



# **SAGA OF STRUGGLE OF TRAIN EXAMINERS AGAINST INJUSTICE**

**SANGHARASH KI KAHANI  
APNI JUBANI**



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App.TXR 62 Batch.**

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## PREFACE

When We - a group of 20-25 persons joined Railways as App. TXRs in May/August 1962 , we were totally **novice**, just out of schools/ colleges and were not aware of the type of job, mode of training and its career prospectus etc. -unlike present time when thorough study is made for career planning before joining any service . We were just jubilant that we are joining Railways and getting our livelihood with some perks like free Railway passes to travel .

But soon after joining training , this joy was over, rather turned sour,as we came to know that with same educational qualification and standard of entrance exam , our period of training ,stipend and entry grade was lower as compared to App. Mechanics (Now App. Chargemen). The discrimination was not only in monetary terms but social too . We, the App. TXRs were considered inferior type of supervisors as compared to App. Mechanics though getting training in same workshop, same Training Institute under one Principal and common faculty . This discrimination and inequality gave us a feeling of Apartheid happening in various parts of the world .

Perhaps following words of Nelson Mandela ignited the sparks in our mind :

***“As long as poverty , injustice and gross inequality persist in the World , none of us can truly rest .”***

So, soon , we had taken the vow not to rest till we achieve equality with our counterparts in Railways. Therefore , we decided to organize ourselves to fight for equality . Because , Martin Luther king Jr . as aptly said :

***“Injustice and corruption will never be transformed by keeping them hidden , but only by bringing them into light and confronting them with power of love.”***

So instead of keeping our inequality hidden , we started highlighting our discrimination right from Apprenticeship days in a legitimate way without offending our counterparts and violating the discipline of service .

In the following pages, you will be able to read the saga of our struggle - how we organized ourselves, spearheaded our campaign and struggled for long years not only to achieve EQUALITY but to excel in every field of professional responsibility .

This saga is written to inspire the young generation that nothing is impossible if we identify the cause , focus our energies and consistently work hard to achieve our objective . When we are honest and sincere , blessings of GOD comes in different ways , through kind hearts and helping hands .

**We have tried to narrate our story in detail but in simple language. Its not a story of just our cadre but a motivating story of great courage , determination , unity, sincerity , untiring efforts, great sacrifice and total involvement and developing close relationship . Thus achieving the results which we had not dreamt even initially.**

In the end, I shall be failing in my duty, if I do not express my heartfelt obligations to **my colleagues** like **Sh. Lomi Singh** of July 1963 batch and **Sh. Rameshwar Sharma** also of July 63 batch (who rose as Judge /Law Secretary in Himachal Pradesh)and **Sh. Panna Lal Sharma**, Dy.CRS S&T Retd -my friend -not belonging to TXR cadre (my colleague of Gp. B Federation)and many more

like him who have motivated me to bring out this piece of work . **It will bring me immense happiness , if this story is able to motivate even a single person to stand against injustice .**

In addition, the support given and help rendered by **Sh. Mupinder Singh(who too rose to SAGNF)** and **Sh. Anil Bhatia** of 1975 batch for **editing the manuscript and improving its presentation tremendously**. But for their **dedicated** assistance perhaps this task could not have been accomplished.

**Last but not the least , this is a quite old story fought between 1962 and 1980 – started almost 58 years ago and narrated from my memory only . Hope you will overlook the human errors and appreciate the spirit behind it . Your valuable suggestions are solicited to improve it further .**

***S. K.BANSAL***  
***Apprentice Train Examiner -May 1962 batch***  
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***DATED 1st AUGUST,2020.***

# **SAGA of STRUGGLE - A STORY OF STRUGGLE for UPLIFTMENT OF C&W SUPERVISORS**

**(SANGHARSH KI KAHANI - APNI JUBANI)**

The saga of struggle of Train Examiners Cadre -fought in the most unfavourable environment against the a gross injustice, great discrimination, waged between 1960 to 1980 was not only unique/interesting in nature but fantastic too. It is proposed to narrate the firsthand account of truthful struggle waged against injustice vis-a-vis technical supervisors and specially the mechanical supervisors, how it was started and won. It is important to know by the Train Examiners of yesteryears and the present day that the TXR category was considered as poor cousin or step brother of Mechanical supervisors known as Chargeman. who were being considered far superior than TXRS.

Unlike ' MERE JIVAN KI KAHANI' brought out on my face book account in bits and pieces bits during last few days, in Hindi. I am wring this in English, so as the train examiners - old and new- spread across the length and breadth of the INDIA, especially colleagues from southern and remote areas can benefit, who are not very well versed with Hindi. The story starts from the days when we had joined Railways during the year 1962 as Apprentice Train Examiners, because prior to this, very less information of worthwhile struggle is available. Therefore the story revolves around our entry and subsequent rise/travel in the cadre.

## **2. ENTRY IN THE CADRE:-**

Our batch of 13 persons joined the Railway service in May 1962. In fact our batch - known as 1962 App.TXR batch, consisted of a total of 32 persons- after joining/leaving. 10 persons had joined in Jan. 1962, we were 13 and about 14 persons joined in Aug. 1962. We all however undergone the training together.

Unlike the present days, where people take the full stock of the service, they are about to join, thorough extensive surveys and enquiries, that what type of job, pay scales, training systems, pay scales after training, prospects and working conditions etc.etc. After fully knowing and weighing all these only they join or refuse.,

In our days, the situation was totally different as me **and most of the persons who joined with us, just knew that we are joining Railways, we were not knowing what is this training, what we will learn, what service we are joining afterwards, what are pay scale even, what to say of promotion prospects ec.etc. None of us was knowing about the problems we are going to encounter'**

### **3. STATUS, THEREOF :**

The training was of two categories of Mechanical Engg. Supervisors -one Apprentice Mechanics- who are posted as Charge man - in all wings of Mechanical Engg.

viz, Loco — Carriage, Electrical, and Diesel wings including workshops, and open line sheds etc. And the second, **Apprentice Train examiners**, who are posted as Train examiners on open line. The training in SYSTEM TECHNICAL SCHOOL was under a Principal -an higher grade Mechanical Engineering officer. During the training (Apprentice Mechanics-5 yrs., App. Train Examiners-4 yrs.),there used to be 4 theory sessions of 3 months each, to teach them all mechanical Engineering subjects (standard of the theory session along with practical training being more than a diploma and less than degree) with the same syllabus for both the apprentices to the extent that a combined merit list used to be drawn between them whenever these theory sessions were conducted together.

#### **4. NOW - THE DISCRIMINATION :**

As mentioned above, despite the training of both the apprentices, being under the same school, having the same recruitment qualifications, undergoing the same theory syllabus often having combined/joint merit lists, and same standard of training schedules, a large scale discrimination was observed between both the cadres of apprentices.

1. The basic pay-scale after the completion of due training for apprentice mechanics as charge man was Rs. 205-280 against the pay scale of Rs.180-240 only for Train Examiners.

2. The difference in promotional prospects of both the cadres was enormous as much as that whereas the percentage of the higher grade posts above Rs.205-280 grade i.e. 250-380 and above was 63%, for charge man cadre against only 7% posts in these grade for train examiners. Even in the lower grades i.e. 180-240 & 205- 280 majority of persons were having lower grade (60%) and 33 % in 205-280 grade.

This meant that most of the Supervisors in train examiners cadre used to retire, maximum in the Rs.205-280 grade only and only 7% of the persons used to rise in higher grades.

3. There used to be a grade of Rs. 450-575 -which was the highest, and initially though existing in the cadre of Train examiners but the number of these could be counted on fingers.

4. The number of officers - i.e. Asstt. Mech. Engineers in carriage and wagon wing- used to be only one or two in total mechanical gazetted cadre. Those days these were mostly from charge man cadre only. For example in a selection for AMEs for about 42 posts for which 256 persons were in zone of consideration - in 1976-77 or so, the seniority of Train Examiners cadre persons was after S. No. 200 or so (except one at S.No.146 - as he was repeatedly superseded person).

5. The difference in working conditions in both cadres was enormous, rather incomparable. Whereas the Train examiners are supposed to work in severe ambient conditions in open line like scorching heat, biting cold /lashing rain /flooded pits/sunk maintenance lines flaggy whether conditions to name a few as well as well as poor infrastructure in the form of inadequate lighting during night shifts, no toilets, no shelter, no listers, with almost no offices at all in yards, be it big goods yards or coaching depots. In such conditions we were supposed to maintain minute to minute punctuality and top class safety in operations posing there additional problems on open line unheard of in workshops and sheds.

5.1 The most immediate, heart breaking and disappointing aspect of this discrimination observed during training period, were. Viz:

**1. The stipend being paid to Apprentice train examiners was only Rs.130-145,against Rs. 150-170 being paid to Apprentice Mechanics.**

**2. The class of Pass and PTOs, for Apprentice train Examiners during training was only III class whereas for Apprentice Mechanics II was II class. (This was based on the posting pay scale after training, as the category for II class pass, used to start for pay above Rs. 181/-).**

**3. Though there was a difference in training periods - 4 yrs for train examiners, against 5 yrs for Apprentice Mechanics, and generally this used to be an argument to deny the train examiners their due, but training periods cannot and was not a criteria for granting equality as most of the other technical/non technical supervisors had different training periods from 2-3 period (none had 4 & 5 yrs training periods).**

5.2 The most demoralizing, heart breaking, deplorable, disgusting aspect of the whole issue of discrimination was the total atmosphere was systematically built-up in the training period and otherwise which was created artificially and in arbitrary manner i.e.

1. The Apprentice Train examiners were being treated as stepsons mechanical department during training period and after, as such were of were being treated as second class citizen only reminiscent of the English rule era legacy of KALA-GORA feelings.

2. Though the Apprentice Mechanics used to call themselves Apprentice Engineers, and were having Apprentice Engineers Club with full patronage of administration, but Apprentice Train Examiners were not being called as such and were not considered to be fit for the membership of this club. Consequently we were not allowed to participate in its elections and activities etc. What is more, when new hostel for Apprentices was constructed, they never liked the idea of accommodating the Apprentice Train examiners in it, as in their views, we could not be called Apprentice Engineers, because the name of the hostel was given as Apprentice Engineer's Hostel.

3. The hatred was so intense, that when later on, the intervention of Our principal Sh. K.L. Khurana, we were allowed for the membership of the club, but the hatred and sulking towards us did not subsidize even after that. The extent of hatred can be gauged from one incident. After the entry of Train Examiners in club., I was selected as the Captain of Hockey team. on merit. Immediately afterward, we were to go to Nainital, for participating in an All India Hockey tournament. But as many as seven Apprentice mechanics, boycotted the same, saying that they cannot play under the captainship of a Train Examiner.

### **5.3 LET US NOW GO BACK to OUR -STORY OF SANGHARSH**

Having narrated the status and the total situation prevailing at the time of our joining the Railway Service in 1962. Most difficult situation was that while we all were just raw and unaware as regards rules, culture and system existing in the Railways, not knowing even ABC of the working, most difficult thing was that there was no senior person available to guide us and motivate us, as no senior person was available, to guide us or motivate us. Nor there

was a single piece of paper available for us imparting any information. In addition the greatest setback was that nobody of had any knowledge of working of railways or any service.

Having joined the service in May 62, our position remained very fluid, as after every fewdays new persons(batch mates) were joining us, till off course up to August/September 1962, by which period our full batch had joined.

## **6. A NEW START- VISIT OF SH. K.S.BHATIA - a Sr. Apprentice.**

During this time period, a welcome happening took place That is one ex. apprentice of our senior batch, belonging to 1958 batch of Apprentice train Examiner-Sh.K.S.BHATIA, visited our TXR training centre at Alambagh w/shop. and took pains to assemble all of us and addressed. He told us in detail about this cadre, its working, importance, problems and the injustice being meted out to this category. It was our first exposure to this cadre. He also told us about the various steps taken to address the problems.

6.1 In fact the truth is that though we were given the stipend Rs. 55/- at the time of joining. which was raised to Rs.110/ within two months w.e.f. 01.07.63 (as DA was also added to the basic scale which was 100% at that time), and the same was subsequently revised to Rs.130-145, in due course (against Rs. 150-170 for Apprentice Mechanics), but, being totally raw, we remained unaware of disparity and the implications of these until the visit of Sh. Bhatia.

Bhatia gave us the copy of 7page memorandum submitted to administration, which not only enlightened us regarding the injustice with our cadre, but also clarified many issues to us and in addition it showed us a new path for our struggles ahead.

6.2 This document provided us seed information and worked as catalyst for taking the first step to fight the disparity and unequal treatment being meted out to our cadre. **we drafted the memoranda, based on this document,**

got it cyclostyled and started representing our grievances to various authorities. This seed information also inspired us initially to hold a meeting and unite. The first meeting was held at an open space available in the scrap yard of Railways, opposite to the main gate of Alambagh w/shop. known as Jhagreshwar ground. After about 1-2 hrs, we were shunted out by the security personnel's of the scrap yard). Regular meetings were thereafter arranged in one or the other park/open space. There being no facilities for holding meetings - unlike the present day, the same were mostly conducted by sitting on ground and with no tea or snacks etc. Here **the first concept of making the first organization for the Train Examiners., was conceived and thus the need for making the first organization of the train examiners was felt hence the birth of first association took place. It was also decided to visit other training centre on Indian Railways to mobilize and garner the support of the maximum number of victims of injustice, for the common cause.** Decision to collect some subscription for meeting with expenditure of the activities was also taken. A central body of persons eager to work for their cadre was also constituted.

