

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS TAKEN BY RESPECTIVE MEMBERS OF POSTAL SERVICES BOARD WITH POSTAL JOINT COUNCIL OF ACTION ON THE CHARTER OF DEMANDS SERVED WITH NOTICE OF INDEFINITE STRIKE WITH EFFECT FROM 17.01.2012

As per decision taken at the level of Secretary (Posts), the issues raised in the charter of demands were discussed in detail with the Postal Joint Council of Action under the Chairpersonship of respective Members of the Postal Services Board. The first meeting started at 10.00 hrs. under the Chairpersonship of Member (Operations) (also holding additional charge of Member (Technology). Followed by meetings taken by Member (Personnel), Member (PLI) and Member (Planning). A list of officers and office bearers/members of the Postal Joint Council of action who attended the meeting may be seen at Annexure-I. The meeting started with welcome address of Member (Operations) and thereafter the issues raised in the charter of demands were taken up and the gist of discussions held during the course of the meetings is as follows:-

1(a) Mail network optimization project

Following issues were discussed in the meeting:

(i) Member (O) as Chairman explained that we need to constantly develop and improve our services. Staff side also supported and said that they are not against modernization of the department.

(ii) The Chairman agreed with the staff side that Heads of circles should honour the decision taken at apex level. He reiterated that the department doesn't want to close or change the public interface and sorting will be done by RMS staff.

(iii) Staff Side raised a number of issues of Maharashtra Circle. Since it was not possible to discuss the issues related to only one circle, it was decided to hold a separate meeting on the issues pertaining to Maharashtra Circle, some time later.

(iv) The Staff side expressed their apprehension about the implementation of network redesign for first class mail saying the L-2 mail offices will have very little mail to process and may lead to closure of these offices in future. They also expressed their apprehension that in urban areas and especially metro cities the merger may lead to closure of RMS Divisions. It was explained to the staff side that the Department would like to implement the new network design for first class mail with further assurance that no L-2 mail office will be closed till the completion of the MNOP Project> It was further assured that no staff will be transferred from one city to another unless some officials are themselves willing to move to bigger stations. It was also assured to staff side that the merger of mail offices will be put on hold in Mumbai and Chennai till the new sorting machines are in place.

(v) It was also informed that for the mail offices under the revised network, the Department is going to train the officials of the RMS to handle the new business . Training will also be given in areas of investigation of frauds and monitoring of frauds. It was also assured that in case the new network leads to any back routing of mail, the Department would be open to reassess the arrangements based on the volume of mail that is being back routed.

(vi) The Staff side pointed out that the orders issued by the Directorate vide No.

6-5/2011-D dated 20.10.2011 regarding the administrative control over speed post centres/sorting Hubs have not been implemented by the Circles.

(vii) The Chairman assured that Heads of Circles would be reminded to submit their compliance report on Directorate O.M. dated 20.10.2011 within a week's time. The same will also be monitored through Video Conference. It was decided to discuss this issue with Heads of Circles in the VC scheduled to be held on 12.01.2012.

(viii) Instructions regarding putting in complete address of the addressee in the system at the booking point have already been issued , but the same are not being followed in many circles. It was assured to reiterate the instructions.

(ix) The Chairman agreed for providing department transportation for the staff deployed at AMPC, Delhi to and from Dhaura Kuan. Suitable instructions have already been issued. to CPMG Delhi Circle.

1(b) Closure/merger of post offices

The staff side was apprised of the instructions issued by the Department vide letter No. 14-16-2011-Planning (Pt) dated 25.8.2011 based on the decision taken in the meeting held on 1.7.2011. However the aforesaid letter was found not to have been endorsed to the staff side and a copy of it was ordered to be made available to them immediately. On the point of financial viability in the context of simultaneous relocation of Post Offices in new emerging areas in lieu of closure of Post Offices, the staff side wanted modification of the said instructions to which Member(Planning) as Chairperson agreed for further examination in consultation with Secretary (Posts).

2(a) Grant of Central Government Civil Service Status to Gramin Dak Sevaks.

The staff side was apprised of the background of instruction of EDA/GDS system in the Department of Posts, especially in the context of their conditions of engagement which are totally different from regular Government employees. Special mention was made about their part time nature of work and the additional source of income which were the basic conditions for their engagement. While commending the role of Garmin Dak Sevaks in the functioning of Department of Posts, Member (Personnel) as Chairperson of the committee explained to the staff side the improvements which have taken place in their engagement conditions over the years.

