of a basic literacy course of duration of six months. The post literacy course and continuing education is imparted through Jana Shikshan Nilayams run by department of Education.

The number of beneficiaries of the scheme on the Railways during the last three year is as under:

		(With family)
1988-89	...	12491
1989-90	...	16589
1990-91	...	5425
	Total	<u>34505</u>

* FBesides, 15% and 7½% of the Scholarships are reserved for SC & ST employees 'children respectively:'

2.95 Asked to state the reasons for decline in the number of beneficiaries in 1990-91, the Ministry stated:

"The scheme for Adult Literacy Mission under National Literacy Mission for the benefit of the Railway employees and their families was being reviewed/extended on year to-year basis on the receipt of instructions received from Ministry of Human Resource Development. It is admitted that due to non-operation of the scheme in full swing during the last two years, viz. 1990-91 and 1991-92 there was decline in the number of beneficiaries. However, the operation of the scheme was reactivated instructions have been issued to the Zonal Railways to monitor effective implementation of the scheme at the highest level. The scheme is being extended for a further period on one year, i.e. upto 1993-94".

2.96 In reply to a question whether any evaluation had been about the effectiveness of the scheme and the financial implications, the Ministry stated:

"The effectiveness of the scheme is evaluated every year while considering extension of the scheme for the next year.

The Railways incur an expenditure of Rs.100/-p.m. per Animator and Rs.400/- per annum per Supervisor per Centre. In addition to the above recurring expenditure an *ad-hoc* grant of Rs.200/- sanctioned initially for each basic literacy centre for providing the basic facilities."

The total expenditure incurred by the Railways on literacy scheme during the last three years is as follows:

1988-89	Rs. 2,49,699.00
1989-90	Rs. 3,64,048.00
1990-91	Rs. 1,32,333.00
Total		<u>Rs.7,46,080.00</u>

Staff Benefit Fund

2.97 An unique feature of the welfare scheme on the Railway is establishment of a Staff Benefit Fund. The fund provides assistance to employees and their dependents for their education, relief during times of distress including sickness, development of sports and scout activities etc. Railways make a contribution of Rs.14.50 per capita to the Fund. The Railway employees do not have to make any contribution to this Fund.

2.98 When the Committee wanted to know the procedure adopted for disbursement of Staff Benefit Fund for various activities and whether there was any agency to go into the merit of each case and make recommendations thereon, the Railway Board replied:—

"On each Railway, there is a duly constituted Staff Benefit Fund Committee, who decides disbursement of amounts for various

activities. The Committee meets periodically. All cases covered under the various activities are considered at the meeting of the Committee and decision taken. They consider all aspects including merit of each case while arriving at such decisions. Representatives of recognised Unions are Members of the Staff Benefit Fund Committee”.

2.99 The Railway Board furnished the following break-up of the Fund provided for each of the activities:

“The per capita contribution to the Staff Benefit Fund is distributed for the various prescribed activities, as given below:—

(1) General Activities

a) Education	. . . Rs. 2.50
b) Recreation other than sports	. . . Rs. 1.95
c) Relief of distress, sickness, etc.	. . . Rs. 3.25
d) Miscellaneous	... Rs. 0.50
*e) Inter-Railway Cultural Competition	. . . Rs. 0.05

* (2) Sports activities . . . Rs. 2.50

* (3) Scouts activities . . . Rs. 1.00

(4) Recreational facilities to Officers and Supervisory staff . . . Rs. 2.00

(5) Indigenous system of medicines including Homoeopathy . . . Rs. 0.75

TOTAL . . . Rs. 14.50

*Note: The amounts shown against the specified activities above are centrally controlled and disbursed to the Railway Units based on the recommendations made by the specified bodies who monitor the activities. The number of beneficiaries is not centrally maintained.

2.100 The Committee wanted to know from the Ministry as to how much of the total money out of Rs.14.50 per capita contributed by the Railways to the Staff Benefit Fund goes to Gazetted Cadre and Non-Gazetted Cadre respectively and whether a graduated rate of contribution in the Staff Benefit Fund is possible. The Ministry of Railways replied:

“Out of the total contribution of Rs.14.50 per capita to the Staff Benefit Fund, Rs.2/- per capita is granted for provision of recreational facilities for supervisory staff and gazetted officers. The balance amount of Rs.12.50 is earmarked for other staff for various

activities. Since the existing system of uniform per capita contribution to Staff Benefit Fund is functioning satisfactorily since long, it is not proposed to introduce a graduated rate of contribution to Staff Benefit Fund."

2.101 The Committee wanted to know the date from which the limit of Rs. 14.50 per capita was introduced and whether there was any proposal to review this limit. The Ministry replied:

"The per capita contribution @ Rs. 14.50 to Staff Benefit Fund is effective from 1.4.1989. A proposal to review the per capita contribution is under consideration. The amount of contribution fixed has to link with the Price Index. However, review of the per capita amount fixed is made from time to time, based on various factors including justification for expansion of the scope of activities, financial position of the Railways etc. In this context, it may be mentioned that during the last ten years review was made twice when the per capita contribution was raised from Rs. 9/- to Rs. 10.25 effective from 1.4.1982 and from Rs. 10.25 to Rs. 14.00 with effect from 1.4.1987 and further it was stepped upto Rs. 14.50 per capita from 1.4.89, as stated above."

In this connection, the Ministry stated that since 1993-94 the per capita contribution to Staff Benefit Fund has been raised to Rs. 20/-.

2.102 Regarding Staff Benefit Fund, the President AIRF, during evidence gave the following suggestion for the consideration of the Committee:

"Most of the welfare activities are performed through this Staff Benefit Fund. For example in such ailments where medical reimbursement is not possible, they are helped through this fund. We are also giving scholarship out of this fund. A reference which has been made is about the disproportionate allotment. Staff Benefit Fund is doing a very good job in terms of providing help particularly to the low paid staff. Any increase in this fund would go a long way in helping these people."

Railway Minister's Welfare and Relief Fund

2.103 This Fund had been constituted with a view to provide relief to Railway employees and their families during times of distress. The inflow to the Fund is primarily through voluntary contributions from the Railway employees and Railway Women's Organisations. During the financial year 1990-91, an amount of Rs. 1.44 lakhs was sanctioned from the Fund as relief, including a cyclone relief of Rs. 1 lakh to the affected employees of South Central Railway.

2.104 Asked to state the agency through which the Fund was being disbursed to the needy persons, the Board replied:

"Cases received from the Railways for grant of assistance from fund are considered by a Managing Committee constituted for this purpose

and the amounts sanctioned from the fund are disbursed to the concerned employees through Zonal Railways.

Appeals are being made from time to time, at various levels, to Railway employees and Railway Women Organisations to contribute generously to the Fund. Presently, assistance is being given from the fund, to the extent possible, to the needy employees, whose cases are sponsored by the respective Railway Administrations."

2.105 When the Committee wanted to know whether any efforts were being made to mobilise more contribution to the Fund, the Ministry of Railways stated:

"Appeals are being made from time to time, at various levels, to Railway employees and Railway Women's Organisations to contribute generously to the Fund."

HANDICRAFT CENTRES AND MAHILA SAMITIES

2.106 (a) *Handicraft Centres*

"Handicraft Centres have been set up with financing from Staff Benefit Fund (SBF) for training wives and children of the employees in useful crafts such as knitting, sewing, weaving, etc.

In order to provide an opportunity to family members of Railway employees to utilise their spare time in useful and profitable activities handicraft centres aided by SBF have been set up at suitable places by the Railways. The functioning of the handicraft centres is supervised by a nominated official of the Railway."

2.107 The details regarding the number of Handicraft Centres, number of membership and expenditure incurred during 1990-91 are as under:

Handicraft Centres

RAILWAY	No. of H/Centres	No. of Members	Expenditure Rs.
Central	60	4734	4,335
Eastern	77	6444	Not available
Northern	46	3556	4,07,160
North Eastern	7	558	Not Available
Northeast Frontier	28	4720	35,47,500
Southern	44	1055	1,93,010
South Central	64	4420	1,45,900
South Eastern	35	3455	Not Available
Western	16	487	Not Available

2.108 When asked about the average monthly income of a participating woman, the Railway Board replied:

"it is difficult to compute the average monthly income of the persons working in handicraft centres as it is based on various

factors like number of garments stitched, time spent, proficiency of the individual, number and availability of items etc. Moreover, the income widely varies between different Railways. The participants in the handicraft centres are not engaged on full-time basis. In the circumstances, it is difficult to indicate average monthly income of the participating woman."

2.109 The Committee also wanted to know the various products sold by these Handicraft Centres and how the system of pricing was being monitored. The Railway Board deposed as follows:

"Handicraft centres mainly undertake stitching of uniforms for Railway employees and Railway school children, Railway hospitals etc. The rates of stitching are fixed by a Committee duly constituted for the purpose and such rates are reviewed by the Railway Administration from time to time. Besides, if any other articles are produced by them, prices of the same are fixed by the Committee. Assistance of the local Railway Women's Organisation is also taken in maintaining the handicraft centres. It is noted from the reports received from the Railways that no attempt has been made to go in for garment industry/export business".

Mahila Samities

2.110 The Committee pointed out that the premises allotted to Mahila Samities are not good enough and that these Samities should be encouraged.

2.111 In this connection the Ministry of Railways have stated that recognised Mahila Samities have generally been provided with proper accommodation to the extent feasible. Provision of better accommodation has been found difficult by certain Railway Administrations due to shortage of accommodation and financial stringency. The Mahila Samities run handicraft centres, schools, creches etc. The handicraft centres are entrusted with the stitching of uniforms for staff, children and hospitals. Mahila Samities are not equipped with the skill and machinery for stitching uniforms on large scale. It will be appreciated that supply of well-fitting uniforms is a sensitive subject and a great deal of logistics and work to achieve targets is necessary to avoid Staff complaints. The Handicraft centres are small-scale units which are not equipped to handle large-scale work of stitching of all uniforms. However, a number of handicraft centres have undertaken various other activities like making pickles, candles, chalk-pieces, file-covers, envelopes etc. for increasing their earnings. They are also encouraged to expand their activities according to their capabilities.

2.112 Regarding stitching of uniforms by the Mahila Samities, the Member (Staff), Railway Board, during evidence stated:

“We will have a look at it. The problem is regarding quality that is being turned out by the Mahila Samities. We do have uniform cells in the divisions which are supervising the handicraft centre. But the quality of work is not to the satisfaction of our staff ”.

The witness added:

“The policy is to encourage them. We gave some details about pickles and other things which are made by the Mahila Samities and sold to the staff. The thing like candles, file-covers, envelopes can be made by ladies. Employees' dependants and they can be given to the railways in addition to uniform”.