6.3 The principle, we adopted for successful running an organization was cultivate and foster the atmosphere of brotherhood among ourselves, we started calling each other brother. Not to care for shortcomings of a person, rather developed important virtue of ethics utilizing individual's strengths for the common cause was our motto. A touch of earnest spirit was developed to work untidily and sincerely for the cause and ready to execute any job assigned to individual without ego. For example, at that time, I was not too comfortable in English communication- therefore I never hesitated to call for and utilize the services of Sh. M.N. Dhyan and Sh. Ashok Sharma for English correspondence work and Sh. Ashok Sharma and Sh. A.K. Chakravarti for their proficiency in spoken English. Any delegation which shall go or visited other railways especially south and east etc. or other places where we have to represent our grievances to administration in English, either both or at least one of them would definitely be part of such delegations.

Extensive drives by writing letters to other railways, continued meetings with them by visiting the training centre, regular meetings and writing memoranda to administration, representing them about the importance of our cadre apart from putting them across about the injustice with us were used extensively. Collecting data of injustice, providing relevant data for arguments was our main strategy. Our all activities were loaded with positive attitude only.

**6.4** On the home front, we again adopted a positive attitude. Everybody knows that when you wish to make bigger/better as compared to others, there are two ways of doing this - either to make the other shorter or make yourself bigger. In the former way, you do not gain anything, and remain what you are, but in the later way, not only you do not damage the other but make yourself bigger by achievements. It is only the second way we adopted for our projections. In other way if somebody draws a line, and asks to make it shorter, there are two ways, either to erase it, or draw a parallel line just nearby, a bigger line.

I have given the long expressions to it, to tell you, that the strategy. We adopted was to prove ourselves better in every field of life. We motivated capable persons to secure better marks than them, by providing facilities to such persons, we ensured that more persons complete AMIE in our cadre, for this, we even went to sr. apprentices who were intelligent, to fill for forms for AMIE, the competition was not limited to studies. Our boys started excelling in sports activities like table tennis, carom, chess, other indoor games as well as outdoor sports like football, Hockey or cricket. We became leaders in cultural activities like singing, debates, dramas etc. The aim was to prove our superior qualities in all round activities. This achievement was done with positive attitude in mind rather than for looking down upon AMs

**6.5** Another very vital strategy, which we adopted, and proved very successful for our unity, that We extended our relationship beyond working

colleagues level to the level of families in as much as that every parent was considered our parent, and sister as sister. After joining our services, not ourselves, but our families were also very close. In addition, every senior apprentice was our elder brother and junior as younger. Till very long time we used to call our seniors as 'BhaiSaheb'. The culture of calling BOSS came in picture very late when the recruitment was started from amongst diploma holders, thereby permitting the persons who served in some other organization before joining Railways. From there only this chain of brotherhood started breaking. Now there may be relationship within individual, but not on account of being senior or junior.

## **7.0 START OF ACTIVITIES :**

Having already outlined the concept, systems adopted, strengths of our struggle against injustice, the implementation of the same was initiated, in our activities.

7.1. First of all a monitoring committee was formed (I will not call it a Executive committee/Management Committee, since all the members in this held equal responsibility, and the decisions were being taken with consent. of everyone. A small monthly subscription (rs.1/-only) was also decided. to be collected. In addition many subcommittees were also constituted to monitor and execute different activities, as Memorandum preparation and its submission, for collection of funds, for organization, for having extensive correspondence, for visiting other railways, for delegations to represent our case to administration, for publicity in press or otherwise and most important being the collection of data of all type including about our ex- apprentices. etc.

7.2. A campaign was launched to meet/ contact ex-apprentices starting from Lucknow/nearby areas to enlist their support and blessings and also to prepare the data of their achievements, in professional life and otherwise along with their personal data, postings etc. in addition to know their qualities, to decide in what way we can get their help. For example, Sh. M.C.

Nigam at Lucknow sick line - an ex-apprentice of March -1957 batch) most proficient in English drafting and working rules and so on.

7.3. The number of delegations were then sent to almost all railways technical schools, the first being to Central Railway at JHANSI - there we could meet I.P. Ranjan, V.K. Kulshreshtha, V. Grover and many others, and at W. Rly. - AJMER - where Sh. M.L.Bhagia and one Mr. Sharma met us. Delegations went to ER,SER NER too. All these centres were enthusiastic and good start was given to our activities.

7.4. A number of delegations were sent to Delhi, to meet. N. Rly and Rly. Bd. officials, to explain the injustice being meted out to us. In addition these people were asked to meet ex- apprentices at Delhi so as to start a centre of ours at Delhi.

7.5. To ensure our superiority, we tried to excel in every field, education, sports or otherwise. To ensure that most persons from our cadre qualify for AMIE, we contacted Ex-apprentices like S.P. Puri, (Meerut/Delhi) S.C. Bansal at UMB, S.C. Dixit at Kanpur, etc. on behalf of the cadre, and they did complete the AMIE. Similarly more persons from our cadre were motivated for the same.

In a subsequent occasion, when the first Theory session was conducted - Combined with 62 batch of Apprentice Mechanics, where joint merit list is prepared - our people came out with flying colours, our S.K.AHUJA was among toppers.

**7.6. Another very important vital activity done during the period was collection of extensive data not only of N. Rly, but of all Indian Railways. Data was being collected in the form of total strength of the Train Examiner's cadre, what are the promotional prospects, how much period is spent for getting promoted from one grade to another etc.etc. Such**

data was being collected for not only train examiner cadre but for all the supervisor cadres, specially the technical cadre supervisors.

Idea was that unless you know where are you and what are your weaknesses and also strengths, you cannot have a purposeful struggle launched.

**7.7. Another very important activity was to create the atmosphere of brotherhood among all members, even to the family members, thereby achieving a strong bond of relationship, which was instrumental in unity of ourselves.**

#### **8.0 SOME IMPORTANT HAPPENINGS in 1963- Having impact on Future:-**

8.1 In early 1963, a new hostel was constructed and opened for stay of apprentices. Till now, there being no hostel, all the apprentices were residing in city area making their own arrangements, thereby it was a difficult task to have relationship among themselves and to

exchange their views and have activities together. The hostel was provided, near System Technical Centre, in Char bagh, with all requisite modern facilities, with 205 apprentice capacity. and was named as APPRENTICE ENGINEERS' HOSTEL

#### **8.2 ENTRY OF JULY 1963 - batch of APPRENTICE TRAIN EXAMINERS:**

In July 1963, a new batch of Apprentice Train Examiners consisting of finally 33 persons- after few persons left after joining- joined our cadre, thus doubling our strength. and thereby giving a big boost to our activities. While the provision of hostel extended many facilities, but it presented many ills of modern systems, i.e. RAGGING culture. Since this was the first batch after the construction of hostel, hence the ragging was severe.

At the same time it provided us an opportunity to initiate a culture of brotherhood among the Train Examiners, as the guardians/parents who came to accompany their wards, and were worried about ragging etc, were assured by us, that we will take care of them as a elder brother and they has satisfaction. We all took care of these new entrants and as such an atmosphere of elder and younger brother was created, which proved instrumental in our united activities.

One more batch of Apprentice Train Examiners consisting now of 23 apprentice joined our cadre in December 1963.

### **8.3 A CHANCE INTER-ACTION WITH PRINCIPAL - Proved vital for future activities:**

In the first week of November 1963, one of our Sr. Instructor of BTC Charbagh, was leaving Rly. service to Join a better position elsewhere. We decided to give him a farewell party (this was clubbed with celebration party of Sh. LOMI SINGH -as he was blessed with twin sons on 29th Oct.). The party was arranged at Choudhary Sweets Hazratganj. in the evening.

Our Principal during this period was Sh. K.L.KHURANA, who possessed a great personality, tall, fashionable, very impressive, tiger like face, very discipline liking, fearful and was a terror for persons working under him, but very considerate and helpful. Even the big leader in the cadre of Apprentice Mechanics did not dare to face him. (I have described all this with a purpose, that shall be seen in future events).

We were wary of his presence, but still it was decided to invite him also for this farewell, and gracefully he accepted our invitation, and for the first time a big officer was to attend our event. As luck prevailed, while all of us reached at the decided place, and were waiting for the arrival of our chief guest and Sh. Khurana too in the open corridor of Hazratganj in front of Choudhry Sweets, Sh. Khurana arrived at dot, there. whereas Sh. Paras Ram

- unfortunately (but fortunately for us) became late by about one hour. Big official like Sh. Khurana continued to stand there in open corridor with all of us waiting patiently for Sh. Paras Ram.

**During this waiting period, as was expected too, he started to know about ourselves, our cadre. The first interest arose when he saw a different emblem/monogram on the pockets of our blazers, He enquired why it is different than what is borne by Apprentice Mechanics. This gave us big chance, and we narrated the whole history of injustice with Apprentice Train Examiners, including Stipend, Pay Scales, Training problems and on the top of everything we explained the apartheid policies, of our brother apprentice mechanics, where in we were not allowed to be the part of Apprentice Engineers club, and are not being considered fit enough to be called as Apprentice Engineers and even were initially objected to be in hostel. Dear all, this was first ever, God sent opportunity to us to represent to our worthy Principal about our problems and injustice. We fully utilized this one hour, for this. We were able to convince him about all these injustice with us. He patiently listen to our talks and enquired in between with many questions.(Sh. Khurana, afterward left on transfer to Railway Board, and played a very helpful role in presenting the case of TXRs Cadre later on)**

After about one month of this, incidentally, there was a General Body meeting of the Apprentice Engineers Club. In the light of our discussions with Sh. Khurana, we were for the first time, invited to attend this meeting. In the meeting. He, in the capacity of President of the club (Principal used to be ex-officio president of the club),in his "ROBILLY" voice, announced **"I propose that the Apprentice Train Examiners be made as full-fledged members of this club, any objection, he should come out on right side". Nobody could dare to oppose this and the same was passed unanimously.** and thereby aswe became Apprentice Engineer too.

**This was our first mile stone achievement towards removing discrimination.**

#### **9.0 ANOTHER MILE STONE- THE FIRST EVER ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF APPRENTICE TRAIN EXAMINERS -at LUCKNOW:**

Within one year of start of our activities, we achieved another big success, where in **An All India Conference of Apprentice Train Examiners at LUCKNOW, on 9th & 10th January 1964, was held**, which was attended by the representatives of almost all Railways. In addition, a large number of Senior ex-apprentices of N. Rly. also attended this meet. An all India organization was, here constituted and the name given was “ALL INDIA APPRENTICE & EX.APPRENTICE TRAIN EXAMINERs ASSOCIATION”. Sh. V. Grover of C. Rly. was elected as GENERAL SECRETARY. One thing needs to be mentioned herein, that though I had all along been associated with all the activities of the organization throughout its working and in all its critical and important decisions, but I never held the post of **PRESIDENT** or **GENERAL SECRETARY of the Association**. I just remained with this organization as ORGANISING SECRETARY or TREASURER only.

Very extensive discussions took place during these days, and various strategies were chalked out and number of important decisions were taken to further take our issues. For making all the necessary arrangements, we had taken many decisions, and different committees viz. Mess arrangements, Stay arrangements, Receiving and dispatching arrangement, photography, arranging meeting place, arranging attendance of Ex-apprentices, and most important “Reporting Committee” to note down all discussions, word by word and then prepare the minutes. Another committee was making arrangements for the final open session.

Our Principal - New Principal had taken over by this time - Sh. T.P.S. Kent- He was invited and attended the final session He was introduced with the delegates from all the Railways, he was very much impressed rather surprised

to see the r flawless arrangements, and that too without any support from administration. He rather said that he would have been pleased to be active participant of these arrangements.

**This was the start of new era. of Train Examiner's struggle.**

#### **10. FULL-FLEDGED START OF STRUGGLE AGAINST INJUSTICE:**

After the constitution of the Central organization, full-fledged campaign was launched i.e. **extensive meetings with Rly. Bd./Zonal Administration, Submission of Memoranda with large statistical analytical data and with scrupulously derived facts & figures, Holding Meetings in all zones, and at Centre, passing Resolutions, Meeting with MPs, dignitaries. Drives to strengthen our organizations all over the country, in all zones HQ and Units Cell active interaction with the recognised Staff Unions, asking our members to increase their presence in Staff unions, thus Not leaving any worthwhile forum to present our case, collection of funds, opening and starting an active organization at Delhi (Under the leadership of Sh. R.A. Mittal Train Examiner-Delhi Division) Writing letters highlighting the need for improving the working conditions at micro levels of train examination, In nut-shell no stone left unturned to highlight the problems of and injustice/discrimination with Train Examiners.**

##### **10.1 ANOTHER ACHIEVEMENT:**

During this period, due to the all round presence success at many fronts, viz. Sports, Theory sessions, Extracurricular activities, and frequent meetings/ exposures with official at local level, the significance and prestige of train examiners rose manifold, and administration started giving due weightage to our views and passaging our participation in meetings and forums/ functions. Consequently, we had a greater and easier access with Principal and Vice Principle etc.

