

INDIAN RAILWAYS TECHNICAL SUPERVISORS' ASSOCIATION

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Minutes of 58th All India Annual Conference & Central General Body (CGB) Meeting of Indian Railways Technical Supervisors Association (IRTSA) held on 6th and 7th November 2023 at South Institute, Lalaguda, Secundrabad, South Central Railway.

The 58th All India Annual Conference & Central General Body meeting of Indian Railways Technical Supervisors Association (IRTSA) was hosted by IRTSA South Central Railway Zone, held on 6th & 7th of November 2023 at South Institute, Lalaguda, Secundrabad. Around 160 delegates from all over Indian Railways participated in the conference & CGB. Shri. Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary AIRF and Shri. M.Raghaviaha, General Secretary NFIR graced the conference. Shri. K.S.Jain, PCME SCR, Sri. S.R.Prasad, CWE/SCR and many officers of SCR and office bearers of unions graced the seminar conducted in the open session.

The 58th All India Annual Conference & CGB made the historical decisions of electing Er.K.V.Ramesh as new General Secretary of IRTSA and Er.Harchandan Singh and Er.Darshan Lal as first Chairman and Central Working President of IRTSA. CGB & CEC approved increase in annual membership subscription and changes in life membership. General Secretary's report, Resolutions on the demands of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers specific to the category and common demands, resolution on organisational matters and other matters have been discussed and passed unanimously.

Proceedings of the Central General Body meeting

Conference delegates came in procession from Railway Hospital Junction to conference venue South Institute Lalaguda. Er.M.Shanmugam Central President & Er.Harchandan Singh General Secretary were taken on chariot in the procession.

Er.M.Shanmugam, Central President IRTSA hoisted the flag of IRTSA amidst thundering slogans of Long Live IRTSA, Rail Engineers Unity Zindabad, etc. Opening session was graced by Com. Shiv Gopal Mishra General Secretary AIRF and Chief Guest & Com. Shankar Rao Treasurer AIRF & General Secretary SCR MU as Guest of honour.

Er.N.V.Ramanmurthy, Convenor 58th Conference and Zonal Secretary IRTSA South Central Railway welcomed Com. Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary AIRF, Com. Shankar Rao, Treasurer AIRF & General Secretary, SCR MU, Er.M.Shanmugam, Central President IRTSA, Er. Harchandan Singh, General Secretary IRTSA, Er.Darshan Lal, Working President IRTSA, Er.K.V.Ramesh, Sr.JGS IRTSA and all IRTSA delegates from all over India Railways.

The conference was inaugurated by Com. Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary AIRF by lighting the lamp. Central President & General Secretary welcomed Chief Guest, Guest of Honour, union office bearers and all delegates.

In his inaugural speech M.Shanmugam, Central President, IRTSA recalled his election as Central President of IRTSA 27 years back at the same venue. He recollected glorious journey carried out by him along with IRTSA office bearers and members. Some of the main achievements of IRTSA were listed by him. He briefly explained continuous persuasion done by core team IRTSA in getting 50% upgradation for SSE, CDMS & CMS from level-7 to level-8. He said there are shortfalls in the

upgradation order RBE No.155/2022 dated 17.11.2023 and only 100% upgradation will resolve all the variations. He added that Railway should create additional posts particularly in the category of Technical Supervisors for production, operation and maintenance of Vande Bharat train sets and all these activities should remain with Railways, should not be handed over to any private firms. Central President appealed to Government to withdraw NPS for all Central Government employees and all those appointed after 01.01.2004 should be covered under old pension scheme. He thanked both federations AIRF & NFIR for supporting IRTSA in its entire endeavour.

In his address Er.Harchandan Singh, General Secretary, IRTSA welcoming Com. Shiv Gopal Mishra General Secretary, AIRF fondly remembered his association with Shri. Priya Gupta, Shri. J.P.Chaubey and other leaders of federations. He recalled the sacrifices done by IRTSA office bearers in the All India Railway Strike in the year 1974. He said he is satisfied with the glorious journey of IRTSA for 58 years since its inception from the year 1965. Among the many achievements, introduction of level-8 and level-9 for the category vide RBE No. 155/2022 will give better career progression for the youngsters, he said. He added that the exercise of on-going cadre restructure committee (CRC) should consider short falls of RBE No.155/2022 and to work out a solution to remove the stagnation among the seniors. Re-designation of posts in level-7 and level-8 with the prefixes of Chief & Principal has to be done immediately. He said that grant of Group-B for SSE, CMS, CDMS & SE(IT) is one of the long pending demand of IRTSA, at least there should not be any difficulty for Government in granting Group-B gazetted status for posts upgraded to level-8 and level-9.

