

# INDIAN RAILWAYS TECHNICAL SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION

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## Minutes of virtual CEC meeting of IRTSA held on 20.06.2021

Keeping in view the extraordinary circumstances created due to the spread of pandemic COVID-19, the Meeting of CEC IRTSA, which was earlier proposed to be held at RCF Kapurthala on 20.06.2021, was held as a Virtual CEC Meeting on Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 from 15.00 hrs to 20.00 hrs to discuss important issues and to decide the line of action thereon. Earlier CEC IRTSA met virtually through Whatsapp group on 23.08.2020.

### Welcome Address

Convenor of the meeting K.V.Ramesh Sr.JGS welcomed Central President, General Secretary and all CEC office bearers for the meeting. On behalf of IRTSA also paid homage all those died due to Covid-19 and homage to all the office bearers and members of IRTSA passed away during this period.

### President Address

Er. M.Shanmugam in his inaugural presidential address said even though virtual CEC meeting is held for the second time in the pandemic having no opportunity to conduct physical meeting, communication is flowing then and there with members. He paid homage to 2800 Railway employees lost their life due to corona serving the country. He said freezing of rates of DA for one and half years is unjust since payment of DA is an accepted principle of Government and it is the compensation for price raise in essential commodities. He also said that DA payment will increase the flow of money into the micro economic structure of the country.

He strongly condemned the decision of Government to convert 41 Defence Ordnance Factories into Corporations despite of Government's assurance to the recognized unions these factories will not be corporatized. He asked members of IRTSA to support and leaders of JCM particularly for the forth coming meeting going to be chaired by Cabinet Secretary. He wished Er.M.Bhatnagar, Zonal Secretary IRTSA RCF all the best on his superannuation from the Railway service and requested to continue his service in IRTSA and thanked for his full cooperation given to the central leadership during all the agitations, seminars and other programmes.

Motivating all the zones for enrollment of membership, he appreciated membership drive taken by ICF Zone. He said that on his appeal office bears and Zonal Secretary made a intensive drive through online payment. He thanked all the ICF members for their spontaneous response for his appeal.

### General Secretary Address

Er. Harchandan Singh, General Secretary in his address said that, introduction of about 151 trains under private operations in 12 clusters across the country and corporatization of the Production Units of IR are two major threats for Railway employees and for the country. It is high time that Railway men unitedly make the government to further think and reconsider this proposal. IRTSA stands with the decision of reconstitution of "National Coordination Committee for Railwaymen's Struggle" (NCCRS) to lead united struggle against privatization and corporatization of Indian Railways with the participation of 17 major Unions and Associations including IRTSA. Com. S.G.Mishra GS AIRF and Dr. M.

Raghavaiah GS NFIR will be Convener and Co-Convener respectively. Planning committee of NCCRS was formed with eight members including Shri Shiva Gopal Mishra, Dr. M.Raghaviah, Shri K.V. Ramesh and Shri L.N. Pathak.

GS IRTSA expressed his anguish over, one of the unprecedented actions of Government freezing of rates of DA & DR for the central government employees and the pensioners for one and a half year from 01.01.2020 to 30.06.2021. Government is not heeding to the voice of all central Government unions demand to defreeze the rates of DA and DR. He further said that, main demands of the category for higher Pay Level and Classification of Posts of SSEs in Group B Gaz and demands on MACPS, ex gratia payment for the families of employees died due to Covid and many other demands are not getting resolved.

He appeal to the members to strengthen the central fund by raising membership and send central quota for current and previous year also to the Central Treasurer as well as for Voice of Rail Engineers. I particularly appreciate valid efforts made by the ICF Zone in ensuring collection of membership subscription even during the Covid-19 pandemic.

On behalf of CEC IRTSA K.V.Ramesh, greeted Er.M.Bhatnagar Zonal Secretary IRTSA RCF on his superannuation from Railway service in the month of June 2021.

#### **Address by Patrons & Working Presidents**

Er. K.V.Surendrannathan Chief Patron IRTSA in his address said that a request has been put forward for many of the young Engineers to change the name of the Association from Supervisors Association to Engineers Association. This could be the reason for not getting engorging memberships from some zones. He expressed his hope that change in the name will bring more members and representation from all over Indian Railways.