Earlier training Technical programme included 10-15 days technical tours to different parts of India (3-4 tours during Training for each batch), but these were **meant only for Apprentice Mechanics**. Due to our acquaintance with train examiners of Indian Railways, my help was sought by Vice Principle Sh V.D.Sharma, to prepare their tour schedules and arrange journey logistics. As I came into his contact, **We represented against this lop-sided system/ arrangement as it is great injustice with train examiners, which are also budding technical supervisors. This was understood, endorsed and appreciated by him, and since then the train Examiners were also sent for such technical tours, all over India. This was a significant achievement, and harbinger of motivation to us that constant struggle brings results.**

**10.2** In addition to these, few other practices were put in action. One-we took a decision that whenever we go for outing whether personal visit or on duty, we should make it a point to meet the Train Examiners at the station to enlist their support and to understand their problems. Since there was almost no telephonic communication available during those times, therefore whenever any active members used to travel, persons of en-route stations were being informed about their train-with putting some coloured piece of cloth to indicate in which coach they are travelling so that TXRs at short stoppage station even could easily spot them and can meet him. Effort was to meet maximum number of TXRs.

#### **11.0 FEW INCIDENCES -WHICH HAD IMPORTANT ROLES in LATER YEARS:**

Let us now narrate few incidences, which did look like very normal, but proved to be good for our struggle, in later years.

11.1 One day Sh. A.N.NAGPAL, our Chief Instructor at TXR Training Centre (TTC), told our class, that he has finished to teach technical aspects of TXR's subject, and henceforth, he will just give us dictation only regarding maintenance of ICF Coaches. During those days I was somehow getting few printing jobs done for association or otherwise i.e. invitation cards etc. or

so. As such an idea struck in my mind, and I requested Sh. Nagpal, that instead of giving us the dictation, he should give his notes to us, and we will get the same printed in magazine/book form, with our own contribution. Initially he did not agree, but ultimately, this was put in action. Soon, the effort came in the form a very beautiful book, which was not only appreciated and liked by all apprentices, but due to our Associations it reached in the hands of TXRs all over India. It gave Mr. Nagpal tremendous name, fame and respect not only among TXRs but even in Administration circles.

Though, this incident look like a very normal thing, but in later years, this experience of ours, did prove a very important or say vital and played a very important role in our struggle in 1970's. The details of which will be given at appropriate stage only.

#### **11.2 INTRODUCTION PARTY OF MAY 65 batch-Apprentice Mechanics:**

After the starting of Apprentice Engineers Hostel in early 1963, there had been the entry of only two batches and those of TXRs - July, 63 and Dec. 63 as usual, therefore, ragging process was pursued with full and usual intensity. by all inmates of hostel. After these two batches induction in succession, there was the first entry of apprentice mechanics batch. Though ragging process continued in normal way, but on the day of introduction party, some unusual bitter happening took place, resulting some people questioning the very right of Train Examiners for ragging/introduction party etc. thereby creating a very bad atmosphere, which otherwise should have been an event to enjoy. But bitterness rose so high, that the Train examiners took a severe decision to boycott the introduction party. The word spread like fire in the jungle to the extent that even professors-ex-apprentice mechanics- had to intervene. But the issue could not be settled amicably. The professors during the party went to the extent having said that TXRs shall have to suffer the consequences of this.

Anyhow, the fact is that without any formal decision taken and with no advance preparation, what-so-ever, the boycott was successful, that not a single TXR attended the party, despite open threats. **This episode is not worth mustering its presence in the record, this being not of happy nod, but is mentioned, to tell that the understanding among us was very high, and in addition it indicates the extent of unity among us. Also it tells, how our cadre went to protect the prestige of the cadre even at micro stages.**

### **11.3 ELECTIONS OF APPRENTICE ENGINEERS CLUB:**

In early 1965, the elections of the Apprentice Engineers club, took place, In that as per the eligibility of various posts of office bearers, we were entitled to fight for 6 posts (out of total 11). At that time, the total strength of Apprentice Train Examiners was 105. Whereas the number of Apprentice Mechanics was 210. The contest was uneven. heavily loaded in favour of Apprentice Mechanics and numerically there was no chance for us to win a single post. While they fielded candidates for all the posts, we could contest only 6. However we were able to convert this contest as if not between two cadres but in good and bad candidates.

When the result were announced by Principal, **we won 5 posts**. Even the one person, who lost the election, got 115 votes.(more than our strength) **I cannot forget the comments of respected Principal, after just finishing the announcement - "Such a unity, I wonder". Thus proving the fact that unity is great tool of fight against injustice and discrimination. The lue of strategy in the hustling can also be undermined.**

### **12.0 TIME Now for INTENSE CHASING & MONITORING OF ACTIONS:**

Having narrated our struggle in detail as above, we intensified our activities, in sending delegations to Rly. Board, Zonal Hd. Qrs. not only on Northern Railway, but throughout the Indian Railways, which included submitting of

memorandums, Representations, resolutions and minutes of a large number of meetings we arranged all over. This apart, delegations were sent to all zonal railway HQs of our Associations to meet and maximize contacts with apprentices. All such activities were ensured to take place on each of the zone of Indian Railways. Associations were formed all over. All activities were being monitored at central organization. Instructions were that no opportunity be lost to represent the injustice with our cadre, during the visit or otherwise, at any occasion, irrespective of the status of the official. It is a fact that criticism, and objections are integral part of any living organization. These are -in fact - essential for progress of organizations. We also had our quota of criticism and cynicism. In order to cope with such situations, and to avoid the clash of egos/interests, we adopted a strategy of being fully transparent in all our activities. Instead of being critical of such persons, the Auditing committees for our activities, expenditure etc. were always formed with such vocal persons. In addition, importantly, at-least one of such person was always made a part of all delegates, specially going to Rly. Board and all such places, so that they may have the unfiltered knowledge of happenings and the activities and also to know what efforts are needed for all such activities. Our experience is that all such persons -if they are not of wrong nature- are normally the intellectuals basically. At-least this was the case. in our organization, and it paid off

All such activities continued through -out the period of 1964-65. There were now signs of greater understanding and appreciation of our problems among the officials that mattered regarding the injustice being done with our cadre, Implications of huge frustrations, resentment and feeling of apartheid atmosphere in a safety oriented cadre, which was assigned one of the most onerous duty of ensuring safety through maintenance and operation of Railway Coaching and wagon stock as well as precious lives of passengers and railway officials travelling throughout the length and breadth of railways, were now being acknowledged and appreciated. And therefore.

**13.0. The “D” DAY ARRIVED - ISSUE OF LONG AWAITED LETTER dt.27.10.1965:**

The sincere and tireless efforts put on by TXRs Associations and individuals as a whole, bore fruits, and ultimately the long awaited letter was finally issued by the Railway Board on 27.10.1965,- the day shall always be reckoned as the golden day in the history of TXRs -which stipulated the implementation of the scheme with effect from 01.04.1966. It envisaged that the Training TXRs shall be increased to Five years and the entry grade of all, after completion of the training shall be Rs.205-280- both equal to the Apprentice Mechanics (Chargeman). Consequently the eligibility for Pass/PTOs -during training shall be Second class. It also meant increase in the stipend -Important was that our Stipend was increased to Rs.180-6-210 against Rs.150-5-170 of Apprentice Mechanics. Unfortunately a few of brother, i.e.10 persons, belonging to Jan 62 batch, were deprived of this benefit, as the letter was to be effective from 1.4.1966only and by that time these persons had already been posted as Train Examiners after completion of their 4 yrs training.

This was the pleasant beginning of the end of acute discrimination, and policy of apartheid being applied against the TXRs. Important was that for the first time, the principle of equality, between the similar type of technical supervisors was accepted by the administration, though the removal of total discrimination was still very far away as the great discrimination in promotional prospects and in working conditions was even greater and still existed.

**13.1 The Salient features of Letter No. E(NG)65 PM I-26 dt.27th Oct 1965 -were:**

**1. The 50% posts of Rs.180-240 grade of TXRs, which were presently were of DRs quota, shall be upgraded to Rs.205-280. with effect from 01.04.1966.**

2. The apprentice train examiners available in training as on 01.04.1966 and those who will be recruited in future, shall have 5 yrs Training (instead of 4 yrs at present) and shall be posted in grade Rs.205-280 directly.

3. The apprentice train examiners, having completed their training of 4 years upto 31.03.1966, then shall be promoted to grade Rs. 205-280 against these upgraded posts,(without any selection) after keeping enough posts for apprentice train examiners under training as on 01.04.1966.

4. The left over vacancies in this grade shall be filled by Artisan Train Examiners, through selection among them.

5. Consequently, the stipend of Apprentice Train Examiners was also increased to scale Rs.180-6-204.

6. The scheme was made effective from 01.04.1966.

**14.0 CELEBRATION OF GOLDEN DAY - BIRTH OF IRTSA- Indian Railways Tech. Supervisors Association.**

As soon as the news of letter issued on 27.10.1965 reached Lucknow, we immediately deputed two persons to go to Delhi to bring the letter, they came back on 29.10.65. Incidentally this fateful date coincided with DIWALI, As such, it was construed to be a God ordained Diwali gift given to us, setting aside deep discrimination built in the system for long.

**WE-as was natural- celebrated the golden day with full enthusiasm and whole hostel was illuminated with DEEPMALA followed with grand party in the night.**

**BIRTH OF IRTSA-** taking leaf from our achievement, which spurred the conscious of Apprentice Mechanics, that egged them also to do something an emergent meeting of all apprentice mechanics, led by many Senior foremen of the workshops, was arranged in LUCKNOW, and the INDIAN

**RAILWAY TECHICAL SUPERVISORS ASSOCIATION, took birth on 1st November 1966.** Their prime objective and main demand, initially, was that since they have been treated as a better class of technical supervisors through- out, the history, as compared to TXRs, their pay-scales be also revised upward. In fact this type of the attitude of the persons, just tells us that how deep rooted were the thought of being superior, and they were not ready to accept the reality. Since this superiority complex has not developed in a year or two, rather this was infused deeply in the minds, keeping in view of the constitution of TXR Cadre. But today's TXR cadre had travelled miles and miles from the earlier era. With the introduction of highly sophisticated Rolling stock, along with availability of higher technically qualified supervisors, up gradation of the cadre was overdue, but all these facts could not be absorbed by those who considered themselves at higher pedestal from ages. Hence such thinking was not unnatural. In times to come this could be understood- on account of our results in every sphere and also in view of our outstanding achievements hence forth- and in today's time that feeling has totally evaporated from the minds of everybody. **Through-out our struggle, our argument was that we are the examiners and any production of Rolling stock, cannot be put in operation without TXR's certification, hence an examinee cannot be better than Examiner. We were successful in transcending this rational fact in the mind of Administration.**

However, the formation of IRTSA - after our success, proved to be very effective, strong, and cohesive organization, and it spread all over India, in a short span of time and became effective in raising the problems of their cadre. In fact its importance rose leaps and bounds, after sufficient lapse of time specially when they opened the gate of their organization first to all mechanical supervisor and subsequently to all technical supervisors of all technical engineering deptts. The fact is that the organizations of TXRs, and later on Diploma Engineers, or Engineering Supervisors Associations, lost their steam in years to come owing to leadership crises/hibernation in years

to come leaving the room open for IRTSA to be sole representative of Technical Supervisor. The credit of IRTSA, formation, and its survival after 55 years of active struggle goes to many dedicated supervisors of their cadre, which is still being served mostly by Apprentice Mechanics. In my personal opinion, the contribution of Sh. Harchandan Singh, Apprentice Mechanic of 1963 batch, who played a major role in its formation, and is still serving the cadre after 55 years despite having retired long ago, is immense. and unparallel. Such persons are always the back bone of a successful organization.

In this reference, it shall be interesting to narrate one incidence. Sh. Harchandan Singh and myself had and in fact very good cordial relationship. Though he is more than 4 years senior to me in age, but has always given me and giving the respect due, as elder brother, because of the tradition of that time to treat the apprentices of Senior batch (I belong to 1962 batch and he 1963 batch) as elder. I shall be honest to accept that knowledge-wise, the service rendered by him to cadre, and leadership quality etc. he has no equal. This type of relationship is existing even today after 57 years of relationship.

Sometimes during the days of our struggle, he showed some interest to meet me. and we met at a restaurant at Charbagh. There he asked a direct question. **"Boss, what are your demands for which you are having a struggle. I took benefit of being senior, and asked his demands first, He being very knowledgeable, narrated all his demands in detail continuously speaking for 15-20 minutes, Then he asked me to narrate our demands. On this I coolly spoke just one sentence "Equality/parity with Apprentice Mechanics (Chargeman) ". He just was speechless.**

**It is surely a fact that we were not fighting for higher pay scale or higher promotional prospects. Our whole struggle was built upon calling for equality with our brethren apprentice technical supervisors (apprentice**

**Mechanics-Chargemen specially), and against prevailing injustice and discrimination only.**

#### **15.0 THE SUPREME COURT CASE:**

Travelling back to the fact that after issuance of letter date 27.10.1965, he celebrations were on in all our associations all over India, for our great achievement. It was natural too, as we had come out of the world of discrimination, injustice, and sense of apartheid policies apart from winning the battle of equality. The celebrations continued for long with much pump and show. Amidst a prolonged spell of celebrations, a news came, just as bolt from blue - perhaps in May 1966 itself that one of the Artisan Train Examiners, working in Delhi Division/Hd.Qrs., has filed a case in Supreme court of India against some provisions of this letter.