In his brief speech Com. Shankara Rao, General Secretary SCRUMU and Treasurer AIRF appreciated activities of IRTSA SCR and assured SCRUMU will stand with IRTSA in all genuine issues wherever required. He said issues pertaining to Technical Supervisors are being effectively addressed by AIRF. He called for unified struggle against privatization in Railways, restoration of old pension scheme for those appointed after 01.01.2004, etc.

In his warm and spirited address Com. S.G.Mishra, General Secretary, AIRF prized the activities of IRTSA as a matured categorical Association. He said he will be very happy to take the advices of Er..Shanmugam and Er.Harchandan Singh not only on the issues pertaining to Technical Supervisors but in other common issues also. He briefed his involvement and long association with IRTSA right from the days of his appointment as Apprentice Mechanic at Lucknow Northern Railway. He recalled the brave fight made by office bearers of IRTSA along with federation in the 1974 general strike. He explained about 50% upgradation issued to SSE and other supervisory cadres and its shortfalls. He said there are some categories left out the upgradation and federation will make its full efforts to extend the upgradation for all of them. He said National Pension Scheme (NPS) should be withdrawn and all the central Government employees appointed after 01.01.2004 should be brought in defined benefit old pension scheme and he appealed for participation by all Railwaymen in the nationwide strike ballet on this heart burning issue. GS AIRF assured all his efforts and support for the demands of IRTSA working for betterment of the category.

Report of General Secretary was presented by Er.K.V.Ramesh Sr.JGS on behalf of Harchandan Singh. GS report briefed about nation's strong economic growth, challenges before Railwaymen in the scenario of monetization of Railway assets & outsourcing of Railway activities in all fronts. agreement for manufacturing cum maintenance for a period of 35 years of Vande Bharat express train set, recognition of IRTSA, persuasion of demands, anomalies in MACPS, adverse working conditions, slow progress in the case filed by IRTSA at CAT Chennai pleading level-7 and level-8 for JE and SSE respectively, memorandums submitted by IRTSA, communication & interaction with members and other organisational matters, etc. GS report emphasised the need for allowing next line of leadership to take over even as a senior should play an advisory role.

Submission of Accounts: Er.Surjit Singh Central Treasurer submitted accounts balance sheet for the year 2022 and up to October 2023. Accounts for the year 2022 was passed by CGB IRTSA unanimously.

Demands Resolution – Er.K.V.Ramesh proposed the resolutions of demands of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers on behalf of GS IRTSA. Er.E.Ramesh proposed demands resolution on MACPS, allowances, working conditions. Pension and retirement benefits, pass & PTO, welfare measures etc. There were 116 demands adopted by CGB IRTSA. 58th Conference and CGB Meeting of IRTSA urged the Government & Railways to accept the genuine demands of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers and urge the Railway Ministry for sending exclusive proposal to Finance Ministry regarding Pay Level of the Technical Supervisors and upgradation of posts to Group 'B' (Gazetted).

Constitutional amendment - CGB adopted constitutional amendments in clause-6 and sub-clauses for creation of new posts Chairman and Central Working President and to increase number of working president post from one to two. Name of the post President has been changed as Central President. Changes were adopted in Clause-7 and sub-clauses on Annual subscription & Life Membership of the Association. Amount of annual membership of IRTSA has been increased to Rs.400 per member. Life membership will be extended to all retired/retiring members of IRTSA on one time contribution of Rs.4000, w.e.f.01.01.2024. Duties & Powers of Chairman and Central Working President, changes in duties & powers of Working Presidents and Senior Working President in clause-8 were adopted by CGB.

Organisational resolution on line of action

CGB IRTSA, resolved to authorise the Chairman, President and the General Secretary IRTSA to continue to pursue all the demands and to decide on the Line of Action as required especially in view of the developments in respect of the main demands and other demands of IRTSA.

CGB IRTSA resolved for following line of action:

- i. Upgradation from level-7 to level-8 and critical chasing at Railway Board on shortcomings of Railway Board order RBE No 155/2022 dated 17.11.2022.
- ii. Cadre restructuring of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers.
- iii. Grant of Group – B status to SSE, CMS, CDMS & SE/IT.
- iv. Submission of resolutions of demands and memorandum on main demands.

Membership drive and Struggle-cum-legal fund: CGB advised all Units & Sub-Units of IRTSA to undertake intensive drive for Membership of IRTSA @ Rs.400 PA and complete the same within 2 months. CGB resolved to collect struggle fund of minimum Rs.500 from every member.