Er. L.N.Pathak, Patron IRTSA wished grand success for virtual CEC meeting of IRTSA. He said IRTSA is the only platform established by Er Harchandan Singh in the year 1965 in STC /N.Rly/CB/LKO is shining even today in 2021 having lot of achievements since 3<sup>rd</sup> CPC till date and having good tuning with Organized Labour all over Indian Railways. IRTSA is now playing important Role in " SAVE RAILWAY - SAVE NATION" call given by NCCRS, he added.

Er. Darshan Lal Working President said entire country and the world is struggling because COVID-19 pandemic. Life has become very difficult for many citizens across the country. Government has taken many steps to overcome the universal crisis. As essential Government employees, Railway men contributed for ensuring movement of essential goods, passengers, etc across the country. It was hard time for Railway employees and good number of Railway employees sacrificed their lives while serving because of deadly infection got in the course of their duty. He said apart from various demands of the category not settled for years, this Virtual CEC IRTSA need to deliberate and work hard on the issue of "Save Railway, Save Nation", to prevent privatization of train operation and corporatization of Production units of Indian Railways.

He thanked and warmly greeted Er.M.Bhatnagar Zonal Secretary IRTSA RCF Zone superannuating from Railway service. As Zonal Secretary he carried out all the instructions of central leadership in organising IRTSA programmes at RCF and at New Delhi on behalf of CEC IRTSA. His sincere efforts and commitments raised RCF Zone to new height, Darshan lal added.

He said that, after improvement in the pandemic conditions RCF Zone will host All India Conference & CGB on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at RCF. He further said membership drive is in full swing at RCF and one lakh will be deposited by RCF as Central Quota. He thanked Central President, General Secretary and office bearers for organising

Virtual CEC meeting to discuss important demands of the category, central Government employees and Railways.

Er. K.Gobinath Working President said that during Covid pandemic Railways operated passenger special, goods & oxygen express. Freezing of rates of DA should be withdrawn and arrears should be paid from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. He briefed about the efforts taken by ICF Zone to enrol IRTSA membership online even during pandemic. ICF zone already submitted Rs.50,000 towards central quota, he added.

Er. B.Inbanathan said that payment of Salary/Pension and DA/DR to employees and Pensioner are not a matter of bounty. It is a vested right of employees and Pensioners to receive the salary and pension. Pension is a deferred wage as held by the Apex Court and right to receive Salary and Pension every month is part of the service conditions emanating from Article 309 of the Constitution of India. Therefore, orders for freezing of Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief should be withdrawn and eligible arrears may please be paid from 01.01.2020.

#### **Report of Central Treasurer**

Er. O.N.Purohit Treasurer IRTSA placed the balance sheet of CEC IRTSA ending 31.12.2019. After submitting the accounts statement, he appealed to all the zones for vigorous enrolment of membership.

#### **Position of Court case for Higher Pay Level for JE & SSE:**

K.V.Ramesh briefed that, case filed by IRTSA in CAT Chennai, for higher Pay Level to JE & SSE unfortunately progressing in snail speed, due to the non-functioning of the CAT for the last two to three years due to the unavailability of the judge and now due to Covid lockdown and restrictions. But we have prepared our case well, when the courts open our case will be persuaded for a favorable judgement for raising the pay level of the Technical Supervisors, SSEs & JEs shall be taken as pleaded by us from 01.01.2006 & from 01.01.2016 onwards.

#### **Report of Zonal Secretaries/Presidents**

Er. V.P.Abdul Salam Zonal Secretary S.Rly in his report said that Railwaymen including Technical Supervisors raised to the occasion in operating passenger specials, goods & parcel service and Oxygen specials. There was around 4500 Railwaymen last their life due to corona infection. During the pandemic some of the important issues were represented to GM S.Rly and to other appropriate authorities. Open line Engineers are required to work more than 48 hours a week with less staff strength during the pandemic. Vacancies arose during the pandemic and in previous years are not filled, resulting in more than 30% vacancies particularly in Technical Supervisors category. He also asked for change of name of the Association taking into consideration many of the zones are supporting it.