In the Supreme court, the learned advocate of the opposite party, conceded the **right of the Govt., to upgrade the 50% posts of TXRs of 180-240 grade to that of Rs.205-280 and also to grant this grade to the Apprentice train examiners as on 01.04.1966 and those recruited later on.** However, he raised constitutional objection to grant this grade of 205-280 to those ex apprentice TXRs who belong to pre 01.04.1966 period and have already been posted as TXRs- thus merged with the artisan TXRs, without selection, whereas equally placed Artisan TXRs are required to attend the selection before they could be given this grade. This as per the petitioner, was ultra-virus of constitution, and violates the rule of equality. The case was fought with all their might by the advocates of Petitioners, and the Union of India. We also engaged a top lawyer to defend the same. However, on 14th Aug. 1968, the verdict was given in favour of Artisan TXRS.

#### **16.0 ACTIVITIES DURING 1966-68.;**

After the issue of our basic demand fulfilling letter dated 27.10.1965, it was but natural to embark upon our next objectives, i.e. promotional prospects

and better working conditions, where there was enormous difference in our prospects and working conditions vis-a vis that of chargemen. or even compared to other technical supervisors viz. Signal and Telecommunication Engineering supervisor, or Civil Engineering and Electrical Engineering supervisors. Earlier our comparison was confined to only with the other category of Mechanical Supervisor - Chargemen only, But now we had to enlarge our vision to compare us with all technical supervisor, but mainly with chargemen.

The disparity with chargemen cadre in respect with promotions prospects was so huge that it cannot be imagined this day. The promotion prospects can easily be measured by the upgrading percentages. which means the percentage laid down for number of posts in different grades in cadre. Let me tell you, in chargemen category, there were only 37% posts in the initial grade of Rs.205-280, the balance 63 % posts were in higher grades i.e. Rs.250-280 and above 4 grades. As compared to this, there were as many as 93% posts in 205-280 and 180-240, meaning thereby only 7 % posts in higher grades i.e. 250-380 and above. Which means the chargemen cadre had 9 times more higher grade posts, and resultantly the promotion prospects. Though this letter of 27.10.1965, was a welcome step towards equality in training period and on initial grade on appointment but it did not cut much ice in respect with the promotional avenue in higher grade as it did not touch that aspect much, It just upgraded the 50% posts of 180-240 to grade Rs.205-280. It means there will be now 30% posts in the lowest grade and 63% in 205-280. Our entry grade being Rs.205-280, only 7% posts of higher grades will be available for promotions. The now famous quote -HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT -was unheard of, in those days, not to speak of cadre pride development. As regards, the working conditions, the situation remain the same as narrated in above paras, except off-course, there was more realization on the part of administration regarding need for improvements.

Therefore, a full-fledged campaign and monitoring of these demands was our next objective. But meanwhile this court case took our full attention of ours, and these demand of ours had to be put on back bench for the time being.

#### **16.1 CONSTITUTION OF HIGH LEVEL SAFETY COMMISSION ON RAILWAYS:**

A high level safety commission was constituted by the Government Of India to look into safety aspects comprehensively on Indian Railways, under the chairmanship of Sh.K.N. WANCHOO. The Commission invited written memorandum from all stake holders viz, Administration, Unions, Federations, Officers Recognized Associations, members of Parliaments, Institutions etc. They were also given personal hearings too. Though, Supervisors' Associations were not recognized, they could also submit their written memorandums if they desire so. Our Association was also interested to submit their views on safety. So the responsibility of drafting a suitable and effective paper was given to me and Sh. R.A.Mittal TXR Delhi- presently our General Secretary.

Normally, every safety commission initiates its functioning by asking the administration, the status of implementation of recommendations made by the earlier commissions and committees on the subject. It has been observed that, the Administration normally seldom give factual status in this respect to cover their inefficiency and short comings. We therefore, focused our attention to highlight the inadequacies in the implementation of safety recommendations, apart from submitting our views in detail at the end of our paper. We collected all relevant recommendation of past Safety commissions, and the truthful status of the implementation of each of these was submitted. For example regarding provision of washing lines, sick-line facilities, provision of adequate lightings in the yards, washing lines what should have been provided, and what is available at site of examination, including non provision of adequate staff, non imparting of technical training, defects in recruitment, non availability of adequate office accommodation,

and non availability of modern tools and machinery, apart from pointing out the defects in examination system etc. were discussed in detail. Without exaggeration, it can safely be said, i nut-self, that we were proud of our efforts and contribution in preparation of this highly valued document consisting of about 100 pages..

As regards the quality of our document, it shall be suffice to tell that in a seminar/conference arranged at Bombay by the administration, **Sh. Umrao Mal Purohit, the then leader of AIRF and JCM, complimented the paper and declared from the stage, that an marvellous paper has been submitted by a small organization of TXRs, even surpassing the paper of big organizations.**

In long and short, it was just like a thesis on the requirement of better working conditions for train examination and for ensuring safety on the Railways, and therefore became a reference paper for our demands for better working conditions subsequently.

#### **16.2 LETTER IMPLEMENTATION,COURT JUDGEMENT & AFTER:**

The letter Dt.27.10.1965 was to be effective with effect from 01.04.1966. Since our batch of TXR-62, had joined the apprenticeship in 3 parts - 10 persons in January 1962, 12 in May 1962 and 10 in Aug.1962. Hence we were scheduled to join as TXRs in 1966 itself in January, May and August respectively, after completion of our 4 years training. As per the provisions of this letter the 4 years period of the training was to be increased to Five years. As the letter was to be effective from 01.04.1966, and since the 10 batch mates of ours having completed their 4 years training in January - which could not be increased to 5 yrs. as per the provisions of this letter, were posted as Train Examiners in January, when they completed their 4 years training. Since this letter was applicable to Apprentice Train Examiners as on 01.04.1966, or recruited afterward, our training period was enhanced to 5 years. and thus the provisions of the letter got implemented w.e.f.

01.04.1966. We were then posted as Train Examiners in Grade Rs.205-280 directly on completion of our 5 years training in May/August 1967. despite the court case having already admitted in the Supreme Court by then. In fact, as mentioned in the judgment, the enhancement of training period and posting of Apprentice Train examiners directly in grade Rs.205-280 was fully not challengeable in law, as conceded by the Petitioners' advocate, as was mentioned in the Supreme Court's verdict. We were already under line training (There is one year's line training scheduled in some division in big yards/depots/offices. I somehow, could manage my line training to be in Delhi Division/ Delhi area, (obviously).

16,3 It was but natural, that all our energies of ours, during this period were channelized towards defending the court case filed in the Supreme court, putting all other issues at back benches. Unfortunately, However, the judgment was not in our favour (Judgment delivered on 14.08.1968).

One important thing happened, in between that Sh. Chandrika Prasad, Member of Parliament from BALIA - (known as guru of Sh. Chander Sekher, perhaps) had kindly accepted to be the President of our Association.

we started our activities again. Though the letter was implemented by and large, till the arrival of the judgment in Aug. 1968, its full implementation was put in cold storage and the situation was in doldrums. There was lot of confusion in Administrations, there was an urgent need of actions to look into the after effects of the judgment, what will happen to filling of posts of, grade Rs. 205-280, upgraded from grade Rs.180-280. It is largely felt that the policy judgment by courts in regards to railways take a lot of time for implementation. It comes in catch 22 situation i.e. what to do and what not to do, and how to do. It happened this case too. It was not clear that what will be the fate of our senior ex apprentice train examiners, and so on and so forth. The whole issue needed to be sorted out for want of clear direction after the court case. We, therefore concentrated all our efforts to sort-out these issues. But administration had become clueless about the actions to

be taken fearing the directions of Supreme court. Hence numerous delegations were sent and memoranda submitted, with no results.

#### 16.4 A VERY INTERESTING INCIDENCE-MEETING WITH MR.

Here, It is pertinent to narrate a very interesting and important incidence In the month of September 1969, I happen to visit Delhi, on such mission. In the evening I along with one person of Delhi area, Sh. Harbhajan Singh Bedi of July 1963 batch -TXR Delhi, went to meet Sh. Chandrika Prasad MP, the President of our Association, in his North-Avenue house. He was holding a darbar (court) like meeting in his drawing room. About 20-25 persons mostly from villages, were sitting on floor, and Sh. Chandrika Prasad on a TAKHAT-before them. Turn by turn persons were narrating their individual requirement - somebody wanted Cement, some wanted scholarship for his ward etc. etc. and Sh. Chandrika Prasad was dictating his P.A. to write to concerned authorities in said regard(s)for solving their problems. We were also offered seat on chairs near him. Meanwhile a phone call came - It was from P.S. of Sh. C.M.Poonacha -Minster of Railways, we were told later on. In between the call, Sh. Chandrika Prasad - kept his hand on the mouth piece, and asked me “ **Bansal, would you like to meet Railway Minister** “. I said sure sir, He told then the P.S. of MR, that he would like to meet MR tomorrow along with two persons and the meeting was fixed at 12,00the next day, at MR’s office in Parliament. We both were given letter for entry in Parliament next day.

In those days there were no computers etc. We burnt mid night oil (as I did not come prepared for such meeting) and prepared a memoranda overnight, listing our case in detail and in the morning the typing shops in Chandini Chowk area was got opened specially, and the memoranda was got typed. We then reached the Parliament complex and entered in the Parliament at appointed time, where Sh .Chandrika Prasad met us. **Meeting started right time, and how he started the conversation, I will never forget in my life.** He said in complete Dehati Language:-

**“ Look Poonacha sahib, many people are saying that you are giving more importance to organizations, having opposition leaders as their President etc. (Sh. Atal Bihari Bajpai was the President of All India Station Masters Association, at that time). If such perception continues, nobody will make the congress MPs as their President. I am the President of their association, now listen to their problem and do something.”**

Sh. Poonacha, then asked me BOLO bete, what you want to say,”. I then started my things just like tape record, and spoke for about 10-15 minutes. After this, Sh. Poonacha, asked me, whether I have brought something in writing, I handed over to him my memoranda, prepared in the morning. He kept this paper on his right side pocket on chest of Kurta. (not given to his PS available there) and we came back.

**This was the incidence of perhaps of 3-4 Sept, and within 9-10 days i.e. on 13.09.1969, yet another very important letter was issued by The Rly .Board, on the lines of demands listed in the papers submitted and our problems were resolved. This was another big achievement of ours.**

16.05 By the time the supreme court verdict came in Aug.68, our 1962 batch and the July 63 batch had already joined as Train Examiners, in JUNE/67 & Sept 67) and Aug/Sept.68, respectively in grade Rs.205-280, after completion of our 5 years training,. Our third batch (Dec.63) was also undergoing line training in various divisions, hence only 16 Apprentice train examiners of 64/65 batch were left in hostel.

At that time there were 8 divisions in Northern Railway and each division had between 5 to 10 depots both including Coaching and Goods depots. Owing to demand of TXRs of various divisions our batch was distributed amongst various divisions as such were scattered all over Northern Railway after posting. There were very few stations, where more than 1-2 persons of our batch were posted. I was posted on Moradabad division at a miniscule (ordinary/chotasa) station – BALAMAU, where

there were 3+1 TXRs available including me (I could not manage my posting on Delhi Division). I was the only one of my batch there with one very senior ex-apprentice of 1954 batch, who was also in grade Rs.205-280 only, as Incharge. Having been scattered all over Northern Railway our activities were affected adversely rather having come to a grinding halt, especially for want of communication means and opportunities to travel places. It coincided with non-availability of motivational leadership at LKO Hostel. Consequently, progress of our activities got confined to individual's brilliance, initiatives and efforts for some time, till we could reorient our strategies again and resurrect the cherished work.

Thereafter, we somehow managed to send memorandums, representations, holding meetings, passing resolutions and sending the same to authorities through our zonal and Central Associations platforms. We also arranged all issues to be represented through MPs and other VIPs. for effective reach at appropriate level. The issues raised were mainly concerning removal of discrimination with our cadre in respect with promotional prospects with respect to other mechanical/technical Supervisors and non availability of good & proper working conditions.

#### **16.6 ANOTHER COURT CASE FILED in DELHI HIGH COURT against us.:**

By early 1970, another case was filed by artisan TXRs, This time by the Artisan TXRs of BKN division including some from Delhi area of BKN division against persons working from our group of TXRs (of 5 years Training) working in Bikaner Division - making them as respondents. This case was filed in Delhi High Court. Another very important aspect was that the advocate engaged by them was again the same who was their advocate in Supreme court case earlier. It is pertinent to mention that during that period of time the seniority of TXRs upto the grade Rs.250-380, was division based. (every division had separate seniority maintained for TXRs upto this grade). Hence, though, the case/decision would have been directly applicable for BKN Division, but practically this would have adversely affected all other divisions

and ultimately northern/Indian Railways as other high courts may take suo moto cognizance of the case. Therefore everyone of us, everywhere was worried and serious about this. Hence an advocate was engaged untidily, not leaving the BKN ex apprentices alone to lonely fight this case.