2.113 Asked to state whether the Railways have creche facilities for the children of working women employees and if so, at what levels, the Ministry replied:

“Instructions exist for provision of creches depending upon the demand in the office premises for the benefit of women Railway employees. Assistance to the extent possible is given from the staff Benefit Fund. Suitable accommodation for the purpose is also provided. The details relating to provision of such facilities are not being centrally maintained. Railway Women's Organisations have also provided such facilities at certain specified centres”.

2.114 When the Committee wanted to know the role of Railway Officers Wives Associations, the Railway Board stated as follows:

“The main role being played by the Railway Women's Organisations is to supplement the efforts being made by the Railway Administrations in providing welfare to the staff and their families. They also encourage arts, cultural and sports activities amongst the children of railway employees. They run nursery schools, creches and adult literacy classes. They assist the railway employees and their families, both financially and materially, when natural calamities occur”.

Recreational Facilities

2.115 Railways lay great emphasis on recreational activities and provide excellent facilities. As a result it is in the forefront of the Sports scene in the country and viewed as a major patron. For this purpose they have established a large number of institutes/clubs with sports and library facilities.

2.116 Railways provide recreational facilities for the staff and their families at Zonal/Divisional levels, etc. in the shape of clubs/institutes, playground/stadia community halls/auditoriums, etc. Railways have established 332 Clubs and 449 Institutes. Recreational facilities like reading

rooms, indoor sports/games, etc., are provided in such clubs/institutes. Efforts have been made to provide adequate playgrounds to the extent possible at the Zonal/Divisional Headquarters, etc. The facilities provided are reviewed from time to time by the Committees duly constituted to run such recreational centres and additions/alterations are made from time to time, to the extent feasible, to meet the needs of the present times. Facilities like television/VCR, etc., are also provided at the clubs/institutes subject to availability of funds.

2.117 With a view to promote cultural activities amongst the Railwaymen and their families, competitions are conducted at the Divisional/Zonal and All India levels. Financial assistance for this purpose is provided. A specific allocation of funds is also made under the aegis of Staff Benefit Fund for providing recreational facilities to the employees and their families.

2.118 When pointed out by the Committee that most of the recreation clubs/institutes were located in old buildings, many of them constructed during the British days, the Ministry stated:

“Provision exists for the repairs and maintenance of all welfare buildings which include Recreation Clubs/Institutes etc. chargeable to revenue. A sum of Rs. 9.54 lakhs was spent on this account during 1991-92, which has been stepped up to Rs. 12.43 lakhs during 1992-93 and further augmented to Rs. 13.84 lakhs for 1993-94. A number of facilities are being provided for the Institutes/Clubs, e.g., rent-free accommodation, bearing cost of maintenance and upkeep, provision of playgrounds, furniture, electric installations, water facilities etc. At certain places even swimming pools and children’s parks have been provided. Rs. 3.95 per capita chargeable to SBF is exclusively allotted for providing recreation facilities to Railway employees. The recurring expenditure incurred by the Institutes/Clubs is met out of the per capita allocation and membership fee collected by them. Railway Administrations have been empowered to provide additional facilities, if any, that may be required by the Institutes/Clubs.”

2.119 In this connection, the Member (Staff) deposed during evidence:

“We will give the annual grant for each institute. We have increased the money for repairs also. From Rs. 9.54 lakhs, we have increased it to Rs. 13.84 lakhs. We are trying to upgrade the equipment which is there both through the Boards as well as through the Staff Benefit Fund. We have given Rs. 5 lakhs as grant to set up a gymnasium; we are opening a health club sort of a club where the staff can go and use the equipment.”

2.120 Asked to state the amount of grant provided by the railways to the Clubs and Institutes, the Ministry replied:

“Railways have set up Clubs and Institutes for providing recreational facilities to the railway employees and their families. While the

capital expenditure in providing such facilities is met from Railway revenues, the recurring expenditure is met by the respective Managing Committees. Rs. 2 per capita is granted to the Clubs and Senior Institutes, while Rs. 1.95 per capita is given for provision of recreational facilities to others."

2.121 About the assistance extended by the Railways for promotion of cultural activities, the Railway Board informed the Committee that 5 paise per capita is allocated from the SBF for promotion of cultural activities on all India basis. This amount is utilised by the Railways for holding Inter-Railway competitions in Drama, Dance and Music.

2.122 To a question whether facilities like children's playgrounds and parks are provided near the housing complex and how maintenance of these parks etc. is monitored, the Ministry replied:

"Facilities like children's playground and parks etc. near the housing complexes have been provided adequately. In the urban areas, Railways have got Horticulture wing which maintain the parks, plantation etc."

2.123 Regarding recreational facilities, the AIRF submitted the following in their Memorandum to the Committee:

"The recreational facilities for railwaymen are provided from the Staff Benefit Fund. Contributions to the Fund is made at the rate of Rs. 14.50 per capita which, for 17 lakh railwaymen comes to Rs. 2.47 crores per annum. The ratio of officers to staff on the basis of their numbers 14,000 and 16,86,000 respectively comes to 1:121. The amount spent from this fund for officers @ Re. 1 per head of the total number of 17 lakh employees comes to Rs. 17,00,000, the remaining Rs. 2,29,50,000 goes to the share of the staff which is about Rs. 13.60 per head. Thus the officers receive Rs. 12/- 13.60, i.e. Rs. 107.40 more per head. This is injustice and requires to be set right, so as to give equitable share to both these classes."

Sports Activities

2.124 Sports development on the Railways is a constantly ongoing process whereby the policies of sports appointments/incentives are reframed from time to time according to the sports scenario prevailing in the country. Periodic assessment and review are carried out to evolve policies to suit the needs.

2.125 There is constant interaction and coordination with the SAI and other Sports Control Boards to evolve a concerted approach for overall development of sports. The Railway Sports Control Board is affiliated to different Sports Federations and is represented on many of their executive councils. This not only ensures constant interaction but also

coordination of approach with the Federations, work together with Sports Authority of India and other Sports Control Boards.

2.126 Railways have made arrangements for training/coaching of promising wards of Railway employees. Facilities have extended, on limited scale, to organise coaching/training by expert, qualified coaches in selected disciplines. There is also a scheme for providing assistance for equipment, special training or assistance in specific fields related to sports performance. In certain cases, financial assistance has also been extended for training/exposure abroad of promising wards.

2.127 Railways have also provided infrastructural facilities of playgrounds, stadia, swimming pools, etc. and other latest equipment within the budgetary constraints. The facilities are adequate in the background of resource constraints. However, efforts to augment/update the facilities are made to the extent resources are available.

2.128 Asked about the reasons for decline in sports quota recruitment, the Member (Staff), during evidence stated:

“There is no reduction in sports quota.”

2.129 When asked to state the reasons for abolition of scouts and guides quota in Railways, the witness clarified:

“We had phased out a large number of locomotives last year. So, we had created a large number of surplus staff; we had to engage them and we had to go slow with the recruitment process. But, we will have a look at it as to when we can restore it”.

2.130 The detailed note regarding the Sports Policy adopted by the Railways is as under:

“To ensure that the Railways are able to fully utilise the best years of the sportspersons career, the maximum age limit for recruitment against sports quota has been kept at 23 years (as against the maximum age limit of 25 years for Group ‘C’ and 28 years for Group ‘D’ for recruitment through R.R.B.S. etc.)

The norms for recruitment for Group ‘D’ prescribe participation with modal winning position in Sr./Jr. State Championship or representation in National School Games, All India Inter University Championship or Sr. National Championship. The recruitment is limited to four in each Division and Headquarters, 10 each in RDSO and Production Units and 5 each in W & A.P., DCW and RCF during a financial year.

For Group ‘C’ appointments, the Annual quota for each Zonal Railway is 24 except N.E. & N.F. Railways. Where it is 18. For ICF, DLW & CLW the figure is 12 while that for DCW, NCF & WAP, the same is pegged at 5 each. The remaining unit, Metro Railway has been allotted only 4 in a financial year. All the above posts are in

direct recruitment grade but with prior approval of Railway Board, upto 40 of these appointments, on all India basis can be in higher, Intermediate grades”.

2.131 The minimum norms for recruitment of sportspersons against sports quota on Railway have been indicated below:

2.132 “Group ‘C’

Sportspersons who have represented in any of the games recognised by the Railway Sports Control Board:

1. The country as a member of Junior/Senior team.

OR

2. Zonal teams within the country and the team should have obtained at least 3rd position, in inter zonal championships.

OR

3. The State or equivalent Unit in national championships whether junior or senior section and obtained at least 3rd position in individual or at least 4th position in team games.

OR

4. The University in All India Inter University Championships (organised under the aegis of Inter University Sports Board) and should have obtained upto second position in individual events or upto third position in team games.

OR

5. A State School team in National School Games for Schools (conducted under the aegis of All India School Games Federations) and should have obtained at least first position both in individual or team games.

Note

1. In Team games like Hockey, Football, Cricket, Volleyball, Kabaddi, etc. fourth position will be taken into consideration.
2. Appointments against sports quota in Group ‘C’ should be given only after trails except when the sportspersons has represented India or got position in National level”.

2.133 The Ministry of Railways have informed the Committee that from the norms prescribed it will be seen that the recruits under sports quota have sports background of excellence, even prior to their appointment. Once in service, these employees are provided all encouragement to sharpen their talent further by giving practice time, special casual leave for participating in coaching camps and for participation in International events. The period of participation in camps for National championships,

for Railways, is treated as duty. Participation in Inter-Railway championships for teams and individuals excelling in performance is also treated as duty. Sportspersons are also provided infrastructure facilities and equipment. The Railways also bear the cost of participation of Indian Railway sportspersons in International events representing the country.

2.134 To motivate the sportspersons to put in their best, additional increments (upto 3 increments) for excellence at International level are also permissible in addition to upto 2 increments for excellence in National Championships. Besides, the scheme of additional increments, sportspersons in teams winning National titles are sanctioned cash awards.

2.135 The sportspersons with truly outstanding performances enlisted below are also considered for out of turn promotion:

“Group ‘C’

Sportspersons who:

- (a) represented the country in International meets;

OR

- (b) represented Railways in the national meets on three occasions and acquitted themselves creditably;
- (c) the sportspersons should have put in three years' service in the existing grade, where relaxation of this limit is required, the case is to be referred to the Railway Board;
- (d) no sportsperson should ordinarily be given more than one out of turn promotion in the course of his/her career; and
- (e) as far as possible, the out of turn promotion should be to a grade where there is a direct recruitment quota and his promotion should be counted against this direct recruitment quota. The General Manager will, however, have discretion to relax this provision in special cases”.