Er. Ashok Chowdery Zonal Secretary CLW in his report told that the situation is slowly improving in the pandemic. He expressed his sorrow for the loss of former Zonal Secretary Er.Sugato Dutta due to Covid. During the pandemic WhatsApp remains the main communication mode among the IRTSA members, he said

Er. Mayank Bhatnagar, Zonal Secretary, RCF said that, At RCF, the IRTSA Unit Team Members interacted with brother engineers regularly and solved their problems under the leadership of Er. Darshan Lal, President IRTSA, even during the pandemic situation of Covid 19. He informed the CEC that, RCF zone will deposit Rs. One lakh towards central quota within this month. He thanked thank Er. K. V Ramesh for conducting virtual CEC

meeting successfully. He also specially thanked Er.Harchandan Singh & Er.M.Shanmugam for their contribution to the community.

Er. K.Gobinath Zonal Secretary ICF said that, due to the Covid pandemic situations, ICF unit could not undertake membership during the year 2020. This year due to online membership drive more than 700 members enroll/renew in a shortest period of time. Y.R.S.Benarjee, Zonal Treasurer/IRTSA/ICF unit has deposited Rs. 50,000- as a first installment towards Central quota of membership for the year 2021 to CT/IRTSA. He also mentioned about M.Shanmugam, CP/IRTSA and office bearers of ICF Zone meeting with Dr.M.Raghavaiahji, General Secretary/ NFIR during his visit at Chennai.

Er. Mruthyunjaya Bapat Secretary/IRTSA/RWF, said that, whole year passed through pandemic covid 19 and on response to the central call our members of RWF unit came forward and collected Rs 25000/- for prime minister's care fund and sent to central unit during April 2020. on behalf of IRTSA my deep condolences to the bereaved family members of shri Murgendraswamy SSE/utility, shri Kushal Kumar Ex.Zonal secretary IRTSA/RWF, shri Bharath Kumar Dalai JE/Civil, shri Ravindranath SSE/Drawing and shri Kannan SSE/Elect passed away due to covid.

Er. M.V.Ramanmoorthy Zonal Secretary S.C.Rly in his report paid his homage to Shri. G.Krishna Rao Zonal President and other office bearers who passed away during the pandemic. He briefed about contribution made by employees of SC.Rly including IRTSA members for the relief fund collected in favour of families of deceased SSEs. He briefed about the representation made to GM SCR on the issue of "Training Module & Refresher Course (RC) for Supervisors of Mechanical Engineering Dept (Diesel)"

Er. K.L.Vinod Kumar Zonal Secretary SWR said that, IRTSA SWR executed two virtual all-member meetings, another one webinar series and other online educational events. He further said, IRTSA/SWR has cordial relation with associations and federations at zonal & Branch levels. Continuous persuasion, struggle and sincere efforts have brought many achievements to our zonal and branch units. Subject of PCO allowance to Cadre PCO staff of Mysore workshop has materialized by the active negotiation with administration with the help of recognised federation's workshop branch.

Er. R.B.Singh Zonal Secretary Western Railway, said that IRTSA/WR took all necessary steps to extend support to Engineers affected by Covid. He briefed about the representation made to HODs on the regional issues of Technical Supervisors. He also promised to submit central quota of membership in a short period of time.

#### **Views of other CEC Members**

Er. E.Ramesh Vice President welcomed all the members to second virtual CEC meeting of IRTSA. He said that for survival of PUs and workshops of IR and to stop private train operation focused action must be taken. He further briefed on eradication of unmindful outsourcing of various IR activities, filling up of vacancies in the category of Rail Engineers, inclusion of training period for the purpose of MACPS and revision of Group Insurance Scheme for the Railway employees. He also suggested that as per constitution of IRTSA subscription for VRE is Rs.80 and suggested that the VRE membership fee may be given to the respective sub-units or Units, for doing other organisational activities.

Er. G.Aranganathan JGS citing Tamil poem Thirukkural wanted the Government to take care of its employees. He condemned the decision of converting Defence PUs into Corporations. None of the demands of Technical Supervisors are agreed by Government while non-technical cadres are given Grade Pay Rs.5400.

Er. Aribaskar said that, ever growing contract work will be a major threat to Railways and for technical supervisors. Number contractor engaged employees are getting increased dynamically in Railways. The system of 'supply and installation' and contracts on 'turn key' basis make the number to grow still larger. It may be assumed that these works never return to Railway men since know how and technical knowledge are not shared with Railways.

Er. Gopi condemned the decision of restriction of payment of night duty allowance to the basic pay of Rs.43,600. He briefed the health issues linked with night duty working and necessity for compensation for working in night shift in the form of night duty allowance.