After many dates and adjournments, ultimately the time for final hearing and arguments arrived towards the end of 1970 perhaps. On day one -though we kept sitting in the court room, ready, but case did not come for hearing. On day two, the advocate of petitioners was asked to present his case near afternoon and he started and continued his arguments till the end of the day, but could not finish. Hence he concluded his pleadings in early hours of third day. All these days, I kept on sitting in the front row with our advocate, well within the sight of worthy Judge. The petitioners advocate presented his case really very well. As such our opposite side train examiners were very jubilant on account of presentation of case. by their advocate.

Now it was the turn of our advocate to put up his defence. He has hardly spoken few sentences, when the Hon'ble justice interjected and asked the advocate a specific question. On this, since he perhaps was not very clear, he just started to tap the back of his head with his right hand, as if something is stuck in his throat. Seeing him so perplexed as I was sitting just beside him - got up on my legs and replied the answer to the question of hon'ble judge. Being satisfied with this, he posed me another question, which needed somewhat longer reply. I took the benefit of it, and not only gave the satisfactory reply to the question, but also narrated the case in detail along with the numerous facts and arguments saying "sir kindly allow me to explain the full facts of the case" thus I spoke about 20-25 minutes.

**Let me admit that I was not a respondent in the case since the case was of BKN division, and I belonged to Moradabad division- hence my intervention was just like an intervention of a private person, and is not permissible in the preview of law. and basically tantamount to contempt of court and as such is punishable, but this could have been objected**

either by the Hon'ble judge himself or by the opposite side advocate/petitioners. The petitioners did not object either it did not occur to them or because they became over confident after the presentation of case by their advocate, and as regards me their feeling was that I keep on speaking at times without any substance. The judge did not object, perhaps thinking me as one of the respondents, as he must have noticed me sitting with our advocate, for the last 2 days, in the first row. Additionally, I was just clarifying the question put by him and thus intricacies of the case were being suitable addressed to his satisfaction. After this the advocate of the petitions presented his counter reply, but on some questions being asked by judge, as per my presentation, could not satisfactorily replied by him. Any- how, the case was closed for the day and judgment reserved.

The judgment was announced After 10-12 days, the petition of opposite party was quashed, and the decision was given in our favour. Important aspect was that the judgment contained most of the arguments stated by me in my deposition.

Indeed this was a wholesome achievement, again as we won a very important case, which could have affected adversely the whole issue.

#### **16.7 ANOTHER IMPORTANTACTIVITY -leading to future achievements :**

Reference is invited to an event, mentioned in earlier part of this write up, i.e. Printing of a booklet on ICF Coach maintenance based on notes of Sh. A.N.NAGPAL - our Chief Instructor/TTC/LKO. There it was said that though it looks like a very non important task, But I had told there, that the importance of this shall be narrated later on. Time has now come to narrate the same here.

As told, with the posting of batch 62, july 1963,and at some time later of Dec.1963 batch too, there remained only the batch of 64/65 consisting of 16

apprentices only, the centre of activities got automatically sifted to open line on various divisions (I was posted at Balamau/Moradabad Division). By 1970, I was transferred to Bareilly C&W Depot, which was one of the big 4 C&W depots of Moradabad Division. Incidentally this got me united with, My father and family after a lapse of 8 long years. My father was transferred to Bareilly in July 62 itself, just after my joining railway service in May 1962.

In view of various achievements in these years of activities, most of the problems faced during training periods had got resolved. This ended a chapter but passed to opening of new leaf in our struggle as, with our postings on working post of Train Examiners, the total perspective as also the scope of our struggle got altered to our problems of the cadre of Train Examiners, as a whole, i.e. concentrating on Promotional prospects and Working conditions on line/depots broadly. From Now we were more concerned regarding the working aspects concerning train examination.

During this period, I came to know about the important technical instructions on maintenance of Rolling stock are being issued by the Northern Railway HQ office - Mechanical wing under the title of " **C&W- IMPORTANT LETTER** ", which were serially numbered too. I became curious and started searching it everywhere possible to get these i.e. few in the office of Bareilly 4-5 more such letter in MB C&W Depot and even in DRM office of Moradabad. The first letter which was seen by me, was serial No.63 -important letter. I could get a total of 8-9, letter of different serial numbers. This spurred me to go in depth and collect more and more such letters. This led me to visit, HQ office, NR Baroda House New Delhi. the originating point of issuance of these letters.. There I found that even the original policy office file is not having the several number of Important letters issued so far., though the latest letter No.63 was there. ( It was because whenever a big official wanted to see some letter, the same was given to him, by taking it out from the file, without caring to put it back after the requirement is finished).

But where there is will there is way. Here, our interpersonal relationship of TXRs association, came to play a important role. I wrote a letter, to all my association colleagues, scattered all over the Northern Railway, giving the numbers of missing letters, to make a thorough search in their offices, After hectic and tremendous efforts, put in by various colleagues the result started showing as we received one or two letters from each of their depots, and we were successful in collecting all the important letter issued from Northern Railway HQ. since beginning. Here, the experience of the past started ticking in my hind sight, having made the publication of ICF maintenance, possible in the form of a booklet in 1964, and its success It spurred me to go in for printing these letters in a compendium form, though my individual contribution. As such the printing work of these letters got initiated by me immediately.

The printing of these letters was almost at last stage, when Sh. C.P.SIBAL, Asstt. Mech. Engineer HQ, came on Inspection of Bareilly Depot. By the way he was a Ex App. train examiner too of a sr. batch, and knew me on account of association activities. In the evening I met him in his saloon, and showed him my work of printing of important letter-proof copy. He complemented me profusely for my sue motto initiative of mine.

As the destiny prevailed, after about a month or two, an urgent directive came from Railway Board, addressed to all Railways, quoting the recommendation of, **High level Railway Safety Commission**, which inter-alia said **that it has been observed that the cadres who are supposed to ensure safe running on Railways, mostly the technical supervisors are not in know of the important policy letters in respect with safety, as these**

**seldom reach to concerned supervisors. Therefore it was recommended that it must be ensured that such instructions reach to them invariable, in addition to introducing and ensuring the refresher courses for them.**

Consequently. The Rly. Board wanted compliance of this recommendation, within a short period.

At that period of time, there were only two officers in C&W deptt., N.Rly. HQ. one Dy.CME- sh. K.G.UPPAL, the overall head of C&W deptt. and one AME - sh. C.P.SIBAL. Sh.Uppal, then called sh. Sibal, to discuss, how to comply with these directions. On this sh. Sibal -told that a young TXR met him at Bareilly, and he has done lot of work in this respect. Dy.CME wanted I should be called to HQ immediately. Therefore an urgent telegram was sent to Bareilly to direct me to see Dy.CME, forthwith. Those days the Dy.CME post was very big post and even very senior persons used to be afraid of going before him. Any how this telegram was soon a talk of the depot and even Moradabad division, that why a TXR of few years standing has been called by Dy.CME. Me too was somehow worried naturally.. Still, I immediately went to HQs and was led to his room along with Sh.SIBAL. Sh. Uppal told me very calmly and in short and low voice -as was his way of talking I came to know in times to come -that **Sh. Sibal has spoken very high about me, and now HQ wants my help, in accomplishing an important task assigned to the Deptt. He told me that he wants that a compendium of Important policy letters, in respect with maintenance of Rolling stock, be compiled, published and distributed to individual C&W supervisors, officers, and concerned sections.** In this regard, I was to collect all the letters issued so far, edit them suitably, weed out outdated instructions, assimilate several letters issued on one subject, and add additional letters on the basis of technical aspects, and all with latest modifications. The work was to be started immediately, The system adopted for this was, that, I will the rite the matter in my hand writing in the day, hand over the hand written pages to Sh. Uppal in the evening, he will mark modifications even of 'is' and 'are' by pencil while going to home in car/or at his residence, and next morning the same will be got typed. This continued unabatedly for a month, or so, and ultimately a draft was ready wherein 67 letters issued so far, were merged in 21-22letters and 2-3 new letters. Most important were 3 letter regarding

yardstick for staff calculations for BG, MG and NG separately, which were accepted by finance also for sanction of manpower, for C&W works. Due to these letter this booklet was officially accepted in 2-3 more railways too. (thereby due importance, name and fame too) This was then got printed. By next month, the result came out in beautiful compendium form, with blue cover, -to be known as blue book of C&W with the name “C&W IMPORTANT CIRCULAR” released by forward by. Sh. K.G. UPPAL. Important was that there was no name of myself given anywhere, as these were official circulars.

**Though there was no mention of me-self, in this booklet, but this was the book which gave me unprecedented name, fame, respect, and popularity not only in administrative circles, but among my cadre as a whole, This put me in lime light, and the relationship cultivated during this period boosted my image many notch higher and helped me tremendously not only to help my cadre immensely, but even me-self in my career, as shall be revealed in times to come’**

( Not to mention much, my own book of Important letter, completed by now at the cost of thousand of rupees, had to be disposed off as waste paper, being out dated and all supervisor given free books) but NO regrets. **the results it yielded to my cadre and even for me. were far more.**

#### **17.0 REVIEW OF STRATEGY & REORIENTATION OF ACTIVITIES.**

Having found a world of extreme discrimination, total injustice, and the policies of apartheid against the cadre of apprentice train examiners vis -a -vis the other equally placed mechanical supervisors having same recruitment qualifications having training under the same principal with same syllabus, and equal in all respect spurred us to wage a grand struggle to achieve equality and due respect and creation of friendly atmosphere during training apart from equal or even more stipend, same training period, same pay scale on appointment. This battle was surely big and most motivating, and

all this was achieved by the time our time for joining our services arrived and we were posted too.

Having found that things on open line were nothing as we had found and fought the issues tooth and nail during apprenticeship period i.e. a world of extreme discrimination/total injustice/apartheid policies against the cadre vis-a-vis the other equally relevant mechanical supervisors (Chargemen), though having been recruited with same qualifications/having same syllabus training under the same principal that had spurred us to wage a grand struggle to achieve equality, due respect and higher grade.

Now on line, the field had changed for us to play/performance as well as the goal posts, however, the nature of treatment meted out to us was similar like apprenticeship. Furthermore, working conditions on line were shoddy and tottering rather primitive system of examination of coaching and goods stock despite this being the back bone of the Railways. Now the struggle was to achieve adequate and equal promotional prospects in TXR cadre to stand and be counted amongst better treated technical supervisors as also to strive for much improved working conditions as per the need of the day. Earlier the struggle was mainly waged by some 100+ Directly recruited train examiners, off-course with the support and full and able participation of equally placed directly recruited Train Examiner of Indian Railways and with the advice of our ex apprentices.

Due to these circumstances, the need for total review of existing system of promotional avenues and poor working conditions and reorientation of our strategy to match with the requirement was urgently felt.

Strangely enough, earlier the image of TXRs on line was cultivated as the supervisors maintaining and running the wagon stock only and the wagon stock was termed as MATCH BOX fitted on two axles/four wheels. Its staff provided lubrication to wagon bearing animal fat (CHURBY) only. And no fight whatsoever was put up by TXR cadre to improve upon this image, since

most of the cadre comprised off Artisan TXRs, perhaps they didn't care enough or attached no value to prestige of cadre from which they earned bread & butter for their and their family livelihood. The attitude of administration was no less reprehensive towards belittling TXRs image, since some percentage of TXR staff was recruited directly from Khalasis (non technical staff) level, leave aside their qualification with very little exposure of mechanical department/maintenance experience. They used to be picked up just on whims of local bosses and sent for 15 days training at Jamalpur and posted as TXRs. With the passage of time and introduction of highly sophisticated modern Rolling stock i.e. wagons & coaches with new trolleys, roller bearings, helical springs, air brakes, under frame modules, knuckle and what not, the recruitment of highly technically qualified supervisors became a necessity rather compulsion for the admin. By now there was a perception change in recruitment policy i.e. qualification standards/training of even artisan TXRs and most of the supervisors were having at-least ITI certificates, majority with higher educational qualification and were having sufficient field experience of C&W working as were now picked up from at-least skilled cadre only.

#### **17.1 COMPOSITION OF TRAIN EXAMINATION CADRE.**

Though keeping in view of the high standards of technical advancements in rolling stock, the necessity of having highly technical supervisor, the recruitment of supervisors through the apprentice train examiners scheme was introduced. Though the thought was under consideration from even British era i.e. 1945, but its modalities were yet to be fine-tuned. The total recruitment was 9 (1945 batch) about 14 -1947 batch both pre independence,(trained at LAHORE, 8 in 1949, and then with the start of System Training school in 1954 at LKO, and simultaneously in other zones, - 23 apprentices of 1954 batch, and 10 of 1957 batch.16 of Jan.58,40 of Dec.58, and 13 of June 1959. After this regular recruitment started and we were 105- 32 of 1962, 34 of July 63,23 of Dec.63 and 16 of 1964/65.- i.e. a total of

230 from apprentice cadre. out of a total cadre of about 1000+ TXR cadre. More or less, the same is the status available in almost all other zones. However there is much improvement in this status in later years with more and more recruitment of Apprentices, but bringing it close to its stipulated 50 % strength of the cadre still remains or remained a distant dream.