59th All India Annual Conference and Central General Body Meeting: CGB decided to hold 59th Annual Conference & Central General Body Meeting of IRTSA at RCF Kapurthala in the month December 2024.

Open & Technical Session

Dr.M.Raghavaiah GS/NFIR and Sri.K.S.Jain Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer SCR graced the seminar as Chief Guests. Sri.N.S.R.Prasad CWE/SCR, and Sri.Birendra Sinku CWM/LGDS graced as Guest of honour. Officers of SC Railway, union office bearers and members of IRTSA graced the open session and Technical seminar.

In his address Dr.M.Raghavaiah, General Secretary, NFIR complemented Er.Harchandan Singh and Er.M.Shanmugam for leading IRTSA for many years serving the cause of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers. He said Earnings of Indian Railways has increased more than 17% in a year, however Railway men from at any level are working with mental agony whether their jobs are secured

or not. While speaking about the cadre GS NFIR said, it was noted that grave injustice has been meted out to the category of Technical Supervisors due to various decisions made by the Railways and Government. Justice Miabhoj turbinal award for Technical Supervisors for better pay scale, better status, etc were diluted by Railways. Even though 50% upgradation order dated 17.11.2022 has given some relief, huge injustice has been meted out to the category of Technical Supervisors category and justice could not be rendered because of negative attitude of Railway Board and Government for many years, he added. He questioned the decision of Government on manufacture & maintenance contract of Vande Bharat Train sets even though cost of manufacturing at Railway production units will be the lowest. On withdrawal of NPS and extending old pension scheme for all those appointed after 01.01.2004, he said finance ministry officials are informally admitting faults of NPS. Over time, night shift allowance, periodical rest, working on holidays, etc. all are becoming more complicated issues now he said. GS NFIR assured that, valid suggestions made in the presentation by Er.K.V.Ramesh will be presented to Hon'ble Railway Minister appropriately by NFIR. While concluding his speech GS NFIR said, federation and IRTSA will work together to remove the injustice done to the Technical Supervisory category.

Sri. K.S.JAIN, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer, SCR warmly recalled his association with members of IRTSA at NE Railway and ICF. He said IRTSA formed in 1965, every year conducts All India Annual Conference and Central General Body meeting regularly to discuss problems of the category. Seminars conducted as part of Annual Conference and presentation & discussion on Technical & performance improvement of Indian Railways by its collective wisdom and rich experience are useful for Railways performance, safety & efficiency of Indian Railways, he added. He congratulated Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers for 50% upgradation of SSE/CMS/CDMS and other supervisory cadres from level-7 to level-8 vide RBE 155-2022 dated 17.11.2022. He appreciated IRTSA for always standing first to join with the nation in offering physical & financial assistance to relief work in case of any natural Calamities. During the time of COVID pandemic, apart from contribution of one day salary, IRTSA contributed to PMCARES fund and Chief Minister's relief fund. He wished the conference all success.

Sri. S.R.Prasad, CWE/SCR, complemented IRTSA for doing wonderful job for the category and for Railways. He said in the new economic environment competition is growing and Indian Railways raises to the occasion to make its presence in the transport sector of the country. Indian Railways adopted to many changes from steam traction to diesel traction & electric traction, ICF designed coaches to LHB and now to Vande Bharat train sets. Rapid expansion of Vande Bharath train services across Indian Railways are astonishing. Zonal Railways need to update themselves for this rapid range in developing infrastructure, M&P, training, Tools, technologies, etc. Technical Supervisors of Indian Railways are capable of doing them, he said. He further added in PPP made challenges were thrown open to South Central Railways in further improving its efficiency and South Central Railway will go for achieving them.

Earlier, **PPP was made by Er.K.V.Ramesh on "Vande Bharat Express Train Set - The Game Changer & Future of Indian Railways' Workforce & Infrastructure"**. In the presentation he briefed Salient Features of Vande Bharat Express Train set and higher earning potential of VB train sets. Comparing the earning potential of Shatabdi & VB trains, in the life period of 35 years MAS-MYS VB will earn around Rs.400 crore more than Shatabdi express running in same route. While comparing average cost of manufacturing of a VB coach manufactured by ICF with proposed purchase of VB train sets from MNCs & purchase of Metro coaches he pointed out that cost of manufacturing done at ICF is the lowest.

The presentation briefed about Government's decision on Manufacturing cum maintenance agreement for VB Sleeper Train sets with MNCs and cost advantage of VB train sets produced by ICF.