Er. Zaheer Hussain President GOC briefed on the ill-effects of outsourcing of activities like cleaning, painting, welding etc awarded on lowest bidder basis. These contractors engage unskilled & untrained employees who don't bother about quantity, quality, industrial safety, etc. Supervisors are required to put more efforts not only during the execution of work, but made answerable for any failures on service. He demanded that strength of Technical Supervisors should not be reduced.

Er. Jaya Krishna said that, Indian Railways have launched e-Privilege Pass/PTO module on August 2020 through Human Resource Management System. Instead of creating a hassle-free system, employees are put into severe hardship due to multiple problems faced by them in getting their privilege passes and PTOs, He demanded that, Issue of manual Pass & PTO may please be permitted as per employees' choice and Lacunas of e-Privilege Pass/PTO in HRMS Module be cleared.

Er. Mahalingam said that, PCO allowance granted to SSE & JE at the rate of 6% and 12% is inadequate at should be paid on par with Shop floor SSEs & JEs. He further said that digital propaganda should be done in a big way to fight against privatization & corporatization and recent move by Railways to hand over major Railway sports complexes to RLDA should be stopped.

Er. Raghupathy highlighted 7<sup>th</sup> CPC recommendation that, amount of NDA should be worked out separately for each employee. With the computerization of pay rolls, working out the amount of NDA automatically for each employee every month will not entail any difficulty. This formulation will extend to all employees across all ministries/departments who were already in receipt of Night Duty Allowance. He demanded that, all the non-gazetted staff who are booked to perform night duty, should be allowed to claim Night Duty Allowance without any upper pay ceiling, and orders of recovery should also be withdrawn.

Er. Rajagopalan GOC, S.Rly demanded that all SSEs & JEs working in PCO wings and CDMS, DMS, CMS & CMA should be covered under incentive scheme.

Er. Suresh Kumar said that as front line engineers role of open line SSEs and JEs are most important in safe running of train whether the rolling stocks are new or old. Huge shortage of supervisors particularly in coaching depots like BBQ, SR causing serious problem and all vacancies in safety categories should be filled with out any delay.

Er. B,Saravanan spoke about the demand of design allowance not materialising inspite of demanding it for more than two decades. He briefed on difficult working conditions in the design wing by having multiple heads.

Er. Shangaragurunathan demanded that, Junior Engineers, Senior Section Engineers and Technicians working in all Production Units need to be classified as safety category since they have direct responsibility in safe functioning of locomotives, coaches and Wheel & Axles produced by them.

Er. Singaravelan said that Senior Section Engineers (SSE) in the category of Technical Supervisors were given no improvement in the Cadre Restructuring since 1984 and Junior Engineers (JE) are eligible for only one promotion in their cadre as apparent from the following table - in spite of manifold increase in duties and responsibilities of the Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers. There has been no upgrading or Cadre Restructuring of the Apex Grade of Group 'C' ever on the Railways – (either in 1979, 1984, 1993, 2003 or 2013). Consequently, there is extreme stagnancy & resultant frustration amongst the incumbents of the Apex Grade 'C' – especially amongst the Technical Supervisors / Rail Engineers on the Railways. Hence Combined Cadre Restructuring of Group A, B and C services on the Railways should be done.

Er. Tavit Raju Secretary Tirupathy SC.Rly expressed his grief over loss of precious lives during the pandemic and paid homage to office bearers of SC Rly who passed away. He briefed about the social work done the Tirupathy Rail Engineers during the pandemic. Need of furniture for SSEs & JEs, transfer of supervisors, excluding SSEs from bio metric attendance, etc were some the achievements of Tirupathy workshop unit, he said. One of the long pending issue of seniority of Electrical Technical Supervisors are under persuasion.

Er. MMVGK Raju Secretary Lalguda workshop said that we are in grievous situation and all should adhere to the Covid protocol. He appealed to all to take vaccination which is one of the main weapon to fight against corona virus.

Er. Syed Azamathula said that CMT supervisors Pay level demand should be persuaded vigorously, should be granted PCO allowance and they should be classified as safety category.

Er. Vetri Vel Secretary BBQ depot expressed his anguish over step motherly treatment to open line staff & Engineers, who worked 100% during pandemic to operate freight & passenger trains. But they have received nil support from administration even in supplying corona safety kits. He demanded that all supervisors posts should be filled as per bench mark and other department works should not be forced of Mechanical supervisors.