2(b) Scrapping of new recruitment rules for appointment of Postmen which curtails promotional avenues of the GDSs.

The staff side was explained the rational behind amending the rules of recruitment which was to infuse young blood into the system so as to make it more efficient. On the persistent demand of the staff side to bring back the old system, the Chairperson, citing the example of quality improvement by the intake of direct recruit IPOs, requested the staff side to let the first recruitment process be completed and its impact seen and if there is a need, the issue can be reconsidered after that.

2(c) In regard to the proposal of the staff side regarding payment of employees share towards service discharge benefits scheme, the Chairperson advised them to take up the matter in a different forum.

2.(d) Enhancement of bonus ceiling of GDS to Rs. 3500/-

The Staff side was informed that the ceiling was fixed with the approval of Cabinet keeping in view the recommendations of Nataraja Murthy Committee Report and findings of Departmental Committee thereon.

2(e) Withdrawal of tightened norms for cash handling.

The Chairperson agreed to have a relook into the matter.

2(f) Stop reduction of TRCA in case of reduction of work load.

This will be looked into, in the light of decision arrived at about review of norms for cash handling and also the number of such cases, all over.

2(g) Compassionate appointment of GDSs.

The system of awarding graduation points was ordered to be reviewed, keeping in view the requirements of GDSs functioning.

2(h) Filling up of GDS Mail Men posts in RMS.

While expressing inability in filling up of GDSs Mail Men posts, the Directorate told the staff side about examining the feasibility of redeploying these posts in new schemes e.g. employment in IAP areas.

3. Revision of wages of casual labourers etc.

The staff side was apprised that a committee had constituted under the Chairpersonship of CPMG Assam Circle to look into all the issues pertaining to casual labourers, which is likely to submit its report shortly. During the course of further deliberations in the matter, the Chairperson advised the staff side to submit their view point to the Committee which would also be taken into account, even though this process may result in few days delay in submission of the Committee's report.

4. Revision of OTA rates.

The staff side was apprised that the Department is not competent to take a decision in the matter of revision of OTA rates as the issue falls under the purview of the Ministry of Finance,. The staff side made a mention of the revision in OTA rates having taken place in the Ministry of Railways on which the Chairperson directed the officers concerned to have complete information on the subject for having a detailed examination. In the performance of OTA, it was decided to reiterate the instructions already issued in this regard by SR Section.

5. Implementation of assurances made on 12.07.2010.

The staff side agreed that in quite a large number of cases follow up action had already been taken by the Department but there were certain issues in regard to which necessary action was yet to be taken. Specific mention in this regard was made of fidelity bonds to which Chairperson gave instructions for expeditious disposal of the pending issues.

6. Immediate finalization of cadre restructuring.

The staff side was apprised that in so far as cadre restructuring of Postal Accounts wing is concerned, the proposal already stands submitted to Integrated Finance Wing for submission to Secretary (Posts). As regards other cadres in the Department of Posts which are under consideration of the Committee constituted under the Chairpersonship of DDG(P), few sittings have already taken place and submission of the report will be got expedited.

7. Decentralisation of PLI/RPLI etc.

The staff side was explained in detail about the competition being faced by the Department in the field of PLI/RPLI and the benefits that will be derived out of the decentralisation process. The staff side expressed their apprehension about the relocation of staff in regard to which Member (PLI) as Chairperson explained as to how the role of DPLI was going to be refined by making the job more productive. It was further explained that the staff of PLI will play an important role on increasing the business. On the issue of posting back of staff to divisions who are presently on deputation to PLI jobs, it was informed that it was for the heads of Circles to take initiative and individuals to apply for repatriation. The staff side was further asked to make a separate reference to the Department for further follow up action in SR Section.

8. Filling up of GDSs Posts

The staff side was apprised of the suitable instructions regarding filling up of vacant posts of GDSs having already been issued by the Department vide letter No. 17-103/2007-GDS dated 17.02.2011. Consolidated instructions on the issue are being reiterated.

9. Ensure 100% filling up of LSG, HSG-I Promotional posts before implementation of Post Masters cadre

The Chairperson agreed to look into the matter keeping in view the vacancies in these grades that expired on the date of notification of the rules of recruitment pertaining to Post Master cadre. As regards eligibility of accounts line official for PSS Group `B` it was informed that this was not in line with the provisions contained in the rules of recruitment.