Second out of Turn Promotion

2.136 A second out of turn promotion which is to be recommended in really outstanding and deserving cases, can be granted at Railway Board's level only.

Holiday Homes

2.137 The Railways have provided Holiday Homes at hill stations, sea-side resorts and other important places to enable the Railway employees to spend their holidays with their families inexpensively and with comfort. There are at present, holiday homes at 41 centres in the country.

2.138 In addition to holiday homes, the Railways have also provided convalescent homes at Pali Hills, Bombay and at Coonoor, for recovery and recoupment of health in the case of employees who are ill.

2.139 Asked to state the occupancy rate of the Holiday Homes and whether the convalescent homes were made available to the family members of the Railway employees, the Ministry deposed as follows:—

“The holiday homes get fully occupied especially during seasons as most of them are at hill stations or sea-side resorts and places of tourist importance. The family members also are allowed to avail of the facility of convalescent homes subject to availability.”

2.140 To a question whether the adequacy of Holiday Homes and Convalescent Homes had been reviewed keeping in view the large number of employees who could avail the facility, the Railway Board replied:—

“Adequacy of both holiday and convalescent homes is reviewed by the respective Railway Administrations from time to time but due to constraints of funds, Railways are unable to extend such facilities. However, it is proposed to set up 5 more holiday homes, of which 3 are under construction, one each at Patni-Top (Northern Railway), Dwaraka (Western Railway) and Kalangut (Central Railway). Two more proposals one each at Nagore (Southern Railway) and Dadar (Central Railway) are under consideration.”

Staff Canteen

2.141 Considering the large work force on the Railways, 267 Staff Canteens including 94 statutory canteens have been set up on the Railways to provide wholesome and subsidised meals to employees at their work places.

2.142 Two types of canteens have been provided on Railways, viz., statutory and non-statutory. The statutory canteens have been set up in establishments which are governed by the Factories Act, 1948 and employ more than 250 workers. Non-statutory canteens are set up, as a welfare measure, where the strength of staff is 100 or more. Advisory Committees, consisting of staff representatives oversee the functioning of the canteens. At present a total number of 173 non-statutory and 94 statutory canteens are functioning on Railways. These canteens are run on no-loss no-profit basis. Railway Administrations provide necessary accommodation, sanitary and electric installations, furniture and cooking utensils including gas connections and bear charges for electricity and water installations. The staff working in such canteens have also been treated as Railway employees, and *ipso facto* wages thereof are being borne by the Railway Administration. Uniform is also provided to them.

2.143 With a view to effecting improvements in the working of the canteens and also their cleanliness and attractiveness, Railway Administrations have been instructed to periodically review and effect desired improvements.

2.144 The Ministry of Railway have also informed the Committee:—

“Instructions have also been issued to Zonal Railways to undertake modernisation of the canteens attached to workshops in phases. It is

considered that the existing number of subsidised staff canteens are adequate. They are generally well-equipped and are able to prepare and supply sufficient eatables prepared by the Staff."

2.145 The Committee pointed out that during the Study Tour to Bhubaneshwar, it was found that the canteen in Carriage Repair Workshop at Mancheswar was not upto the mark and the eatables supplied often remained inadequate.

2.146 The Railway Board, in this connection submitted the following:—

"As regards functioning of a Statutory Canteen in Carriage Repair Workshop at Mancheswar (South-Eastern Railway), necessary action has been taken by the Railway Administration to augment the existing strength of canteen staff to enable them to meet the increasing demand for meals etc. The canteen has been provided with a number of modern equipments like wet grinders, dry-grinders and chapati preparing machines etc. and is proposed to be made a 'model canteen' in the Railways."

2.147 Elaborating the point further, the Member (staff) stated as follows during evidence:—

"One important change has come, about our canteens. Earlier, we used to have two types of canteens: Statutory and non-statutory canteens. Statutory canteens are those which, according to Factories Act, have to be run by the Government or by the employer. Non-statutory canteens are not necessarily to be run by the employer. We have a number of such canteens which are run by the employees. They have a committee which runs the canteen. For the last about four to five years, we are meeting the establishment cost of all those canteens. We have 173 non-statutory and 94 statutory canteens. The establishment cost is also being met by the Railways. But in practice, there is no difference between these two. The establishment cost of the employees—cooks, bearers, etc. who are working there is met by the Railways. All the equipment that is required is given by the Railways. The Committee is still there because they are the people who have to decide what kind of foodstuff will be there and at what rate that will be sold. We have a large number of running sheds where the non-statutory canteens work. Here also, we have taken over the establishment cost."

2.148 Regarding subsidy content, the witness added:—

"We are spending almost Rs. 10 crore per annum. The cost of establishment is a recurring cost. They are running on no-profit basis. We do not subsidise the foodstuff which is made there—tea, coffee. This is run on no-profit no-loss basis by the canteen committee. Electricity the water are also given free. Establishment is free."

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

2.149 From the replies furnished by the Ministry of Railways the Committee note that the Indian Railways, being the largest single employer in the country, gives due importance to staff welfare measures. The welfare concept in Indian Railways is defined to cover such services, facilities and amenities as adequate canteens, rest and recreational facilities arrangement for travel to and from work health services, residential accommodation and such other facilities as contribute to improve the working conditions in the Indian Railways. These measures help in implementing the human resource development programmes on the Railways in motivating, retaining and building up a committee and loyal work force.

2.150 However, the Committee find that the task of resolving problems relating to welfare of staff etc. has been entrusted to the officials of the Personnel Department working at various levels. At divisional and zonal levels of the Railways, there are designated Welfare Officers who are assisted by Welfare Inspectors to deal with matters relating to staff welfare. In addition, the various welfare activities are also monitored by specific Committees consisting of representatives from the recognised unions.

2.151 As the Personnel Officers who are also the incharge of the Welfare Wing generally remain busy in administrative matters and hardly find any time to promote welfare activities. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Welfare Wings should be headed by an independent Welfare Officer who should be entrusted no other work except the welfare activities.

2.152 One of the Welfare activities which calls for the attention of the Committee pertains to the appointments on compassionate grounds. The Committee are constrained to find that as many as 7700 cases of compassionate appointments were pending with the Railways as on 31st March, 1993. It was also brought to the notice of the Committee during evidence that the person seeking employment on compassionate grounds has to appear before the Railway Authorities a number of times before he or she is actually given employment. The plea of the Government that "sometimes it so happens that the application form is incomplete and the person is called for further questions" is not acceptable to the Committee. The Committee recommend that as and when an applicant, seeking employment on compassionate grounds, approaches the concerned authorities, they should guide him properly in the first instance itself. The respective zonal authorities should also prepare and print a check-list of all the documents required alongwith the application and that check-list should invariably be given to each person seeking employment on compassionate grounds so that he may be able to submit all the relevant documents in one go.

2.153 One of the difficulties in granting employment to the next of kith and kin of the deceased employee is reported to be non-availability of suitable vacancies. The Committee desire that as and when any such

occasion arises, Ministry of Railways should allow the respective zonal railways to create supernumerary posts which could be adjusted against the future vacancies.

2.154 The Committee also find that a widow who has minor children, at the time of the death of an employee, has to apply immediately after her ward attains the age of 18 years and in case she does not apply within one year of this date, his/her claim becomes time barred. It is painful for the Committee to note that the number of cases of compassionate appointments rejected on this ground has been as high as 1244 during 1989 to 1991.

2.155 Keeping in view the above facts and hardships faced by so many families of the deceased employees, the committee feel that the present time limit of one year may be increased at least to 3 years. Simultaneously, the Welfare Wing should also maintain a register of all the deceased employees in zonal railways/divisional headquarters indicating the date on which the ward of the deceased employee would attain the age of 18 years and immediately thereafter that wing should write to the widow indicating clearly that in case her child does not apply for a post in the Railways within the stipulated time her case would be treated as time-barred.

2.156 The Committee note that although provision of educational facilities are primarily the responsibility of the State Govts./Ministry of Human Resource Development, Railways have provided educational facilities where such facilities were not in existence or were found inadequate to meet the needs of the railway employees, purely as a measure of staff welfare. As on date 629 educational institutes comprising of a Degree College, Intermediate Colleges and Higher Secondary/High Middle/Primary schools recognised by the respective State Governments/CBSE are being run by the Railways. However, in their Memorandum submitted to the Committee, the NFIR have stated that the "number of primary schools is inadequate and does not cover many areas in the jurisdiction of each zone." As a result, the children of Group 'D' employees, namely Gangmen, are not able to travel long distances for getting primary education. Most of the primary schools run by the Railways do not have adequate furniture for the teaching staff and also for the students. The Committee are unhappy to observe that whenever the subject of education is discussed in the scheduled negotiation meetings, the Railway Administration comes with the ready reply that education is the responsibility of the State Governments. Article 45 of the Constitution of India lays down that the State shall endeavour to provide for free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years, keeping in view the above principle, as enunciated in the Constitution, the Committee feel that the education policy of the Ministry of Railways should be reviewed and re-oriented suiting the present day sentiments and requirements of the children of the Railway employees. As the Railwaymen, particularly the Gangmen and other Group 'D' employees, are scattered all over the country

and most of them are working in remote areas where facilities for the education of their children are not available, the Committee recommend that Ministry of Railways should encourage the Mahila Samities by providing adequate funds to take the initiative in establishing and running the primary schools so that the children of Railway employees get elementary education at least. Simultaneously, the Railway Administration should also ensure to get these children admitted in State-run schools. Appropriate grants (recurring & non-recurring) should be given to recognised educational Institutions in Railway Colonies or in the vicinity of Railway Colonies where railwaymen's wards are admitted.

2.157 The Committee note that the Railways have also set up Kendriya Vidyalayas at places where there is a concentration of transferable railway employees and where adequate educational facilities are not available. There are at present 66 Kendriya Vidyalayas functioning in railway colonies, of which 6 are in the Project Sector and the remaining are in Civil sector. In Civil Sector schools, priority in admission is given to children of transferable Central Government employees whereas in Project Sector schools priority in admission is given to children of the employees of the unit concerned which is meeting all the expenditure. For example during their tour to Bhubaneswar the employees of Khurda Division of South-Eastern Railway informed the committee that most of the employees remain at one place of posting and as such the rules of the Kendriya Vidyalayas may be so amended as to get their wards admitted in the Kendriya Vidyalayas. During evidence the Member (Staff), Railway Board, informed the Committee that they have taken up the matter with the Education Ministry to treat the Kendriya Vidyalayas located in production units in a different manner and to give a different formula of admission to the schools so that their children get a much higher percentage of admission. The Committee would like the Railways to pursue the matter and also desire that the Ministry of Education should accede to the request made by the Ministry of Railways.