Er. Vignesh Kumarn demanded for the withdrawal of Railway Board letter on Annual target of surrenders through Work Studies by Zonal Railways for the year 2021-22, since fixing target for surrender of posts without any scientific study about the work content and without taking into account forecasted increase in Railway business after Covid pandemic is not desirable

Er. Yoga Sreenevasa said that, Execution of work through employees hired by Railway contractors who are neither qualified nor trained is more difficult and involves high risk. In the absence of Railway Technicians or a smaller number of them available, most of the responsibilities & accountabilities fall on the heads of JE & SSE. Employees hired by Railway contractors are grossly under paid so they cannot form a reliable competent workforce. Tendency to bypass or skip procedures and to push in inferior quality materials or services are major threat not only for this category employees but for Railways and its customers.

Er. Karthikeyan EWS/AJJ/ S.Rly demanded full of actual medical expenditure incurred by serving Railway employees for self-medical treatment at private hospitals against emergency medical treatment for COVID-19 recovery

Member Engineers, Kalyan Banerjee CLW, Dayananda Rao RWF, YRS. Bajerjee ICF, Surjit Singh RCF, Pavithran SWR, Harminder Singh RCF, Anup Baipai NR, K.Subramaniam SCR, Jatana RCF, Sekar ICF, Suresh SWR, Hari WR, Subir Rai WR, Baldev Raj RCF, Nanya Naik, Ramakrishnan SWR, Thirumaran GOC S.Rly,

K.Sreedharachari SCR, Amith Rathi RCF, Tamilmaran S.Rly, Bedi Amristar NR, S.K.Bharh RCF and others participated actively in the deliberations.

Er. Ravi highlighted Hazardous & strenuous working conditions and its related allowances and demanded Grant of Risk & Hardship allowance for JEs & SSEs as applicable from the Risk & Hardship Matrix recommended by 7<sup>th</sup> CPC.

For point of redistribution of Funds of VRE, CEC office bearers Ashok Chowdrey & Ragupaty suggested for continuance of hard copy of VRE since it is a handy reference document to keep. K.V.Ramesh clarified that subscription for VRE is not part of membership contribution of IRTSA under constitution of IRTSA and submitted that annual membership subscription for IRTSA is Rs.200 only. Subscription for Voice of Rail Engineers Rs.100 is to contributed separately.

### **Line of action for pursuance of demands**

K.V.Ramesh proposed the line of action, Virtual CEC Meeting of IRTSA held on WhatsApp on a dedicated platform titled as “Virtual CEC Meet IRTSA” on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2021 resolved for

1) Joining Railwaymen struggle in protest against Privatisation of Trains & Corporatisation of PUs and release of arrears of DA/DR from 1.1.2020.

2) CEC resolved to urge up on the government for acceptance main demands adopted in the meeting.

3) Considering the condition prevailing in the country as a whole, Further line of action will be decided by Central President in consultation with General Secretary for pursuance of demands. – Line of action was adopted by CEC IRTSA unanimously.

M.Bhatnagar in his thanks giving speech said, Respected President, General Secretary, Er Darshan Lal President RCF unit. I am overwhelmed by your kind words for me. I owe my gratitude to all CEC member & Respected speakers who shared their views in this meeting. I humbly accept the responsibility you have given to me. I also thank Er K V Ramesh for beautifully conducting this virtual meeting. I also thank the IRTSA RCF Unit for their co-operation. I thank the Almighty for giving me an opportunity to work with such great Association and great leaders of IRTSA. With warm wishes I thank everyone.

President and General Secretary in their concluding speech called upon all the members to motivate all Rail Engineers to participate in all the programmes going to be organised in the future and also appealed to make all out effort to complete the membership drive and send the central quota.

K.V.Ramesh Convener thanked all the members CEC IRTSA for participating in the virtual CEC meeting with enthusiasm even during the pandemic. He posted the message of General Secretary that the issue of change of name of the Association will be discussed in the physical meeting. All the views expressed by the members will be taken into consideration.

Finally, he thanked Patrons, Central President, General Secretary, Working Presidents, Sr. Vice Presidents, Zonal Secretaries and all the CEC office bearers for making this virtual CEC meeting a grand success.

**Harchandan Singh,  
General Secretary, IRTSA**