10. Creation of a separate cadre of System Administrators

The issue is a part of the subject matter being considered by cadre restructuring committee. However, it is not feasible to create a separate cadre as they are recruited as PAs/SAs. They can be compensated for travel by maintaining a log book

11 (a) Combination of beats/double duty , stop harassment of staff by insisting on 100% delivery under Project Arrow etc.

The issue related to Post Man cadre are under consideration by a committee which was constituted under the Chairperson of CGM (Mail Business). However the staff side requested for an expeditious follow up action by the Committee and desired that an officer with longer practical experience and knowledge about the problems faced by Postmen may be made the Chairperson. The Chairperson agreed to examine the demand of the staff side in consultation with Secretary (Posts).

11 (b) Good quality uniform and other kit items

In the context of delayed supply of uniforms by various Circles particularly delay particularly in Delhi Circle was highlighted during the meeting. Member (Planning) as Chairperson, directed official side to find out from all circles

regarding the status of supply of uniforms. As regards quality being purchased, it was directed to associate representative of the staff side. In the process of purchase of uniform cloth the proposal of cash payments for uniform was directed to be examined in the light of prevailing instructions on the subject.

12. Fixing norms of newly assigned work of Multi Tasking Staff

The staff side was apprised of the instruction already having been issued by the Department which take care of their grievance.

13. Grant of promotion to Drivers/artisans at par with Railway /Defence

In view point of the staff side was that MMS Drivers are plying heavy vehicles with more onerous responsibilities than mere staff car drivers and therefore they should be compared with drivers of the transport department The Chairperson agreed to have a detailed examination of the whole issue. As regards artisans, the staff side was apprised of the Department already having made sincere efforts in consultation with Ministry of Finance but the proposal did not find favour on the grounds that the cadre of charge hand stands merged with that of Artisan Grade-I. However it was agree to have a further relook into it.

14. Declare SBCO staff as divisional cadre and stop harassment under contributory factors

The proposal was discussed but could not be agreed to.

15. Filling up of Civil Wing Posts

A meeting in this regard has already taken place under the Chairmanship of CE (Civil) and it was decided by the Chairperson to make available a copy of the minutes of the meeting to the staff side immediately.

16. Functioning of Postal Accounts offices.

The cadre restructuring proposal of the Postal Accounts Wing has already been submitted to JS & FA for further submission to Secretary (Posts)

17. Counting of past service as RTPs for promotion and MACP

In the light of the Supreme Court judgement on the subject, there was no scope for further examination of the proposal.

18. Implementation of apex court judgement in case of Relaxed Rules of Recruitment (RRR) candidates

The judgement of the apex court has been implemented in letter and spirit which clearly stated that this should not be treated as precedent for the purpose of any other case or cases. In view of the above there is no further scope to reexamine the matter

19. Stop victimization under contribution negligence factor.

The Chairperson explained to the staff side that it would not be possible to issue any sweeping order in the matter as each and every case needs to be decided on its merits and competent authority while disposing of the matter does not take into account all the relevant factors including the involvement of the officials.

20. Stop discrimination towards PO & RMS Accounts Cadre

It was decided to refer the matter to the committee constituted for cadre restructuring.

21. Enhancement of LR strength

It was not found possible to enhance the LR strength as determined by the staff

side.

22. Ensure prompt grant of Child Care Leave

Suitable instructions in this regard already stand issued.

23. Review of MACP clarificatory order and rectify the issues like non drawl of special allowance etc.

The issue was referred to the committee constituted on allowances. The committee has submitted its report which is under consideration of the Department.

24. Drop FR 17-D etc

The staff side was apprised of liquidation of arrears in the matter of Rule 9 (Pension Rules) disciplinary cases with further clarification that all out efforts are being made to clear the pendency. As regards imposing of FR 17 A, the staff side was explained that Department`s instructions on the subject provide for invoking the said provision only in case of incitement, violence etc. with further clarification that Heads of Circles would be addressed to follow these instructions scrupulously.

25. Legitimate right to avail holidays etc.

It was agreed to reiterate the instructions of the Department issued in this regard from SR Section to be followed in normal course.

The meeting taken by Members of the Postal Services Board ended with vote of thanks to the Chair