2.158 Normally, the Railways provide subsidised hostels in such places where educational facilities are inadequate and employees are at one place and there is a need to put the children in hostel. The Indian Railways have provided 20 hostels in 59 divisions for the wards of railway employees. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to examine the feasibility of setting up of more subsidised hostels, particularly in those divisions where this facility is not available.

2.159 The Committee find that the Railways have established Staff Benefit Fund which provides assistance to employees and their dependents for their education, relief during times of distress including sickness, development of sports and scouts activities, etc. Railways make a contribution of Rs. 14.50 per capita to the Fund and the Railway Employees do not have to make any contribution to this Fund. From the information furnished to the Committee they find that the per capita rate of Rs. 14.50 have already been enhanced

to Rs. 20.00 per capita since 1993-94. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the rate should be reviewed annually and enhanced/adjusted according to the rate of inflation from year to year basis.

2.160 The Committee further note that the cases received from the Railways for grant of assistance from Railway Minister's Welfare & Relief Fund are considered by a Managing Committee constituted for the purpose and the amounts sanctioned from the fund are disbursed to the concerned employees through zonal Railways. The Committee desires that elected representatives from the two federations are also included in the Managing Committee.

2.161 Housing is a basic necessity of an individual; more-so-for a Government Servant with transfer liabilities. From the statistics provided by the Ministry, the Committee find the state of Affairs in Railways in regard to this very important component of their service package to their employees is quite distressing. On an average, there is hardly 40 per cent satisfaction limit, the highest satisfaction level of 63 per cent being in the North-East Frontier Railway and with Southern Railway lagging far behind, with hardly 28 per cent satisfaction limit. What is more discouraging is the fact that the satisfaction level, which was 37.4 percent in 1972-73, rose to 40 percent now, showing an increase of only 2½ percent in two decades. Even in an overall perspective, if one compares the satisfaction level of the Central Government employees *vis-a-vis* the general pool accommodation, which is more than 60 percent, the Railway employees appear to be at a disadvantageous position. The Ministry's contention that they have provided increased outlays for housing purposes over successive plans is also not very convincing. An increase in the annual average expenditure upto Rs. 26.3 crores during the Seventh Plan from Rs. 12.1 crores of the Sixth Plan is to be viewed in the light of the inflationary trends which almost neutralised the said increase.

2.162 During their visit to various Railway Colonies the Committee found that the condition of houses, roads, sewerage, water supply etc. was very bad. At places the overhead water tanks were leaking; water was coming out of sewer lines; and there was no proper maintenance of houses allotted to Class III & IV categories of employees. The Committee, therefore, feel that adequate attention should be paid to all the above problems faced by the Railway employees.

2.163 On top of the non-achievements of the Ministry in the matter of construction of new residential units comes the fact that about 70,000 quarters, that is, almost ten percent of their existing number, are sub-standard and can be used only after basic amenities like kitchen and toilet are provided in them. While resource constraints can be advanced as a reason for not going ahead with new constructions, the Committee fail to understand as to why this substantial number of sub-standard units cannot be made habitable by the Ministry with smaller investments. The

Committee, therefore, recommend that the Railways should not even wait for their planned target of removing these deficiencies by the end of the Eighth Plan but to make these sub-standard units habitable by the end of 1995-96, so that at least 70,000 more employees are accommodated at one go and at nominal cost. Besides, action should be initiated without any further delay to replace the 31,000 quarters which have been declared too old for any cost-effective repair. This will not only save the railway from acquiring and identifying new pieces of land, which in itself is a lengthy procedure, but will also help in overcoming the botheration of creating any fresh infrastructure.

2.164 Time and again, the Ministry has cited resource constraint as the main reason for their non-achievements in the housing sector. The Committee think that in the current times when liberal housing finance and other such facilities are being encouraged by the Government of India, through its several financial institutions and other agencies, Railways should explore the possibilities of getting their housing projects financed by such agencies like HUDCO, LIC etc., which provide long-term loans at reasonable rates of interest.

2.165 The Committee have been apprised that hardly 50 percent of the gangmen and other categories of the Railwaymen, who, by the nature of their duties, are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the Indian Railways, are provided with residential accommodation of some sort by the Railways. They are compelled to live in tents, barracks, wagon bodies, sleeper huts and mud huts. As a result of the representations by one of the Unions of the Railways, the Railway Board has issued instructions that the staff living in sleeper huts, tents, barracks and wagon bogies should be granted full house rent allowance. However, a similar demand for gangmen and gatemen living in huts and mud huts is still pending. The Committee desire that a favourable decision be taken in this regard without any further delay.

2.166 The Committee are perturbed to note that there are about 1.85 lakh encroachments in railway colonies, covering over 0.2 lakh hectares of land. No serious efforts seem to have been contemplated by the Ministry to reclaim the encroached land. The Committee recommend that the Ministry should take up the matter seriously with the concerned State Governments to get the vacant possession of the railway land expeditiously and wherever feasible use the same for construction of additional staff quarters for railways employees.

2.167 The Committee note that as of date the Railways' medicare system comprises 114 adequately staffed hospital and 645 Health Units which provide a comprehensive range of medical facilities to the Railway employees. Besides, while common speciality services are available in Divisional and Zonal Hospitals, super-specialist services are also available in eight of the Hospitals.

2.168 Despite this vast paraphernalia existing with the Railways, the Committee has received several complaints regarding the shortcomings in the medicare facilities being provided by the Railways to its employees. While there is no dearth of facilities, apparatus, equipment, etc., there is shortage of doctors and medicines. Evidently, the machinery and apparatus cannot substitute for doctors and medicines. This gives rise to a feeling that the sincere efforts of Railways in providing medicare to their employees are being negated by the insufficiency of doctors and medicines. It is, therefore, but imperative that necessary steps be taken immediately in this direction. The Ministry has submitted before the Committee that the shortage of doctors is due to the fact that though a big panel of 500 doctors is selected through the UPSC, most of them are reluctant to join the Railway service. The problem does not end here. Even the doctors who join leave the service once they get a better posting. To combat this problem the Railways are entering into contracts with locally available doctors, whom they are offering very good remuneration. The Committee think that this arrangement with private doctors cannot be a reliable and permanent solution and is, therefore, no substitute to Railway's own doctors. They therefore, recommend that in order to attract medical talent to Railway service necessary provisions may be made for grant of special pays/emoluments, etc., to the doctors who are posted to field/hard/remote areas. The Committee think that this would go a long way in obtaining the desired results. They would like to know the outcome of the efforts made in this regard.

2.169 The Committee have been informed by one of the Federations of the Railways that the medicare facilities for road-side staff and families are not at all satisfactory. There is a system of having a line doctor covering a distance of 100 to 120 kms. from morning till evening by a passenger train dispensing medicines enroute at every stoppage. The Committee can well envisage the scene being enacted during such 'whirlwind medical tours' where a doctor gets hardly one or two minutes to not only diagnose the ailments of his patients but also to dispense medicines before his train 'whistles away' to the next destination. By having such an impractical system the Railways instead of taking care of the health requirements of the employees and being acknowledged as benevolent employer only invites ridicule. The Committee, therefore, desire that the present system must be dispensed with immediately and serious thought must be given to either introducing special medical vans on Railways for this purpose or road ambulances which can cover a fixed area during the course of the day.

2.170 The Committee note that 377 Handicraft Centres having a Membership of 29429 are being run with assistance from the Staff Benefit Fund for training wives and children of the Railway employees in useful crafts. These Centres mainly undertake stitching of uniforms for the railway employees, railway school children, railway hospitals etc. and the rates for stitching are fixed by a Committee duly constituted for the purpose.

Assistance of the local Railway Women's Organisation is also taken in maintaining these Centres. From the data supplied to the Committee it is surprising to note that the Ministry of Railways were not able to give the details of the expenditure incurred on Handicraft Centres in Eastern, North-Eastern, South-Eastern and Western Railways. What is more disturbing is the fact that the Ministry of Railways have not been able to compute the average monthly income of the women working in the Handicraft Centres. The Committee desire that proper attention should be given to these Handicraft Centres so that the family Members of railway employees can utilise their spare time in useful and profitable activities.

2.171 The Committee note that the recognised Mahila Samities run Handicraft Centres, schools, creches, etc. Under the aegis of these Samities some of the Handicraft Centres have undertaken various other activities like making pickles, candles, chalk-pieces, file covers, envelopes etc. for increasing their earnings. During their tours to various places, the Committee had found that the premises allotted to Mahila Samities were in a very bad shape. At places there was no light, sewing machines were not in a working condition, there was no provision for ventilation, drinking water and toilet facilities etc. The Ministry of Railways were candid in admitting the fact "that the Mahila Samities are not equipped with the skill and machinery for stitching uniforms on large scale". Since these Samities are discharging useful function the Committee desire that the Railways should encourage them by providing proper accommodation, light and other basic facilities. The Members of these Samities should also be imparted proper training on the lines of Womens' Polytechnics so that the Members of these Mahila Samities could become self-supporting.

2.172 The Committee note that the policies with regard to giving appointments/incentives to sportsmen are reframed from time to time according to the sports scenario prevailing in the country. There is constant interaction and coordination with the Sports Authority of India and other Sports Control Boards to evolve a concerted approach for overall development of sports in the Railways. The Railway Sports Control Board is affiliated to different Sports Federations and is represented on their executive councils. Although Railways have made arrangements for training/coaching of promising wards of the railway employees yet the NFIR, in their Memorandum submitted to the Committee, have stated that the existing facilities were not adequate for giving training to the youngsters in certain streams like hockey and football. They have also complained that the scouts and guides quota for filling up Group 'C' & 'D' vacancies has recently been abandoned. The Committee recommend that the Railways should make adequate arrangements for training/coaching of promising wards of Railway employees and necessary facilities such as qualified coaches in selected disciplines, assistance for equipments, training/exposure abroad to promising youngsters etc. should also be provided to them. They also desire that sports quota and quota for scouts

and guides and Group 'C' and 'D' vacancies should also be restored with immediate effect.

2.173 The Committee find that the Railways have Holiday Homes at 41 centres in the country. In addition to these Holiday Homes, Railways have also provided Convalescent Homes at different places. The Committee desire that the adequacy of Holiday and Convalescent Homes be reviewed keeping in view the large number of Railway employees who are entitled to avail of this facility.

2.174 The Committee note that Railways are providing two types of Canteens—Statutory and Non-Statutory. The statutory canteens are to be set up in establishments which are covered by the Factories Act, 1948 and employ more than 250 workers, whereas non-statutory canteens are set up as a welfare measure, where the strength of staff is 100 or more. At present, the Railways have been running 267 Staff Canteens including 94 Statutory Canteens. These Canteens are run on 'non-loss no-profit' basis and the Advisory Committees consisting of Staff representatives oversee the working of the Canteens. The Staff working in these Canteens has been treated as Railway employees and *ipso facto* their wages are being borne by Railway Administration.