In the presentation he has given suggestion for better utilization of land & other infrastructure available in Indian Railways particularly for South Central Railways. The suggestions are establishing Ancillary Production unit for Integral Coach Factory, Chennai, Maintenance depot for Vande Bharat, Aluminium freight wagon manufacturing unit, Establishing solar park to generate electricity, manufacturing plant for next generation technology propulsion system for use in high power electric locomotives & DPRS, Railway components manufacturing hub, Setting up of semiconductor fab, Plantation of Jatropha and establishing Biodiesel plant, Erection of windmills to generate electricity, Establishing container storage & transit point for Krishnapatnam port at Bitragunta.

While concluding, Er.K.V.Ramesh said that SC.Rly zone with efficient operating ratio of 88.2% is having potential to further expand its activities, to improve performance of IR. Particularly its workshops, loco sheds and carriage & wagon maintenance depots can add IR's capacity in manufacturing and maintenance of Vande Bharat Express train sets and manufacturing of Aluminium freight wagons. Land can be used for electricity generation especially from solar, so that entire energy requirement of SC.Rly can be met. Title of all these lands should be with IR. Complete outsourcing of manufacturing & maintenance of any rolling stock should not be done. It should remain with IR with controlled outsourcing by giving opportunities to regional establishments.

The presentation also requested for sufficient addition of man power and Training of workforce in new technology in the engineering fields of Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and S&T for manufacturing, maintenance & operation of semi high speed trains.

Er.Darshan Lal, Working President briefed about non clearance of stagnation among Technical Supervisors in the recent 50% upgradation order. Many of the SSEs already in level-9 & level-8 got no financial benefit out of this upgradation order he said. He said at present three tier supervision is available and from 01.12.2026 four tier supervision will be available. He demanded that sufficient number of percentage should be available at lower most grades so that enough working hands are available in the field.

Zonal Secretaries report

Er.Jagtar Singh, Zonal Secretary RCF in his report said that RCF zone of IRTSA has followed all the instructions of CEC IRTSA. He said Engineers' day was celebrated at RCF in a grand manner on 15.09.2023. He listed the achievements of IRTSA RCF zone as part of RCF Sanharsh Committee at RCF. Railway Board's sanction for 10 new school buses at the cost of Rs.2.6 crore, procurement of brief case for supervisors, new office cabins & furniture for supervisors, stoppage of recovery of HRA for second allottee on shared accommodation, preventing victimization by solving DAR & Vigilance cases, improvements in the amenities of staff quarters, sanction of Rs.50 lakh for improvements in elementary & senior secondary schools. He declared readiness of RCF Zone in hosting next CGB at Kapurthala followed by superannuation programme in honour of Sh.Darshan Lal.

Er.K.Gobinath, Zonal Secretary ICF & Working President explained CEC activities carried out by CEC members of ICF headed by M.Shanmugam Central President. Meetings held with Dr.M.Raghavaiah General Secretary NFIR and Com.S.G.Mishra General Secretary AIRF on various occasions, visit to Lalaguda sub-unit, meeting with Special Secretary Finance, CRB & CEO, Member (TRS) and other office bearers. Explaining zonal level activities, he told about memorandums submitted to Member (TRS), DG(HR) during their visit to ICF, Pongal celebrations organised by IRTSA ICF Zone, cricket tournament conducted among sub units of IRTSA S.Rly and various teams formed among IRTSA ICF zone, participation of IRTSA ICF Zone in the demonstration, gate meetings conducted by Joint Action Council (JAC) of ICF opposing introduction of private MNC manufacturer inside ICF factory for manufacturing VB sleeper version and withdrawal of NPS, etc.

ICF Zone has contributed an amount of Rs.4,70,000- during the year- 2022 and Rs.2,50,000- during the year- 2023 towards the membership and struggle fund.

Er.Akilesh Viswakarma, Zonal Secretary NR in his report said about meetings conducted at various sub units of IRTSA Northern Railway. He said IRTSA Northern Railway office bearers are representing the demands of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers continuously to Com.S.G.Mishra GS AIRF. He said 50% upgradation effected from 01.12.2022 is insufficient to clear the stagnation among the SSEs and grant of Group-B (Gaz) status should be pursued vigorously.

Er.M.Bapat, RWF in his report said that a joint forum of RWF demonstrated protests against the New Pension Scheme on three occasions. On each occasion, IRTSA participated and supported with a large gathering. One issue that has been a source of discontent among Rail Engineers in RWF is the non-implementation of the much-awaited upgradation, whereas many other sister units have already implemented it. The RWF administration expresses its difficulty due to the unavailability of posts to be surrendered. Secondly, Rail engineers from the Axle shop proposed a direct incentive scheme against the present fixed 15% of the basic.