#### **17.2 IMAGE OF TXR CADRE:-**

During our struggle in apprenticeship period, there was no such problem of image, and whatever small hitch was, we were able to put it out of our path tremendously through our endeavour of standing tall amongst our brethren apprentices in all spheres of training viz studies, merit qualifications, AMIE, Sports, Extra-curricular activities and others you name it and we had it. but here the problem was totally different. We the TXRs could easily prove ourself comparable with the cadre of other Mechanical apprentices and we were struggling for our uplift, citing the injustice with us. Hence success. achieved.

Now, the struggle was for higher promotional prospects for the cadre and better working conditions. Had this fight been for our cadre of apprentices only, perhaps it would not have been so difficult. But this struggle was for upliftment of the total cadre of TXRs. For this the image of the total cadre mattered. It has already been narrated above which clearly brings out that as per the constitution of TXRs cadre, as many as 75+% were from artisan TXR cadre, in addition, the image was of supervisors maintaining match box on 4 wheels. and also the recruitment qualifications of supervisors was not very assuring. Unfortunately all the official sitting on higher posts and responsible for taking decisions, had the old images of the cadre as also of C&W deptt. as a whole infused in their minds badly. We have ourselves seen that the young officers at the time of their postings never wanted to be posted in C&W deptt. and some who had to be posted thought it disgusting for themselves. Naturally to wage a struggle for improvement in our prospects was never going to be easy task rather it was a highly uphill task and therefore required lot of guts, resolve and efforts too.

Additionally too, equality in promotional prospects was difficult to explained. Though we were quoting, time to time availability of 63% posts in grades higher than the grade rs.205-280, which was the initial grade. Our demand was also the same, because our initial grade was also 205-280. Where - as the cadre of TXRs had the initial grade of Rs. 180-240 having still 30% of the cadre posts.

### **17.3 LOSS OF PRECIOUS TIMEFOR MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES & STRUGGLE**

Life is not a straight ladder game, where you go up & up, but also of biting snakes that bite and bring you fall on lower planes. Briefly recalling that our success in getting letter dated 27.10.65 issued from Railway Board put us in extended euphoria mode, but then euphoria ended when we were dealt with a body blow as news regarding challenging of this letter in Supreme Court of India by few artisan TXRs reached us. It put us in tail spin mode Naturally, the review of strategy and reorientation of activities was the need of the hour in view of the new situation. Our struggle for having satisfactory level of promotional prospects as also the provision of satisfactory working conditions on open line had to be put on back burner, as we were required to put concerted and concentrated efforts to fight the court case. This took away from us our precious time, which otherwise could have helped us move onwards towards our next goal. Though we were not successful in defending the court case. Unfortunately, immediately after this there was another notable advancement rather bad development(one more court case) which jolted us badly and we lost another year of positive activities. You would agree that losing the case in Supreme court in itself was a big setback, this defeat was going to give us another big jolt;The huge force thus far standing by our side i.e. battery of experienced Ex-apprentices, which always gave us a very big moral support drifted away from us.. Though the judgment was most unfortunate, and we did our best to save it, but don't know why, but the fact is the bracketing of ex-apprentices with artisan TXRs, made them to behave inimical with us, their postures were even more strident than the

opposite party. The fact is that at that time and even now the organization was led by one of our ex-apprentice of 1958 batch Sh. R.A.MITTAL who was our General Secy. yet for strange reasons that I fail to appreciate till day, I was treated to be the villain and was made principal target, as if I alone were responsible for their loss. I was singled out for that and steps were taken to putting hurdles& restraining me in for getting many benefits admissible to me, and even in day to day working. However, the situation on other zonal railways was not so grim.

#### **18.0 SERIOUS REPURCUSSIONS ON CADRE:**

In order to start a campaign for achieving better promotional prospects and better working conditions, need was for more intensive, continuous, and coherent struggle. Unlike our struggle for equality in training period, since these were the requirements of cadre at a large, hence positive involvement of all stake holders i.e. TXRs as a whole was essentially required. But the situation created by the court cases, win & loss, the bitterness created due to all this in the members of the cadre, bifurcation of the cadre members in number of groups specially 3 groups, all groups having one or the other grudge, an unhealthy atmosphere of total mistrust among each other and on the top of everything almost negligible activities during last 2-3 years, had played a havoc on the total environment prevailing in the cadre at that time. Unfortunately, we were only about less than 100 persons in the total cadre of 1000 TXRs on N. Rly. (135 ex-apprentices and approx. 750+ artisan TXRs ).

#### **19.0 RE-ACTIVATION OF ACTIVITIES:**

Besides all these setbacks, the difficult situation existing, very demoralizing environment prevailing, on the top of everything the fact that we all were scattered all over N. Rly we regenerated our energies, and with the help of many positive thinking ex-apprentices were able to motivate many energetic, well meaning, active, and intelligent persons, and therefore we could regroup

our activities under the leadership of Sh. R.A. Mital-working at Delhi at that time. Our main task at that time, was not only to galvanize, our activities to wage a struggle for our main demands of better promotional prospects and better working conditions, but also to strive for improvement in the atmosphere of total mistrust prevailing in the mind of members of TXR cadre as a whole.

While studying the total situation in depth, it was concluded, that we cannot achieve anything, as desired, with the image of the cadre prevailing presently. We therefore decided to concentrate our activities towards image building of the total TXRs cadre. Therefore, this exercise was initiated with frequent meetings with officials, by sending memorandums/representations, and propagating through M.P.s and other higher placed officials. In regard to improving the atmosphere of mistrust, we made efforts by meeting our own persons including artisan TXRs, by assuaging their feelings and sentiments regularly. Instead of having the feeling of enmity, we tried to have an amicable atmosphere. This all was very fruitful and by and by there was improvement in the total atmosphere of the cadre. During our discussions with official, many options to improve our prospects were used to be discussed. All these positive activities, as also positive attitude, gave us ample results in times to come.

#### **20.0 ISSUEANCEOFIMPORTANT LETTER - CHANGING CADRE IMMENSILY:**

Due to combined efforts of the entire cadre combined and realization by the administration, that a vital cadre ensuring safety operations cannot be kept frustrated and

tense for a long time. The Board took a vital decision and issued a **letter to be effective from 1.11.1972, wherein the grade Rs.180-240 was abolished and all posts upgraded to grade Rs. 205-280. making it a single entry grade of TXRs.** Thus after a long struggle, disparity within the cadre was removed.

This not only restored the due pride of TXRs, they stood and cherished for long but another very important impact of this, that with giving initial grade being equal to all supervisors, our efforts to get the equal promotional prospects with other technical supervisors, got boost. In addition it opened the gate for our efforts towards trying for removal of bitterness prevailing in the cadre, and thus we intensified our activities to bring all factions of the cadre together.

#### **21.0 ANOTHER BIG STEP FOR MOVING AHEAD- UNIFICATION OF CADRE-**

We were in deep discussions for finding ways to take our cadre further. Greatest hurdle in this was the constitution of our cadre, which was not only detrimental for our struggle for better promotional prospects but was instrumental in creating separate corners in the cadre and also creating many factions and thereby was resulting in acute mistrust and bitterness among ourselves. The issuance of letter in 1972, removed all these hurdles and thereby spurred us to put in more efforts to achieve unification of cadres, and clear the atmosphere of hatred, enmity, and mistrust. We intensified our efforts towards this end. and at last we were successful in achieving a thing which was never thought possible since the birth of this cadre.

Thus far we were still working with the name of our the association-as, "ALL INDIA APPRENTICE & EX- APPRENTICE TRAIN EXAMINERS ASSOCIATION". Though the centre of activities was the northern region - as was natural too, on account of the existence of Ministry of Railways/Railway Board being at Delhi, but each and every zonal railway was having equal contribution in all our activities hence achievements (and failures too).

It is pertinent to mention here, there was another association named as "ALL INDIA TRAIN EXAMINERS ASSOCIATION" with its HQ at KOLKATTA, though claiming representative of all TXRs but mainly it consisted Artisan TXRs. Though it was an very old organization of TXRs, but its activities largely localized, in and around KOLKATTA areas (ER.SER Etc.) and therefore most

of the office bearers were dominated by persons of that area only. Its activities as also following was, therefore limited. Still it was a registered association. Its general Secretary at that time was Sh. A.K.DAS - TXRTIKIYAPARA yard, HWH. Their nominated, President - was great unionist, CPI leader Sh. S.C.BANNERJEE - MP from KANPUR. We not only contacted this organization, but also active persons of all zonal Railways and off-course blessings of our Ex-apprentices of Indian Railways.

22,0 **ALL INDIA TXRS CONFERENCE - at BAREILLY of MORADABAD DIVISION-another mile stone in the history in MARCH 1973-**

I was posted at Bareilly junction at that time. Though the HQ of our Association was New DELHI -since our GS being there, but centre of activities, anyhow was Bareilly. Hence the Conference of TXRs was also called there. in the month of March perhaps. The TXRs of all cadres and associations were invited there, along with the TXR Association of KOLKATTA. Never the less, the representatives of almost from all zonal railways attended the said meeting. The main agenda of the meeting was merger of associations of the cadre i.e of Apprentices and artisan TXRs.

We all knew very well, struggle for promotional prospects and working conditions, is not possible alone. we strived to achieve unity at all cost. We therefore agreed to adopt the name of the organization, as **ALL INDIA TRAIN EXAMINERs ASSOCIATION, With HQ at Kolkata** only with subsidiary HQ at Delhi. We agreed to have their president as also the General Secy. post for them. It means we accepted all their demands in this respect. Even the post of Working President post -which is virtually the de-facto president of the Association-as the post of President held by a MP was just a ceremonial post. Sh. T.K.NIRANJANAN, a senior and respected person of S. Rly was nominated as Working President. In nut-shell all factions of TXRs were merged under one banner to present a united front. This was another good phase of our struggle.

### **23.0 WORK -TO- RULE AGITATION- A GLORIOUS CHAPTER of our struggle.-**

**In 1973, the FOURTH CENTRAL PAY COMMISSION gave its recommendation. It was revealed that despite the grant of Grade RS.205-280, as initial pay scale by 1972, the IV CPC still recommended a grade of Rs. 380-640 only, to TXRs against the grant of grade Rs. 425-700 to all other technical supervisors.** After earning the hard fought equality after a life long struggle and efforts were squandered put to naught as per the recommendation of the Pay Commission. This was not acceptable to our cadre. Our meetings with officials failed to cut any ice, since nobody was ready to intervene, saying they cannot do anything as this being the recommendation of Pay Commission.

. Finding no way out of this impasse, we were first clueless to find solution to this problem. Ultimately an emergency meeting of Central Committee of Association was called. After going into deep discussions amid brain storming session, It was found, no other way is available to us but going for the observation of WORK-To RULE WEEK. In order to avoid the tag of agitation, we instead termed it "SAFETY OBSERVATION WEEK" somewhere in OCT.1973. In order to ensure that somebody may not play trick to harm our cause, by giving wrong messages of taking the agitation back, we decided to have code words both for starting and specially to end the agitation. During those days no whatsapp, video etc. facility was available, therefore everything was to be conveyed through telephone and basically telegram's only. Everyone shall be amused to learn that the code word decided to call off the agitation was 'UNCLE DIED' and like this many decisions were taken, Appeals were sent to all over India to make it a success. Extensive tours of office-bearers were made to unite and educate the normal TXRs. In nut-shell intensive as well as extensive preparations were made to make this successful. We put in our best brains to look after and plan everything including minutest details. since there was no experience in history of our cadre in this regard. We wanted to leave nothing to chance. Due notices

were served to administration along with memorandums containing our demands charter. On the top of everything, a complete compendium of defects concerning coaches and wagons, affecting safety during day to day examination was also circulated for all for education. Zone-wise observers to monitor the implementation of the decisions., were also nominated.

### **23.1 EFFECT OF WORK TO RULE**

The Work to rule started on the decided date. First day the results were somewhat moderate note/ mild, but from second day on, the effect was visible and within two days the sick-lines were full to their capacity. We got some requests from few stations to relax it as the TXRs working in sick lines were being pressed to make fit and release maximum number of rolling stock. During this period, I travelled to TKD, MB and KJGY Sick lines to intensified the agitation. We used to travel during night by goods trains. On 4th/5th day, alarm bells ringing for administration started sending alarms. The maximum effect of this was felt on Eastern region, where most of coal fired power plants existed. The power plants started issuing emergency rather SOS, messages, in view of their coal stock levels on ground left barely for 1 to 2 days. The result was going to be total power shut down in the covering area unless supplies reached there urgently. The next day all national newspapers Statesman, Hindustan Times, Indian Express, Telegraph etc. carried big editorials, mentioning that how a small cadre of supervisors have played havoc with generation of power in the country. At this stage the then Railway Minister- Sh. Ram Subhag Singh became concerned and called immediately Sh. G.P.WARRIER- the then Member Staff, and asked the details. On being apprised, he was much annoyed and put a poser to MS as to why this matter could not be settled in advance, He then directed him to intervene in the matter to ensure immediate action on the subject. Sh. Warrior then contacted AIRF/NFIR, -as associations are not recognized, On being told that this is being independently being organized by TXRs, he requested Sh.J.P.Choubey of AIRF, and so, Sh. Mital our General Secy. was invited to

Rly. Board, and was requested to immediately call off the agitation. On being told that it will take 2-3 days, as he will have to issue telegrams to each unit, Telecommunication officers were asked to provide all facilities to enable Sh. Mittal to talk to all. **Thus the most successful and effective work to rule of the history of Railways came to halt. An emergent meeting of unions was then called by the Board, to settle the issue.**

We also summoned all of our members, who were having some say in both the recognized staff unions, to acquaint them fully about the problem and to prepare both the unions to press upon our demands strongly, before the Board. Mention of the proceedings of this meeting is not only important but interesting too. The Board, was not interested to assure modification of Grade 380-425 to Rs.425-700, for our cadre too, and just kept saying that they will recommend. But the Unions were insisting on clear assurance. On seeing their reluctance, **Sh. Choubey, having become emboldened and buoyed by the success and impact of our work to rule, openly, declared there, " Let the Board not give this in Meeting, we will ourselves take it on field ". These golden and unforgettable words of Sh. Choubey, worked/weaved magic immediately and Railway Board relented and agreed to meet our demands.**

**It will be interesting to tell about the effectiveness of this agitation. That it proved more effective than even the total strike by Loco pilots sometimes earlier. After few months, work to rule was called by another two important cadres of Railway (names not mentioned knowingly), and these could not succeed in their mission.** In fact, after their failure, an interesting cartoon appeared in some national paper, where in it was shown -One horse was getting NALL fixed on his foot, by a lohar (Blacksmith). One Frog who was looking this being done, After the work of fixing on horse foot finished, the frog also lifted his foot before the lohar, to fix that on his foot too.