2.175 The facilities at the Staff Canteens are also not adequate. For instance, during their Study Tour to Bhubaneshwar, the Committee found that the Canteen in Carriage Repair Workshop at Mancheswar was not upto the mark and the eatables supplied often remained inadequate. In this connection, the Railway Board have informed the Committee that they have augmented the existing strength of canteen staff to enable them to meet the increasing demands for meals etc. and that it is proposed to make this canteen a 'model canteen' in the Railways. The Committee would like to know the criteria fixed for converting a canteen into a model canteen. They may also be informed as to how many other canteens are also likely to be converted into model canteens in the entire Railways.

NEW DELHI;
August 23, 1994

Bhadra 1, 1916 (S)

M. BAGA REDDY
Chairman
Railway Convention Committee.

A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX I
(Vide para 1.13)

**ISSUES ADJUDICATED BY THE RAILWAY LABOUR
TRIBUNALS**

First *ad hoc* Tribunal, 1953, headed by Shri Sankar Saran, Former Judge, Allahabad High Court.

- (i) The redistribution of grades for various categories of staff, decided upon as a result of the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee, should be reviewed.
- (ii) The revised scales of pay introduced for certain categories of staff in replacement of the prescribed scales of pay, originally allotted to these categories should apply with retrospective effect from 1st January, 1947 and arrears should be paid accordingly.
- (iii) The Second proviso to Rule 203-R of the State Railway Estt. Code, Vol. I, as modified by the orders of August 21, 1951 should be revised.
- (iv) The officiating pay should be admissible to staff working in the higher grades without the imposition of any minimum time-limit as to the duration of the period of working in the higher grades.
- (v) The orders that in workshops, leave with or without allowances, shall not be far less than half a day, should be reviewed.

Demands at S. Nos. (ii) to (iv) were settled by mutual agreement between Rly. Board and National Federation of Indian Railwaymen. The recommendations made by the Tribunal in respect of Items (i) and (v) were accepted by the Govt.

**RAILWAY LABOUR TRIBUNAL, 1969, HEADED BY SHRI
N.M. MIABHOY, RETIRED CHIEF JUSTICE, HIGH COURT OF
GUJARAT.**

Demands referred for adjudication

Decision taken

- (i) Night duty Allowance should be calculated at $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the normal rate of pay to all employees performing duty at night, irrespective of their classification under Hours of Employment, Regulations.

Demands referred for adjudication**Decision taken****(ii) In respect of workshop staff:**

(a) all vacancies, which occurred since the introduction of the incentive scheme should be filled up.

(b) proper proportion of skilled, semi skilled and unskilled staff should be maintained and other measures taken to ensure adequate scope for promotion to the semi-skilled and unskilled staff.

(c) the posts of supervisory staff in the mechanical workshops should be redistributed amongst various grades in conformity with their responsibilities and adequate channel of promotion should be provided for them.

(iii) Casual labour on the Railways should be paid wages at the rate of 1/30th of the minimum of the time-scale plus appropriate Dearness Allowance applicable to the corresponding categories of staff in regular employment in the Railways.

(iv) The disparity between the hours of work and annual gazetted holidays at present prescribed for clerks at railway stations, sheds and depots on the one hand and those prescribed for clerks in administrative offices on the other should be removed by granting the former the privileges available to the latter. If this is not possible, the former should be monetarily compensated for extra hours and days of work done by them.

(v) The present Hours of Employment Regulations which govern hours of work periodic rest and overtime in respect of railway staff, other than those employed in Workshops, falling under the definition "Factories" in the Factories Act, should be completely reviewed.

The Government accepted the recommendations made by the Railway Labour Tribunal, 1969 in toto.

Demands referred for adjudication

- (vi) All gangmen in the Civil Engineering Department of the Railways should be granted an Arduous Duty Allowance of Rs. 3/- per month.
- (vii) The scale of pay of gangmates in the Civil Engineering Department of the Railways should be raised to the skilled grade. Along with this, the scale of pay of keymen and head trolley men of the Civil Engineering Department should also be suitably enhanced.
- (viii) The scale of pay of all running staff should be enhanced.

Decision taken

THIRD AD-HOC TRIBUNAL, 1971, HEADED BY SHRI N.M. MIABHOY, RETIRED CHIEF JUSTICE, HIGH COURT OF GUJARAT

- (i) All categories of staff, including running staff who are disqualified for their duties at the prescribed periodical medical examinations or other medical examinations should be provided alternative appointments with all their emoluments, *i.e.*, pay, dearness allowance, and running allowance protected. Their promotion prospects should also be ensured.
- (ii) The pattern of authorised scales of pay was generally based on the combination of the prescribed scales with the appropriate dearness allowance. In respect of running staff while dearness allowance appropriate to the scales was added to the prescribed scales of the dearness allowance which was legitimately due on pay plus running allowance was not taken into account. Therefore, the authorised scales of running staff should be so changed as to reflect the combination of prescribed scales of pay and the dearness allowance due on pay plus running allowance.
- (iii) The break in service in the case of social guides on the ex-E.P. railway who were absorbed in other categories for which they were considered suitable after a short break should be condoned for all purposes.

The demands at S. Nos. (ii) & (iv) were rejected by the Tribunal. The recommendations made by the Tribunal in respect of the remaining three demands were accepted by the Govt.

Demands referred for adjudication**Decision taken**

- (iv) On account of the contraction of cadres after the introduction of the incentive scheme in workshops, incentive schemes in workshops, promotion prospects of workshop staff has been adversely affected. Therefore, the pre-existing promotional prospects must be preserved by retaining the pre-existing number of higher grade posts through a scheme similar to the "shadow" posts scheme which has been introduced in respect of units affected by computerisation.
- (v) The number of posts of Mistries in workshops and loco sheds is inadequate. The number of Mistries in the workshops should be so fixed that the men supervised by each Mistry does not exceed 10, suitable modification in the existing yardsticks in respect of loco sheds is also required.

APPENDIX II
(Vide para 1.51)

ISSUES NEGOTIATED IN THE MEETINGS OF THE STAFF COUNCILS WITH THE RAILWAY BOARD DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS

S. No	Brief Description of Demand	Decision
1.	Revision of rate of incentive bonus.	Accepted
2.	Prompt payment of staff hurt on duty with regular salary bills.	Accepted
3.	Grant of seniority to staff classified as Skilled <i>w.e.f.</i> 1.8.78	Not accepted
4.	Supply of protective clothing to F.L. Drivers and other staff.	Accepted
5.	Payment of National Holiday Allowance and coverage of staff under Factory Act.	Not accepted
6.	Allotment of separate reservation quota for GM/DLW in certain trains at Varanasi	Not accepted
7.	Creation of Unit Purchase Cell in DLW.	Accepted
8.	Payment of incentive increments on passing App. II & III examinations.	Accepted
9.	Creation of a post of Principal Office Superintendent.	Not accepted
10.	Supply of terrycot uniforms to Peons.	
11.	Creation of posts of Pharmacist-cum-Storekeeper.	Accepted
12.	Counting of service in lower grades for allotment of TGT Selection Grade.	Accepted
13.	Stepping up of pay of senior staff.	Accepted
14.	Payment of incentive bonus from 1.1.85.	Partially accepted
15.	Benefit of pay fixation in case of B.T. Oilers when promoted as Skilled.	Partially accepted
16.	Uniformity in payment of compensation under Workmen's Compensation Act.	Not accepted
17.	Merger of Chargeman A&B as Chargeman under Factories Act to make them eligible for 100% incentive Bonus and O.T. at double rate.	Not accepted
18.	Classification of Shop Supdts. in Gr. 2000-3200 as Group B and creation of a Class II post for Time Keeping Staff.	Not accepted
19.	Creation of additional posts in Electrical and Civil Engg. Department.	Partially accepted

S. No	Brief Description of Demand	Decision
20.	Counting of Special pay to staff of stores Department/Accounts Department	Not accepted
21.	Upgradation of Class IV posts.	Not accepted
22.	Creation of additional posts of paramedical staff in DLW Hospital.	Partially accepted
23.	Creation of additional posts of staff at ICF Hospital.	Partially accepted
24.	Honorary to be paid to Supervisory Staff-Shop Supdts. and Deputy Shop Supdts.	Not accepted
25.	Establishment of Railway school in ICF.	Partially accepted
26.	Memorandum of Grievances regarding Demerger and Promotional Examination to OS Gr. II.	Partially accepted
27.	Consideration of educated Class IV staff of all Deptts. for absorption as Clerks on promotion in Ministerial Section.	Partially accepted
28.	Special Pay to eligible PCO Staff	Partially accepted

APPENDIX III

(Vide para 1.67)

STATEMENT SHOWING NUMBER OF GROUP 'B' OFFICERS INDUCTED INTO GROUP 'A'/JUNIOR SCALE OF VARIOUS ORGANISED SERVICES DURING THE CALENDER YEARS 1988 TO 1993.

Deptt	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993 (upto March' 93)
IRSE	29	1	67	40	2	225
IRSME	31	11	40	75	4	53
IRSEE	—	73	19	2	91	—
IRSSE	2	60	7	18	134	2
IRSS	2	—	39	14	28	—
IRTS	—	21	56	29	111	3
IRAS	—	17	29	12	20	2
IRPS	10	20	1	9	70	5
Total	74	203	258	199	460	290

During the year 1992, there was an appreciable increase in the number of Group 'B' Officers inducted into Group 'A' and during the first three months of the current year 1993, as many as 290 Officers have been inducted to Group 'A'. The situation is likely to improve further when the pending DPCs are held in the near future. To remove stagnation, *ad hoc* increase in induction have been made.

APPENDIX IV
(Vide para 2.19)

STAFF QUARTERS

Year-wise expenditure from the beginning of the Sixth Five Year Plan.

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(Figurers in crore of Rs.)

Year	Actual Expenditure	Plan Period	Total Exp. during the plan	Average Exp. per year
1980-81	10.24	} VI Plan (5 years) 1980-85	60.32	12.10
1981-82	10.96			
1982-83	9.76			
1983-84	13.14			
1984-85	16.42			
1985-86	16.26	} VII Plan (5 Years) 1985-90	131.28	26.26
1986-87	24.74			
1987-88	29.70			
1988-89	26.45			
1989-90	34.13			
1990-91	32.53	} VIII Plan		
1991-92	33.30			
1992-93	25.03			
1993-94	(B.E.) 27.53 (B.E.)			