Er.Santosh while presenting zonal secretary's report of IRTSA SWR said that General Body meeting of IRTSA Mysore unit was held on 28.06.2023 and important issues related to upgradation, promotions, MACPS were discussed. On the eve of Engineers' day celebrations seminar on the subject "Industrial safety & Need for sustained compliance" was conducted. While thanking for the achievement of introduction of level-8 & level-9 in the hierarchy of the category, he said upgradation order was not implemented on its full sprit in Mysore workshop. Sanctioned PCO posts which were ex-cadresied a few years back were not taken into consideration for 50% upgradation to level-8. SWR zone requested CEC IRTSA for vigorous persuasion for 100% upgradation to level-8 and grant of incentive bonus for SSEs at the rate of 15% to actual basic pay drawn in level-8 and level-9.

Er.N.V.Ramanamurthy, Zonal Secretary, SCR thanked all the delegates came all over Indian Railways and making the conference a grand success. He listed activities carried out by IRTSA SCR zone including submission of memorandum, his visit to sub-units of South Central Railways to encourage all of them to actively participate in the 58th All India Annual Conference and Central General Body meeting. He thanked Er.M.M.V.G.K.Raju, Er. Md.Thousif Khan, Er. K.Subrahmanyam, Er. P.Nanya Naik, Er.P.Pandu, Er.Anthny Denzil, Er.C.Sirisha, Er.Raghuram Mogili, Er.K.Gopal, Er.G.Sathyanarayana, Er.N.S.K.Kishore, Er.B.Rajesh, Er.B.Anjaiah, Er.A.Srinivas Rao, Er.K.Lacha Babu, Er.K.Sathyanarayana Reddy, Er.B.Venkata Subbaiah, Er.Santhosh, Er.B.Hanumanthulu, Er.S.Thaviti Raju, Er.U.Ramanjaneyulu, Er.A.Jayaprakash, Er.K.Hemanth Kumar and others working tirelessly for the success of the conference.

Er.R.B.Singh, Zonal Secretary, Western Railway in his address urged all the zones and sub units to actively participate in all activities of IRTSA. He thanked President & General Secretary of IRTSA for effectively perusing the issues of Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers.

Er.Gopi presenting Zonal Secretary's report of Southern Railway briefed about black badge organised at BBQ coaching depot to attract attention of administration and to avoid victimization of supervisor shri.Anbarasu SSE/C&W/BBQ on account of DRM inspection on the train maintained by him. Immediately the suspension was revoked and no other punishment was given to Shri.Anbarasu. One more black badge protest was done to attract the administrative attention on account of an assault of Supervisor Shri.Chruchill Antony SSE/C&W/TNPM. Security measures were strengthened as result of the protest.

Issues on maintenance of Vande Bharat train sets: Er.Gopi highlighted some of the crucial issues being faced by open line supervisors. Vande Bharat express maintenance in open line depot causes more hardship to the open line supervisors like never before. C&W mechanical department

supervisors are deployed by the administration to jointly carry out Electrical department activities like energizing, de energizing and traction related activities jointly with electrical department. There is a proposal to hand over the above electrical department activities to C&W supervisors which will cause additional burden to already over stressed engineers. Inadequate training, insufficient manpower & Spares are causing hardship to the open line supervisors. Proper time and work study has to be done for the Vande Baharat train maintenance at open line depots to ensure safe running of trains. 30% percent of existing sanctioned posts of open line engineers has not been filled up in MAS division. A coaching depot in Tambaram has been in operation since 2017 but till now, no sanction of supervisors and staffs has been created for it. These are not isolated cases and are happening in almost all open line depots across Indian Railways. Open line engineers are overburdened, stressed and they even cannot take leave for their personal work. Hence filling up of vacancies and sanctioning of additional posts are the important areas need to be focused on.

Er.Subrata Das speaking on behalf of Eastern Railway assured CGB that, he will make necessary arrangements to revive.

Election of New office bears: Election of new office bearers was conducted by election officers Er.Darshan Lal, Er. N.V.Ramanamurthy and Er.R.B.Singh. Er.Harchandan Singh as Chairman, Er.M.Shanmugam as Central President, Er.Darshan Lal as Central Working President, Er.K.V.Ramesh as General Secretary, Er.Surjit Singh as Central Treasurer and other office bearers were elected unanimously.

Long live IRTSA. Jai Hind.



K.V.RAMESH
General Secretary, IRTSA