It can safely be said that such successful and effective events can only held once only in your life span, as this not only require tremendous efforts, perfect planning and selfless thinking, and specially special blessings of God almighty coupled with good wishes of large number of persons. This event is very difficult, if not possible in present atmosphere, when most of the supervisors always think self before cadre interest have dearth of mustering enough courage and guts in working, perhaps they believe more in pleasing the higher ups, than hard working. But nothing is impossible and normally history repeats. It is rightly said that where there is a will, there is way. We need more battle hardened, selfless, initiative oriented persons to repeat the success.

### **23.0 NEXT PHASE OF STRUGGLE FOR PROMOTIONAL PROSPECTS**

It is pertinent to say that the positive atmosphere created by continuous chasing, submitting memorandums, regular meeting with officials with relevant data and inputs. This extensive exercise of image building of our cadre, strength built by merger of all factions, continuous representations/ interventions /recommendations of MPs/VIPs, helped to bring our cadre in lime light of administration. successful launch of work to rule, throughout Indian Railways sent shivers to the spine of Railway Board and made our presence felt. All these measures and strategies combined with personal equations at the right moments, played crucial role for our next phase of struggle for promotional prospects.

Meanwhile during the general strike which was called in May 1974, we together took a very crucial decision, wherein while we did not oppose the call, but we also did not give an official statement of joining in the strike as a member of the association. We however decided that all members may take their own decision, as railway men or respective union persons whether to join the strike or not. This was a very crucial but difficult decision to take. Whereas IRTSA officially declared to join the strike. It was due to our declared policy of not to affiliate our association with any particular union, but

maintained good relations with both the recognised unions, and rather encouraged our members to actively join the union of their choice, and even become their office bearers. Our own General Secy. Sh. R.A.Mittal was a very active and effective office bearer of NRMU/AIRF. and in time to come rose to very senior position in this union/federation.

#### **23.1 MY POSTING IN HQ OFFICE - A very crucial and vital opportunity-**

Taking cognizance of my performance and contribution to the administration at crucial time in compilation of 'C&W IMPORTANT CIRCULARS' which earned accolades For N.Rly. Mechanical department administration, orders were issued for my posting in HQ office directly under C&W deptt. now headed by- Addition CME(Earlier by Dy.CME C&W-Sh. UPPAL) against a newly created EX-CADRE post in grade Rs.550-(old grade 250-380). This was the first post created for establishing C&W control organization On N.RLY. Prior to this the punctuality of trains, any mis-happening and some ineffective position of C&W was being collected by Loco Controllers only. Every morning, this used to be collected by one of C&W Inspector posted in HQ office and presented to Dy.CME (C&W). This post was exclusively created,for the first time to streamline the C&W Control working. On account of this posting of mine I gained access to high officials of Mechanical Deptt. in HQ & Divisions.

23.2 This post became a important link between Divisional and HQ officers, due to this reason, I became close to almost all DMEs/AMEs, the divisional head of C&W deptt. Gradually, we were able to set up C&W Control organization in all the 8 divisions of NR. Which enabled us to have close contacts. Shortly, due to my proximity with officials, I was able to raise and solve a number of problems being faced in official matters and personal too. This helped us in satisfying grievances of large number of our members. Similarly I could do it at HQ level and was able to help many persons in their profession working and personal problems, by making its presentation to officials concerned in positive way.

23.3 IN a short period, though the post of HTXR control was not concerned with this, but on account of large data collected in respect with rolling stock, especially in coaching stock, the work of maintenance of coaching stock, and of planning of washing line requirements in addition to staff creation/requirement etc., started being assigned to me. I was able to convince the officials, that the shortfall in working conditions, lack of promotional prospects, shortage of working staff, and lack of motivation, are mainly responsible for failures in day to working. Due to large information on C&W activities, I could get access to many internal details of the deptt. My image of having deep knowledge of problems helped me to present all such things in coherent way, and thereby conscious positive steps were started by the administration in a positive way to overcome these problems.

23.4 My regular poking, at the right occasions in respect of acute stagnation, acute shortage of working staff, very poor availability of working conditions, lack of motivation etc., helped to present a realistic picture of problems, and thereby to find their solutions. This started giving positive results.

23.5 On the organizational front, we continued or rather intensified our activities in raising our issues, through meetings, memorandums and specially through Member of Parliament letters. In one of the such campaigns, Sh. SURAJ BHAN M.P.- who was Minister of Agriculture, Dy. Speaker Lok Sabha and Finally Governor of UP& Himachal Pradesh, in later years, raised our issues with the govt. Had discussions with Member Staff Sh. AJAY Johri, on the neglect of C&W deptt. with respect with number of number of officers in C&W, for which comparative figures of Staff': officers available in loco, DSL, workshop etc. were submitted.

23.6 As luck prevailed, during this period only, Railway ministry sanctioned about 565 additional posts of Asstt. officers on Indian Railways, for all departments. **N.Rly. mechanical Deptt. got a share of 25 such posts. Due to our talks already being in progress, and after, my lengthy talks with**

**CME, a share of 11 posts out of 25 was allotted to C&W deptt. This was again a morale boosting achievement of ours**

However, this sanction of higher posts created a big problem. In fact these posts were not new posts, were created by surrender of equal number of highest non gazetted posts of supervisors, from respective cadre. **Hence we were supposed to surrender equal number of posts of highest supervisor post in lieu of these 11 posts.** So far it was ok. But the problem came when the question of selection against these posts arose. Since the seniority of supervisors for officers selection, was combined for all mechanical deptt. So we were put in serious problem. Because **as per combined seniority the status of C&W persons was very much low,(on account of very low promotional prospects in C&W cadre) there being no possibility of selection of any C&W supervisor.** Now, see our dilemma, we lost 11 higher grade posts of Supervisors, and the resultant posts of AMEs shall be filled by other streams of Mechanical deptt. The number of higher grade posts was already too low in our deptt. and loss of 11 of these posts shall be lost. It played havoc in our cadre. We immediately raised our voice and intensified our efforts. Sh. Suraj Bhan MP. played crucial role in it. He had to meet MS and Even MR in this respect in addition to our intensified lobbying in official circle. At last our efforts enabled us to get another big achievement of our struggle, where-in it was decided that selection for AMEs to be held stream wise, not on combined seniority but through cadre wise seniority only. This was done for the first time in the history of Railways and was later-on introduced in Traffic deptt., where also the commercial deptt suffered badly vis-a-vis operating deptt. (not introduced in other deptts.) This win was surely unique. and for this C&W deptt., solely was instrumental.

#### **23.7 - ACTIVITIES - THROUGH WHICH ALL THESE MADE POSSIBLE:**

It is worth mentioning, that we were holding the fort at local level, but on Rly. Bd., level, all our activities were possible/ managed through the great

support given by Sh. SURAJ BHAN MP, and through him one or two his MP friends. OUR strategy was to ask extensive information from Bd. through Parliament Questions and repeat questions for seeking clarifications and writing detailed letters through him, till the reaching every issue upto the logical end. There were many occasions when he signed 9-10 letters at a time to various authorities. I am proud of gaining his complete confidence in me-self, and he never hesitated to sign any letter or on Parliament questions. The system was, after a letter is sent by him, I used to collect, acknowledgement and their reply. Then a counter letter/letters used to be written, till the issue is decided. This strategy worked for us very effectively. Can you imagine that once I asked him when I should come to him to get few letters signed, he told me that he is going to Chennai in a delegation of MPs, hence I should come on train at New Delhi. There were about 10-12 letters, and he started signing. One MP, travelling with him said : Suraj Bhan ji paper be read before signing” The reply of Sh. Suraj Bhan ji was that ‘I have full faith on Bansal sahib’.

**I must agree sincerely, that though there were many persons who played their role to help the cadre of TXRs, and we will remain ever grateful to all these persons, but the total credit of bringing this cadre to today’s level, special credit shall have to be given to Shri SURAJ BHAN, MP, CRSE - Sh.K.G.UPPAL and Sh. BAMMI Addl.,CME/C&W- N.RLY. The whole cadre shall remain indebted to them forever. It is indeed not possible to describe the contribution of these persons.**

### **23.8 SPREADING THE WINGS:**

1.Meanwhile, on account of my posting at a centralized post of HTXR/ Control, we could know about the information of availability of higher grade posts in ex-cadre posts in RITES, Work study cell, on various deputation post etc. We, therefore started managing the postings of our cadre persons in all such organizations. It not only gave us a slice of some higher grade posts to

our cadre, but it further helped us to boost the image of our cadre and spread our wings all over.

Here, mention of one episode shall be interesting. One of our SME Sh. S.M.BHARDWAJ(eventually Retd. as GM/DLW) who was an officer working in Mechanical HQ wing, got posted as EFFICIENCY officer (EO) in Work STUDY cell. During those days, EO used to be in charge of work study course being conducted at CHANDAUSI -Zonal training Centre, for a duration of - if I remember correctly -for 45 days. The capacity of this was 32 trainees/batch. But despite best efforts, the utilization of this capacity could never be achieved. Hardily 8-9 persons of all departments used to attend, and thus the facility, used to be wasted. Sh. Bhardwaj, after his posting as EO, called me, and asked me if I could help to improve this, due to our vast network. We were able to coax a large number of TXR colleagues to attend these courses, and in the next two courses, there were as many as 31 and 29 participants respectively, 60% of them being from TXRs (Mostly from our group of 105 persons). The added advantage being posting of number of our persons in work study cell, all getting one grade higher at-least, some even more. I

myself got posted in this cell, in grade Rs.550-750, and subsequently promoted in gradeRs.700-900 too in the later years.(1977 onwards). The idea was to get maximum number of TXRs in Higher grades.

2. Meanwhile, in between under general upgrading, and on account of our continues pressure on the administration, through meetings and specially MPs letters, and relentless chasing at all forums, some good number of higher grade posts were sanctioned in our cadre including introduction of higher grade posts of grade Rs. 335-425.giving some much waited relief to our cadre. But still we were much behind other technical supervisors. The most unjustified was non-existence of one highest grade of Rs.840-1040 in our cadre. Though we were having the highest grade of Rs.450-575,from the very beginning (as per all technical cadres) but after 3rd pay commission,

top two grades Rs. 370-475 and Rs.450-575 were merged in one grade Rs.700-900. Though our counter cadres were given the higher grade first in the form of Supdt .Allowance, and subsequently converted in grade Rs 840-1040. Initially this grade was not extended even to other than workshop supervisors i.e. FOREMAN (chargeman).

### **23.9 ANOTHER TYPE OF CAMPAIGN INITIATED - Collection of extensive data**

During our long struggle, we came across a fact, that in order to properly press upon our demands, possession of maximum details of all cadre of supervisors including our own cadre, basically their cadre strength, grades, recruitment/promotional policies, problems in their cadre, availability/sanctioned/stipulated percentages of various grades etc. etc. is very much essential. In our own cadre we collected names of the entire TXR cadre on Northern Railway, seniority wise, including their date of birth, date of posting as Supervisor, dates of their promotions in different grades and so on.

Through analytical study of this data, and consequent statistics prepared, proved much essential and vital in our struggle, as we could not only use these statistics for placing our case, but helped us to present and pleading our case to administration more forcefully. and in more convincing way.

As regards the Northern Railway data, It is well known that except for top grades Rs 700-900 and above, the seniority of TXR cadre was division wise. Therefore there was large imbalance in promotions in different divisions. Through this data we could point out all this effectively & forcefully, there bybalancing of higher grade posts suitably. Moreover, this data did prove immensely helpful in our struggle in later years.

Let a interesting thing be narrated here. There was a big news in air those days of merger of seniority from the initial grade. I was able to draw an integrated seniority of all TXRs of all divisions. Incidentally, the colour of

the cover of the note book, where this data was maintained was red. This data became so popular, that TXRs specially became much, interested in this and made frequent queries. It was so popular, that I started to charge Rs.2/- from everyone as donation for our association. for seeing his own status. only.