Note: B.E.: Budget Estimate

APPENDIX V

(Vide para 2.37)

List of Important Water Supply, Sanitation and other works in progress in 1993-94

(Fig. in thousand of Rs.)

S. No.	Particulars	Anticipated Cost
1.	Jhansi—Laying of pipe line for Baut Ghat to Filter House.	16500
2.	Lilluah—Water treatment plant.	14783
3.	Dhanbad—Additional filtration plant 20,000 GPH including pipe line and pump house.	5946
4.	One fan each in 6600 units of type-I quarters on S.E. Railway	8250
5.	One fan in each of 6600 units of type-I quarters.	9829
6.	Improvement in drainage system.	11167

APPENDIX VI
STATEMENT SHOWING RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

Sl. No.	Para No.	Recommendations/Conclusions
1.	2	3
1	1.75	<p>From the history of evolution of Trade Unions in the Indian Railways, the Committee note that the Railway companies provided a natural platform for the labour movement and as early as in 1897, an 'Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma', came up as a sequel to a strike by the guards of that Company. Between 1897 and 1919, a large number of unions sprang up and many of them cut across staff categories and, therefore, laid the framework of the broad labour fronts. These unions were functioning in isolation and there was a growing consciousness that the labour was not unified enough to negotiate from a position of strength. However, in 1925, all the unions came together to form All India Railwaymen's Federation (AIRF), which continues to exist even today.</p>
2.	1.76	<p>Indian National Railway Workers' Federation (INRWF) was formed in 1947 and it was granted facilities for consultation in December, 1949. In 1952 both the federations were merged and this resulted in the emergence of a single federation for labour on the Railways which called itself the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR). This was perhaps the most noteworthy feature in the Indian Railways' labour movement. But unfortunately, during the subsequent years there came a phase of deterioration in the labour movement, thereby depriving the Railway workers of having a unified labour representation. A maturity in approach was noticed subsequently during the first half of 1950s, but it was shortlived. In 1955, some former members of the AIRF held a separate convention. That resulted in the revival of AIRF in August, 1957. Though considerable efforts were made by the then Railway Ministers in 1957 and in 1973-74 to unite both the recognised Railway Federations viz. AIRF</p>

1.	2	3
		& NFIR but amalgamation could not materialise.
3.	1.77	The Committee strongly feel that in the Indian Railways which have the most vital infrastructural system in the country with a work force of nearly 16 lakhs and with multiplicity of about 740 categories, the principle of 'one union for on industry' is very much desirable.
4.	1.78	A peculiar phenomenon which has come to the notice of the Committee is dual membership. During evidence, the presidents of both the federations admitted that the concept of dual membership very much existed in the system.
5.	1.79	The Committee feel that apart from giving a wrong signal about the actual membership of each of the federations, the Railwaymen are also put to physical harassment at the time of collection of Membership fee.
6.	1.80	The Committee, therefore, recommend that for achieving the principle of single union in the Indian Railways, the Railway Board should <i>de-novo</i> examine the norms for recognition of unions. Though both the federations are in favour of introducing a system of secret ballot for the Railwaymen to choose one of the two existing federations, the Committee feel that both these federations should be persuaded to be amalgamated under one banner. In fact the initiative for a single union must come from the two federations. The Ministry could start a dialogue with the Corporate Enterprise Group (CEG) for materialising the concept of one union for one industry. The Committee suggest that the membership of the new federation must represent all classes of Railwaymen.
7.	1.81	The Committee further note that since early 1970s there has been a rise in category-wise unions and attempt is being made to form a third federation by bringing together all these unrecognised category-wise unions. The Railway Board has stated that they do not hold dialogue with these unions but accept their Memoranda and redress their grievances. The Committee feel that for an industry with 740

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| | | <p>categories of workers performing diverse functions ranging from engineering, production, medical, catering, tourism, transportation etc., recognition of such sectional unions is not at all in their interest. The Committee observe that mushrooming of category-wise unions reflects a clear failure both on the part of the Federations and the Management. Perhaps, these categories did not have enough membership in either of the two federations and the genuine demands of these workers seemed to have been over-looked both by the federations and the Management.</p> |
| 8. | 1.82 | <p>The Committee, therefore, recommend that category-wise Unions should not have a legitimate place in the Railways' collective bargaining system, as this will lead to serious problems in the administration, thereby defeating the very concept of collective bargaining. The Committee hopes that the federations will adequately reflect the interest of the category employees thereby rendering the very basis of category-wise unions redundant.</p> |
| 9. | 1.83 | <p>The Committee have been informed that staff councils exist in Production Units to look after the welfare of the workers there and that a scheme of productivity-linked-incentive exists in the Railways whereby the staff of a Production Unit is entitled for incentive when the production exceeds the target. But no such scheme exists in the new Production Units like the Wheel & Axle Plant, Bangalore, the Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala and the Diesel Component Works, Patiala. During non-official evidence of the two National Federations, the Union Leaders expressed apprehensions that the Administration was either trying to do away with the scheme or diluting the same. The Committee think that denial of such incentive scheme to employees of new production Units is either in the interest of Production Units nor in the interest of Railway Industry as a whole.</p> |
| 10. | 1.84 | <p>The problems of the staff of the Production Units are because of Railway Ministry's policy not to recognise the unions of the two recognised</p> |

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Federations in the Production Units. It is observed that the Staff Councils were abolished on introduction of Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) in all Departments and the two recognised Railway federations are sole representatives of the Railwaymen at the National and Departmental levels. Therefore, continuance of the Staff Council, a legacy of the past, must end, with the recognition of the unions having affiliation to either of the two federations in the Production Units. The Railway Ministry conceded that they have been receiving constructive cooperation from the two recognised federations. Therefore, there is no force in their contention that the recognition of the unions in the Production Units will retard the production in the Production Units.

11. 1.85

Under the present system of collective bargaining in the Indian Railways, Permanent Negotiating Machinery (PNM) exists at three levels *i.e.* Board Level, Zonal Level and Division/Workshop level with a provision for reference of cases to a tribunal. Similarly, Joint Consultative Machinery (JCM) functions at two level *i.e.*, National level and Departmental level with provision for compulsory arbitration. After reviewing the working of the PNM, the Committee feel that it has not been functioning as efficiently as it was expected to do and often leads to mutual suspicion resulting in acrimony. At lower level, it had been noticed that PNM has become a forum for dealing with individual cases and such cases constitute almost the entire agenda of their meetings. Even at Zonal level, it has been noticed that due to lack of follow-up action, a particular item figures in the agenda more than once. During evidence, the Chairman, Railway Board, had admitted that there are some Zonal Railways which have failed in holding regular PNM meetings. The Committee feel that the Indian Railways should appreciate that merely setting up of such fora for regular dialogue is not the end of their responsibility. Their effective functioning with utmost dedication and commitment is the continuous responsibility of the Ministry. After

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going into the areas of major disputes, the Committee observe that the problems are not of Railways only but of the entire Central Government employees and, hence, they feel that the Ministry of Railways can do away with the present system of duplication of this arrangement. As the sphere of two collective bargaining machineries i.e. PNM and JCM is the same, the system of JCM may be retained. PNM may be substituted by JCM at all the three levels. The Committee hope that this would help labour in the Railways to speak in one voice, thereby reducing the time involved in routine negotiations and provide adequate teeth to the whole process of consultation management. The Committee further recommend that a proper record of cases, grievances, proceedings and action taken thereon may be maintained. Target date for follow-up action may be fixed and action taken notes prepared and circulated to the Unions. It should also be ensured that action taken must be conveyed to the Unions in unambiguous and transparent terms.

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The Committee note that the JCM Scheme provides for reference of unresolved issues/demands to the Board of Arbitration provided these are arbitrable items. The arbitrable items are those relating to pay and allowances, weekly hours of work and leave. The award of the Board of Arbitration is binding on both the sides. The Committee disapprove the present attitude of the Government in delaying implementation of the Arbitration awards under one pretext or the other. They, therefore, recommend that any award given by the Board of Arbitration should invariably be implemented within a period of 3 months.

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In regard to workers' participation in management, the Committee find that neither the Corporate Enterprise Group (now renamed as Group for Participation of Railway Employees in Management—PREM) meetings are held regularly nor any agenda for these meetings is decided by both the management and Unions. Hence, the Committee stress the need to activate PREM. They, therefore,

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		<p>recommend that if the Unions do not come forward with agenda for discussion, the Railway management should prepare and circulate the agenda and give notice for the meeting as per rule. The Committee appreciate that Ministry of Railways have already moved in this direction and taken up some important items for dialogue such as the issue of re-deployment of surplus staff after phasing out of steam locomotives and issue of gauge conversion etc. in PREM.</p>
	1.88	<p>The Committee are of the firm view that both Unions and management should show adequate commitment and must come up with such important items which have a direct bearing on the working of Indian Railways. For making this forum more meaningful, the Committee suggest that the issue of privatisation and one Union for one Industry should also be discussed in PREM. Incidentally, there has been no meeting of the 'PREM' since an announcement was made about this in February, 1994.</p>
14.	1.89	<p>From the Memorandum and the evidence of the Indian Railway Promotee Officers' Federation, the Committee find that a two-fold classification of gazetted cadre exists in the Railways. The Group 'B' Officers, though they perform the same duties, shoulder the same responsibilities and exercise the same powers as that of Group 'A' Officers, are granted a lower-grade pay scale of Rs. 2000-3500, while the Group 'A' Officers are paid a higher-scale of Rs. 2200-4000. The Committee further note that the First Pay Commission recommended abolition of two-fold classification in the departments where differentiation between the two classes was not necessary or possible either because of the mode of recruitment or because of the difficulty of distinguishing between the importance and responsibility of the duties respectively performed by Class I and Class II Officers and two groups treated as one gazetted service. But this recommendation was not accepted by the Government and this issue of Railway Gazetted Services was not examined by the subsequent Pay Commissions. Though, during evidence, the Chairman, Railway Board, had assured</p>

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the Committee that the Board was in the process of preparing papers for putting it before the Cabinet, the Committee strongly recommend that this two-fold classification should be done away with. However, till a final decision is taken by the Ministry of Railway on the abolition of the two-fold classification, the Group 'B' Officers of Indian Railways should be granted the scale of Rs. 2200-4000.

15. 1.90

The Committee note that though the Group 'B' Officers are physically available and working in Jr. Scale/Sr. Scale of Group 'A' posts, they are not being inducted into Group 'A' as per their own quota of 40% (now 50%) at the appropriate time i.e. after 3 years as laid down in the rule No. 209 (b) of Indian Railways Establishment Code. Further, an inordinate delay of 3 to 4 years takes place in the induction of Group 'B' Officers into Group 'A'. The Committee are of the opinion that if the Group 'B' Officers are inducted into Group 'A' based on the cadre and not on the vacancies, the legitimate representation of Group 'B' in Group 'A' will be ensured and the grievances of Group 'B' Officers regarding low percentage in Group 'A' will be mitigated. In this connection, the Committee learn that even the Fourth Pay Commission had recommended on similar lines.

16. 1.91

With regard to fixation of pay, the Committee regret to note that while a Group 'A' direct recruit is granted higher scale of pay in the Assistant Officer Cadre and is given a further benefit of Rs. 600/- or more on his promotion to Senior Scale, a Group 'B' Officer holding the same post of Assistant Officer with long years of experience to his credit, gets Rs. 125 only on promotion to Senior Scale. The Committee find that the system of fixing up pay of Assistant Officers on their promotion to senior scale was being done under a special fixation formula based on 'Concordance Table' from time immemorial. Even the Third Pay Commission, while appreciating the rationale behind the special fixation formula in certain organised services like Railways etc., have recommended extension of such special

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fixation formula to other organisations also. Now, the Committee learn that though the Fourth Pay Commission have not mentioned about the Concordance table, the Railway Board have withdrawn this benefit on the plea that the Fourth Pay Commission had recommended the same. Further, it has come to the notice of the Committee that some categories of Officers have represented to the Pay Commission that the benefit of promotion to them is inadequate under FR 22(A) and, accordingly, the Pay Commission recommended that the formula of fixation of pay under FR 22(C) may uniformly apply in such cases also. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Concordance table, which was in vogue for decades and withstood the test of the time, should be restored.

17.

1.92

With regard to RDSO and other miscellaneous services, the Committee recommend that the Ministry of Railways being a model employer, should bring these unorganised services at par with the Zonal Railways' gazetted service and grant them similar facilities of promotion, scale of pay and other benefits.

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From the evidence of Railway Board Secretariat Service (RBSS) Association, the Committee note that unlike the two Railway Officers' Federation, the Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association (RBMSA) and RBSS Class I & II Officers Association, do not have the privilege of periodical dialogue with Railway Board. However, they have been provided a forum to meet the management at the level of Secretary, Railway Board. As most of the issues/matters are decided at the Board's level, the Committee feel that the RBSS Associations should also be provided a forum at the Board's level with a provision for holding meetings/dialogue wherever necessary but atleast twice a year. This will create a healthy climate of industrial relations at the apex body of the Railways.

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1.94

The Committee recommend that the Railways being a techno-commercial organisation, the RBSS staff may be exposed to some field training to have

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| | | some basic knowledge about the working in the Railways. |
| 20. | 1.95 | The Committee note that the Railway Board Secretariat Staff are entitled to CGHS facility. However, Railway Board Ministerial Staff Association have demanded that the Railway Board Staff should be allowed to avail of railway medical facilities at the places where CGHS facilities were not available. In this connection, the Member (Staff) stated, during evidence, that 'it is a problem which will have some kind of repercussion. A time may come when everybody would like to go to the nearest hospital. We will consult the Health Ministry'. The Committee recommend that the staff of the Railway Board be given a chance to opt for either CGHS or Railway Hospital facilities. |
| 21. | 1.96 | The Committee recommend that the Indian Railways being the biggest industry of the country, employing largest number of employees in a single unit, should have certain amount of autonomy to settle the problems and grievances of employees, without any reference to the Ministry of Finance and Department of Personnel. The Railway Board is a Statutory Body with a Financial Commissioner holding the rank of Finance Secretary and Member Staff with the rank of Secretary, Services, and, therefore, the recommendation made should be accepted by the Government. |
| 22. | 2.149 | From the replies furnished by the Ministry of Railways the Committee note that the Indian Railways, being the largest single employer in the country, gives due importance to staff welfare measures. The welfare concept in Indian Railways is defined to cover such services, facilities and amenities as adequate canteens, rest and recreational facilities, arrangement for travel to and from work health services, residential accommodation and such other facilities as contribute to improve the working conditions in the Indian Railways. These measures help in implementing the human resource development programmes on the Railways in motivating, retaining and building up a committed |

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		and loyal work force.
23.	2.150	However, the Committee find that the task of resolving problems relating to welfare of staff etc. has been entrusted to the officials of the Personnel Department working at various levels. At divisional and zonal levels of the Railways, there are designated Welfare Officers who are assisted by Welfare Inspectors to deal with matters relating to staff welfare. In addition, the various welfare activities are also monitored by specific Committees consisting of representatives from the recognised unions.
24.	2.151	As the Personnel Officers who are also the incharge of the Welfare Wing generally remain busy in administrative matters and hardly find any time to promote welfare activities. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Welfare Wings should be headed by an independent Welfare Officer who should be entrusted no other work except the welfare activities.
25.	1.52	One of the welfare activities which calls for the attention of the Committee pertains to the appointments on compassionate grounds. The Committee are constrained to find that as many as 7700 cases of compassionate appointments were pending with the Railways as on 31st March, 1993. It was also brought to the notice of the Committee during evidence that the person seeking employment on compassionate grounds has to appear before the Railway Authorities a number of times before he or she is actually given employment. The plea of the Government that "sometimes it so happens that the application form is incomplete and the person is called for further questions" is not acceptable to the Committee. The Committee recommend that as and when an applicant, seeking employment on compassionate grounds, approaches the concerned authorities, they should guide him properly in the first instance itself. The respective zonal authorities should also prepare and print a check-list of all the documents required alongwith the application and that check-list should invariably be given to each person seeking employment on compassionate

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		grounds so that he may be able to submit all the relevant documents in one go.
26.	2.153	One of the difficulties in granting employment to the next of kith and kin of the deceased employee is reported to be non-availability of suitable vacancies. The Committee desire that as and when any such occasion arises, Ministry of Railways should allow the respective zonal railways to create supernumerary posts which could be adjusted against the future vacancies.
27.	2.154	The Committee also find that a widow who has minor children, at the time of the death of an employee, has to apply immediately after her ward attains the age of 18 years and in case she does not apply within one year of this date, his/her claim becomes time barred. It is painful for the Committee to note that the number of cases of compassionate appointments rejected on this ground has been as high as 1244 during 1989 to 1991.
28.	2.155	Keeping in view the above facts and hardships faced by so many families of the deceased employees, the Committee feel that the present time limit of one year may be increased atleast to 3 years. Simultaneously, the Welfare Wing should also maintain a register of all the deceased employees in zonal railways/divisional headquarters indicating the date on which the ward of the deceased employee would attain the age of 18 years and immediately thereafter that wing should write to the widow indicating clearly that in case her child does not apply for a post in the Railways within the stipulated time her case would be treated as time-barred.
29.	2.156	The Committee note that although provision of educational facilities are primarily the responsibility of the State Govts./Ministry of Human Resource Development, Railways have provided educational facilities where such facilities were not in existence or were found inadequate to meet the needs of the railway employees, purely as a measure of staff welfare. As on date 629 educational institutes comprising of a Degree College., Inter mediate

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Colleges and Higher Secondary/High Middle/Primary schools recognised by the respective State Governments/CBSE are being run by the Railways. However, in their Memorandum submitted to the Committee, the NFIR have stated that the "number of primary schools is inadequate and does not cover many areas in the jurisdiction of each zone. As a result, the children of Group 'D' employees, namely Gangmen, are not able to travel long distances for getting primary education. Most of the primary schools run by the Railways do not have adequate furniture for the teaching staff and also for the students. The Committee are unhappy to observe that whenever the subject of education is discussed in the scheduled negotiation meetings, the Railway Administration comes with the ready reply that education is the responsibility of the State Governments. Articles 45 of the Constitution of India lays down that the State shall endeavour to provide for free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14 years. Keeping in view the above principle, as enunciated in the Constitution, the Committee feel that the education policy of the Ministry of Railways should be reviewed and re-oriented suiting the present day sentiments and requirements of the children of the Railway employees. As the Railwaymen, particularly the Gangmen and other Group 'D' employees, are scattered all over the country and most of them are working in remote areas where facilities for the education of their children are not available, the Committee recommend that Ministry of Railways should encourage the Mahila Samities by providing adequate funds to take the initiative in establishing and running the primary schools so that the children of Railway employees get elementary education at least. Simultaneously, the Railway Administration should also ensure to get these children admitted in State-run schools. Appropriate grants (recurring & non-recurring) should be given to recognised educational Institutions in Railway Colonies or in the vicinity of Railway Colonies where railwaymen's wards are admitted.

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30. 2.157 The Committee note that the Railway have also set up Kendriya Vidyalayas at places where there is a concentration of transferable railway employees and where adequate educational facilities are not available. There are at present 66 Kendriya Vidyalayas functioning in railway colonies, of which 6 are in the Project Sector and the remaining are in Civil Sector. In Civil Sector schools, priority in admission is given to children of transferable Central Government employees whereas in Project Sector schools, priority in admission is given to children of the employees of the unit concerned which is meeting all the expenditure. For example during their tour to Bhubaneswar the employees of Khurda Division of South-Eastern Railway informed the Committee that most of the employees remain at one place of posting and as such the rules of the Kendriya Vidyalayas may be so amended as to get their wards admitted in the Kendriya Vidyalayas. during evidence the Member (Staff), Railway Board, informed the Committee that they have taken up the matter with the Education Ministry to treat the Kendriya Vidyalayas located in production units in a different manner and to give a different formula of admission to the schools so that their children get a much higher percentage of admission. The Committee would like the Railways to pursue the matter and also desire that the Ministry of Education should accede to the request made by the Ministry of Railways.
31. 2.158 Normally, the Railways provide subsidised hostels in such places where educational facilities are inadequate and employees are at one place and there is a need to put the children in hostel. The Indian Railways have provided 20 hostels in 59 divisions for the wards of railway employees. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to examine the feasibility of setting up of more subsidised hostels, particularly in those divisions where this facility is not available.
32. 2.159 The Committee find that the Railways have established Staff Benefit Fund which provides assistance to employees and their dependents for
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their education, relief during times of distress including sickness, development of sports and scouts activities, etc. Railways make a contribution of Rs.14.50 per capita to the Fund and the Railway Employees do not have to make any contribution to this fund. From the information furnished to the Committee they find that the per capita rate of Rs.14.50 have already been enhanced to Rs.20.00 per capita since 1993-94. the Committee, therefore, recommend that the rate should be reviewed annually and enhanced/adjusted according to the rate of inflation from year to year basis.

33. 2.160

The Committee further note that the cases received from the Railways for grant of assistance from Railway Minister's Welfare & Relief Fund are considered by a Managing Committee constituted for the purpose and the amounts sanctioned from the fund are disbursed to the concerned employees through Zonal Railways. The Committee desires that elected representatives from the two federations are also included in the Managing Committee.

34. 2.161

Housing is a basic necessity of an individual; more-so for a Government Servant with transfer liabilities. From the statistics provided by the Ministry, the Committee find the state of Affairs in Railways in regard to this very important component of their service package to their employees is quite distressing. On an average, there is hardly 40 per cent satisfaction limit, the highest satisfaction level of 63 per cent being in the North-East Frontier Railway and with Southern Railway lagging far behind, with hardly 28 per cent satisfaction limit. What is more discouraging is the fact that the satisfaction level, which was 37.4 per cent in 1972-73, rose to 40 percent now, showing an increase on only 2½ per cent in two decades. Even in an overall perspective, if one compares the satisfaction level of the Central Government employees *vis-a-vis* the general pool accommodation, which is more than 60 per cent, the Railway employees appear to be at a disadvantageous position. The Ministry's contention that they have provided increased outlays for housing purposes over

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- successive plans is also not very convincing. An increase in the annual average expenditure upto Rs. 26.3 crores during the Seventh Plan from Rs.12.1 crores of the Sixth Plan is to be viewed in the light of the inflationary trends which almost neutralised the said increase.
35. 2.162 During their visit to various Railway Colonies the Committee found that the condition of houses, roads, sewerage, water supply etc. was very bad. At places the overhead water tanks were leaking; water was coming out of sewer lines and there was no proper maintenance of houses allotted to Class III & IV categories of employees. The Committee, therefore, feel that adequate attention should be paid to all the above problems faced by the Railway employees.
36. 2.163 On top of the non-achievements of the Ministry in the matter of construction of new residential units comes the fact that about 70,000 quarters, that is, almost ten percent of their existing number, are sub-standard and can be used only after basic amenities like kitchen and toilet are provided in them. While resource constraints can be advanced as a reason for not going ahead with new constructions, the Committee fail to understand as to why this substantial number of sub-standard units cannot be made habitable by the Ministry with smaller investments. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Railways should not even wait for their planned target of removing these deficiencies by the end of the Eighth Plan but to make these sub-standard units habitable by the end of 1995-96, so that at least 70,000 more employees are accommodated at one go and at nominal cost. Besides, action should be initiated without any further delay to replace the 31,000 quarters which have been declared too old for any cost-effective repair. This will not only save the railway from acquiring and identifying new pieces of land, which in itself is a lengthy procedure, but will also help in overcoming the botheration of creating any fresh infrastructure.
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37. 2.164 Time and again, the Ministry has cited resource constraint as the main reason for their non-achievements in the housing sector. The Committee think that in the current times when liberal housing finance and other such facilities are being encouraged by the Government of India, through its several financial institutions and other agencies, Railways should explore the possibilities of getting their housing projects financed by such agencies like HUDCO, LIC etc., which provide longterm loans at reasonable rates of interest.
38. 2.165 The Committee have been apprised that hardly 50 percent of the gangmen and other categories of the Railwaymen, who, by the nature of their duties are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the Indian Railways, are provided with residential accommodation of some sort by the Railways. They are compelled to live in tents, barracks, wagon bodies, sleeper huts and mud huts. As a result of the representations by one of the Unions of the Railways, the Railway Board has issued instructions that the staff living in sleeper huts, tents, barracks and wagon bogies should be granted full house rent allowance. However, a similar demand for gangmen and gatemen living in huts and mud huts is still pending. The Committee desire that a favourable decision be taken in this regard without any further delay.
39. 2.166 The Committee are perturbed to note that there are about 1.85 lakh encroachments in railway colonies, covering over 0.2 lakh hectares of land. No serious efforts seem to have been contemplated by the Ministry to reclaim the encroached land. The Committee recommend that the Ministry should take up the matter seriously with the concerned State Governments to get the vacant possession of the railway land expeditiously and wherever feasible use the same for construction of additional staff quarters for railways employees.
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40.	2.167	<p>The Committee note that as of date the Railways' medicare system comprises 114 adequately staffed hospitals and 645 Health Units which provide a comprehensive range of medical facilities to the Railway employees. Besides, while common speciality services are available in Divisional and Zonal Hospitals, super-specialist services are also available in eight of the Hospitals.</p>
41	2.168	<p>Despite this vast paraphernalia existing with the Railways, the Committee has received several complaints regarding the shortcomings in the medicare facilities being provided by the Railways to its employees. While there is no dearth of facilities, apparatus, equipment, etc., there is shortage for doctors and medicines. Evidently, the machinery and apparatus cannot substitute of doctors and medicines. This gives rise to a feeling that the sincere efforts of Railways in providing medicare to their employees are being negated by the insufficiency of doctors and medicines. It is, therefore, but imperative that necessary steps be taken immediately in this direction. The Ministry has submitted before the Committee that the shortage of doctors is due to the fact that though a big panel of 500 doctors is selected through the UPSC, most of them are reluctant to join Railway service. The problem does not end here. Even the doctors who join leave the service once they get a better posting. To combat this problem the Railways are entering into contracts with locally available doctors, whom they are offering very good remuneration. The Committee think that this arrangement with private doctors cannot be a reliable and permanent solution and is, therefore, no substitute to Railway's own doctors. They, therefore, recommend that in order to attract medical talent to Railway service necessary provisions may be made for grant of special pays/emoluments, etc., to the doctors who are posted to field/hard/remote areas. The Committee think that this would go a long way in obtaining the desired results. They would like to know the outcome of the efforts made in this regard.</p>
42.	2.169	<p>The Committee have been informed by one of</p>

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the Federations of the Railways that the medicare facilities for road-side staff and families are not at all satisfactory. There is a system of having a line doctor covering a distance of 100 to 120 Kms. from morning till evening by a passenger train dispensing medicines enroute at every stoppage. The Committee can well envisage the scene being enacted during such 'whirlwind medical tours' where a doctor gets hardly one or two minutes to not only diagnose the ailments of his patients but also to dispense medicines before his train 'whistles away' to the next destination. By having such an impractical system the Railways instead of taking care of the health requirements of the employees and being acknowledged as a benevolent employer only invites ridicule. The Committee, therefore, desire that the present system must be dispensed with unmediately and serious thought must be given to either introducing special medical vans on Railways for this purpose or road ambulances which can cover a fixed area during the course of the day.

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2.170

The Committee note that 377 Handicraft Centres having a Membership of 29429 are being run with assistance from the Staff Benefit Fund for training wives and children of the Railway employces in useful crafts. These Centres mainly undertake stitching of uniforms for the railway employces, railway school children, railway hospitals etc. and the rates for stitching are fixed by a Committee duly constituted for the purpose. Assistance of the local Railway Women's Organisation is also taken in maintaining these Centres. From the data supplied to the Committee it is surprising to note that the Ministry of Railways were not able to give the details of the expenditure incurred on Handicraft Centres in Eastern, North-Eastern, South-Eastern and Western Railways. What is more disturbing is the fact that the Ministry of Railways have not been able to compute the average monthly income of the women working in the Handicraft Centres. The Committee desire that proper attention should be given to these Handicraft Centres so that the family members of railway

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employees can utilise their spare time in useful and profitable activities.

44. 2.171 The Committee note that the recognised Mahila Samities run Handicraft Centres, schools, creches, etc. under the aegis of these Samities some of the Handicraft Centres have undertaken various other activities like making pickles, candles, chalkpieces, file covers, envelopes etc. for increasing their earnings. During their tours to various places, the Committee had found that the premises allotted to Mahila Samities were in a very bad shape. At places there was no light, sewing machines were not in a working condition, there was no provision for ventilation, drinking water and toilet facilities etc. The Ministry of Railways were candid in admitting the fact "that the Mahila Samities are not equipped with the skill and machinery for stitching uniforms on large scale". Since these Samities are discharging useful function the Committee desire that the Railways should encourage them by providing proper accommodation, light and other basic facilities. The members of these Samities should also be imparted proper training on the lines of Womens' Polytechnics so that the Members of these Mahila Samities could become self-supporting.

45. 2.172 The Committee note that the policies with regard to giving appointments/incentives to sportsmen are reframed from time to time according to the sports scenario prevailing in the country. There is constant interaction and coordination with the Sports Authority of India and other Sports Control Boards to evolve a concerted approach for overall development of sports in the Railways. The Railway Sports Control Board is affiliated to different Sports Federations and is represented on their executive councils. Although Railways have made arrangements for training/coaching of promising wards of the railway employees yet the NFIR, in their Memorandum submitted to the Committee, have stated that the existing facilities were not adequate for giving training to the youngsters in certain streams like hockey and football. They have also

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complained that the scouts and guides quota for filling up Group 'C' & 'D' vacancies has recently been abandoned. The Committee recommend that the Railways should make adequate arrangements for training/coaching of promising wards of Railway employees and necessary facilities such as qualified coaches in selected disciplines, assistance for equipments, training/exposure abroad to promising youngsters etc. should also be provided to them. They also desire that sports quota and quota for scouts and guides in Group 'C' and 'D' vacancies should also be restored with immediate effect.

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2.173

The Committee find that the Railway have Holiday Homes at 41 centres in the Country. In addition to these Holiday Homes, Railways have also provided Convalescent Homes at different places. The Committee desire that the adequacy of Holiday and Convalescent Homes be reviewed keeping in view the large number of railway employees who are entitled to avail of this facility.

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2.174

The Committee note that Railways are providing two types of Canteens—Statutory and Non-Statutory. The Statutory Canteens are to be set up in establishment which are covered by the Factories Act, 1948 and employ more than 250 workers. Whereas non-statutory canteens are set up as a welfare measure, where the strength of staff is 100 or more. At present, the Railways have been running 267 Staff Canteens including 94 Statutory Canteens. These Canteens are run on 'non-loss no-profit' basis and the Advisory Committees consisting of Staff representatives oversee the working of the Canteens. The Staff working in these Canteens have been treated as Railway employees and *ipso facto* their wages are being borne by Railway Administration.

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The facilities at the Staff Canteens are also not adequate. For instance, during their Study Tour to Bhubneshwar, the Committee found that the Canteen in Carriage Repair Workshop at Mancheswar was not upto the mark and the catables supplied often

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remained inadequate. In this connection, the Railway Board have informed the Committee that they have augmented the 'existing strength of canteen staff to enable them to meet the increasing demands for meals etc and that it is proposed to make this canteen a 'model canteen' in the Railways. The Committee would like to know the criteria fixed for converting a canteen into a model canteen. They may also be informed as to how many other canteens are also likely to be converted into model canteens in the entire Railways.