#### **23.10 ANOTHER SYSTEM ADOPTED FOR HIGHER GRADE POSTS:**

Our resolve not to leave any occasion to tell about injustice being done with our cadre, had now started to pay dividends, as the administration had started to acknowledge and understand our problems better. This system was adopted everywhere in all zones. My practice to attribute failures and short comings being the result of the prevailing frustration due to lack of promotional prospects etc. also started showing desired effects. We were sure hammering continuously for our rights and problems, sincerely do give desired results.

Due to better understanding created, authorities now were ready to help us in many ways. I started a new way of increasing higher grade posts. In that we will draw a justification for need of a higher grade post, and provide required matching surrender value by surrendering a post of khalasi or two, and get it vetted by accounts. I feel obliged to Sh. S.M.BAMMI our Addl. CME, in those days, to visit FCAO office for discussions even for piecemeal posts, for which he never hesitated. Thus like this we were able to add many higher grade posts in our cadre. Addition of even one post was welcome. Similarly we have been able to achieve higher allocation of funds for provision of ,better working condition by way of quality washing lines, with adequate lighting, and provision of modern tools, adequate provision of staff, modern offices etc. In fact the work of making justification for these, and having discussions on the subject were now assigned to me in person, though this was not in the duty list of HTXR/Control.

### 23.11 BLESSED WITH AN UNIQUE OPPURTUNITY:

During this period, our new GM - Sh. S.C.MISHRA took over charge, on our Railway. He started a new system of monitoring the performance of Departments. Wherein he used to come in the room of Principal head of the department, and shall call all HODs of the department to discuss their performance, failures and also problems. For this purpose he nominated different days of week for each department separately. Being provoked by our constant mentioning of our problems, in one of such meetings, Sh. S.M. Bammi, mentioned about lack of promotional prospects in TXRs category. Some discussion took place in the meeting - as our CME was also apprised about these many times. But then GM desired that some suitable paper with details be submitted to make him to understand the problem. Mr. BAMMY after coming back from the meeting, called me & said “ you keep bothering me with this or that story every other day, but there is an opportunity now. You submit a proper status report in a page or two, in the way, it instantly catches imagination/eye of GM and he appreciates the problem”. Luckily I had the assistance of Sh. Dev RAJ Sharma - an ex-apprentice of my junior batch working with me as TXR control. I explained the requirement to him. Within a couple of days, he produced a bar chart, with bright colours, showing the number of posts grade wise, for 7-8 supervisor cadres of different departments viz. Workshop, S&T, Elect, IOW, PWIs and even of WMIs & TIs. It was a wonderful one page comparative presentation of difference in promotion prospecting respective categories. When I showed this paper to Sh. BAMMY, he was just excited and stood up and said **‘yes this is the paper needed’**. He then presented it to GM in next meeting. This was appreciated by CME and other HODs too. Respected G.M. was also impressed much. and told Bammi to put up a draft letter from him to Railway Board. As normally is done, he just drafted a letter just like forwarding a note submitted to him on the problem. Luckily, Sh. Bammy, asked me to see the same before sending it to GM. On this I gathered my guts, and told him that it needs to be made more effective and forceful. pl permit me, to submit a revised draft. He said

OK- show me. By this time I had become accustomed drafting letters from Sh. Suraj Bhan MP, whereas it used to be, as if he is directly raising a problem, instead of forward a note written by sufferers. I wrote this letter, as if GM himself has observed this problem and then definite request to address the problem. The draft became a little lengthy- as is my habit-. Sh. Bammi was apprehensive of its approval by the GM. I said sir you may send it, and let GM edit it, if he so desired. Somehow he agreed and sent it, though he was hesitant. Luckily, GM approved it word by word. It was got typed and signed by GM along with the coloured graph-bar chart and submitted to Member Mechanical - I still remember -it was perhaps by 28 or 29th of the Month.

**As luck prevailed, or the GOD almighty was kind enough to bless us, the orders for promotion of Sh. S.C.MISHRA, our GM -were issued, for his elevation As Member Mechanical himself came from Railway Board, and he joined there on 1st of the month.**

This happening, which was probably god send opportunity for the cadre of TXRs, as a whole, for achieving our long cherished target of better promotional prospects, And, we did not allow this opportunity to go away from our hands. We went to our GM, to congratulate to him on his deserving and prestigious promotion. Here also, we did not fail to remind him that he will have to deal with his own recommendation of higher promotional prospects for TXRs cadre., because it will be he himself to open the dak pad containing his own recommendation.

#### **24.0 THE ACTIVITIES INTENSIFIED TO FULL STEAM:**

We did not leave the matter, with our request to him, Only. Rather we organized to ensure that similar requests are sent by all the zonal Railways too. Arranged meetings were organized, all over the places, passed resolutions and appeals, and the same were sent to him. Some Zones could manage similar communication/recommendations sent through their CMEs. Similar actions were taken at our central Association level too. Numerous

delegations were sent to Railway Board for apprising other high officials too, with details of our problems and discrimination/injustice with TXR cadre.

Even at political level too, Sh. Suraj Bhan MP, activated himself nicely. He not only raised this issue through his letters to Minister of Railways, CRB, MS and MM himself. He in fact had in person meetings with MR, MM and MS on the subject. Parliament questions were also raised. In brief, we did not allow to leave any stone unturned to put legitimate pressure on authorities.

**Ultimately with the sincere efforts of all of us, and blessings of GOD-almighty - the results came shortly. In the next ALL INDIA CMEs Conference, held under the chairmanship of Worthy MM, decided and a resolution was passed to constitute A committee of 3 Additional CMEs(C&W) - the head of C&W deptt. at that time- consisting of Addl. CMEs of NR, CR and NF. Railway, under the chairmanship of Sh. S.M.BAMMI of N.Rly. with the exclusive terms of reference being - TO LOOK INTO THE PROBLEM OF PREVAILING STAGNATION IN THE CADRE OF TXRs and GIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS “**

#### **25.0 - AN INTERESTING EPISODE:-**

At this juncture, since we have mentioned about the important role played by Sh. Suraj Bhan MP, and his support for the cause of TXRs, narration of an important incidence shall be interesting.

After our Association's merger at Bareilly, an ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING was called at our Association HQ at Kolkata. There, when a question was raised that why our All India President Sh. S.C. Bannerjee MP - great unionist-was not there in AGM. We were told that his presence is very costly, as we have to arrange to and fro air flights tickets, and five star hotel accommodation for him for the stay. We were amused to know that requirement of a trade unionist and that to a Communist MP.

On the other hand, when, subsequently Sh. Suraj Bhan M.P. was requested to be our President, he was attending one of our meeting. The meeting was arranged in a hall in BIRLA Mandir, New Delhi. About 100 persons were available. Everybody was sitting on a carpet spread over floor. including Sh. SURAJ BHAN MP. When lunch time came. I started looking here and there - for calling a worker. Sh. Suraj Bhan asked me as to what are you looking for. I said sir I am looking for if a plate can be arranged, he said no I don't want a plate, I will eat as everybody else is eating. Hence he had his lunch by keeping PURI and dry Aloo vegetable, in his hands only. In every meeting of associations, those days, the major part of the speeches used to be demanding recognition of the Association. When he spoke at last, he said, why you people are worrying about recognition, If. you are not recognized, your president is definitely recognized by Govt. of India. so much down to earth, he was despite being am MP and holding many government status. I thought, it is worth to tell you the greatness of Sh. Suraj Bhan specially looking into the treatment to be accorded to communist trade unionist MP.

## **26.0 MEETING OF COMMITTEE - LOOKING IN TXRs STAGNATION**

As soon as the news of nomination of committee to look into the stagnation of TXR cadre spread over the Indian Railways, we came in our action mode. The committee consisted of Addl. (C&W) of NR,CR and NF Rly. So, we immediately started meeting the CMEs and Addl.CME (C&W), of all Zonal Railways through our Association office bearers, and apprised them our problems in detail. Special emphasis was given to C.Rly., NF Rly. and off-course N.Rly, On C.Rly, our stalwarts Mr. J.D.Kulkarni and Sh.Purohit were very active, having good image and reputation with senior officers So, they were quite influential and instrumental. They were requested to meet Sh. R.N.Gupta, Addl.CME, and provide him all concerned details to him. Similarly Sh. S.PAUL of N.F.Rly was entrusted with this responsibility on N.F.Rly, to meet the Addl. CME (C&W) -Sh. R.K.Sabbarwal. Naturally on N.Rly,I was destined to play this role, Sh.S.M.Bammi Addl.CME (C&W) was already in

know of stagnation in TXR cadre and all facts and figures were already available with him.

Soon the meeting of the committee, was called at New Delhi N.Rly HQ office for 3 days by train to travel from Gauhati to NEW Delhi. Sh. S.Paul, just shadowed Sh.Sabbarwal right up to Delhi, feeding him last minute details.. Both Sh. Sabbarwal as also Sh. R.N.Gupta, were given my reference to contact me if any details are needed.

At last, the meeting started. The system was that they used to have discussion whole day, from 11.00hrs till evening. Before the start of the meeting both Sh. Sabbarwal and Sh .R.N. Gupta called me separately, for introduction as they met me for the first time. In the evening one of these two members (name knowingly not mentioned), used to meet me below our office under the big PIPAL tree, to apprise me about the proceedings of the day. On reaching my home, Sh.R.A MITTAL our GS, and 1-2 more active persons of Delhi area used to discuss about the developments of the day at my residence After discussions I used to type our views about what transpired during the meeting. our objections and suggestions on the letter head of our Association and signature of Sh. Mittal our GS. next day, before the arrival of Sh. Bammi, the letter used to be on his table, so that he could see immediately after entering in the room. As expected he read it (he recognised my type which had bold letter), and immediately called me in his room. He was full of anger and asked me what is this, I innocently told him that it is after joint discussions of our Association, so, I cannot help.he asked me angrily, how I could know about proceedings. I politely told him that we cannot tell this. This same procedure- Discussions in the meeting, information given to me by the same Addl,CME, in the evening, writing our views in the night, placing it at Sh. Bammi's table in the morning and his calling me, show his anger, ask how I came to know and my same reply every day. - Continued for 3 days. On the evening of 4th day, the respected Addl. CME asked me ' Bansal can you give a work-to rule threat" then I said 'why not sir'. And in the

evening, we typed a letter saying “ an emergent meeting of Executive committee of the Association met in New Delhi, It was unanimously decided to launch work to rule if due consideration is not given to our demands by the committee.” In the morning, the anger of Sh. Bammi, naturally found no boundaries, He asked me how this could be, I again answered politely, that ‘What I can do sir, It is the decision of our executive committee. He angrily remarked that I know what that committee is, it is your BADMASI only. However, I must concede greatness of my officers at that time, despite all these actions of mine, they rebuked me regularly, but never tried to harm me in person, and I was never thrown out of office. Rather they continued to help this cadre of unfortunate circumstances.

Never the less, the report was prepared, and as usual, I was apprised of details in the evening again. and I was told that the same shall be submitted tomorrow, afternoon. Today, we did not write the letter, rather next day, while all three of them were getting ready to go to Railway Board, I entered in his chamber, and started to show my resentment, that the committee has not done this or has done this wrong. Instead of listening to my views, they told me to come with them in the car, while going to Rly Board. I was not even allowed to tell my colleagues. Any how I was made to sit in the back seat of car, and when car moved, I was asked to narrate my objections. I continued my speech till we reached Rly. Bd.,

They entered in the room of Sh. H.D. Bhalla the then ED (RS)-today’s AM (RS), next person to MM, and submitted the report. **They remarked that though this report is being submitted, but “BANSAL” (only my surname, he also knew me) has some objections to this. On being asked what are the objections, they said, he is standing outside this room, should we call me. I was called inside of the room. Sh. Bhalla asked me what are your objections - Bansal. I started to play my record and spoke for about 15 minutes, about the objections. After listening to me Sh. Bhalla, called his steno, and started giving dictation to her. I was allowed to stand**

there during this period and finally, Sh.Bhalla gave his remarks -"The report by the committee nominated, is submitted for your approval with the following modification" and he almost covered my objections in it. After giving this dictation, he said 'Bansal satisfied' I nodded my head in appreciation and obligation. I am proud of these great men who gave me such a honour, though I was neither a leader of recognized association nor of a union. I was just a junior TXR of lower most grade of Rs.425-700, at that time. He then left to meet MM, while all the three members continued to sit in the room and myself standing. After sometimes Sh. Bhalla came back and told "approved"

#### **26.1 RESULT & IMPLEMENTATION OF UPGRADING:**

It took some time as usual, in issuing the necessary orders for granting us recommended up-gradation. It is important to tell, that I was not knowing that what is the total recommendation of the committee. As regards my objections, I just gave my views regarding some recommendations, which were mentioned to me. It was natural that some time is required to get the recommendations vetted by Finance.

Meanwhile I was booked to ZONAL TRAINING SCHOOL-CHANDAUSI, for 45 day course of Work Study. There too in the last leg of our training, the practical field training is given, we were at BHITAURA - a road side station near Bareilly. The study was of DEEP SCREENING (Civil Engg.) which was being done mid-section. During this period only, our upgrading orders were issued. A person from Delhi, reached in mid-section itself, with that letter. Within a day or two, **I prepared a statement called 'pinpointing of posts' i.e. indicating, where these upgraded posts be placed along with full justification, keeping in view the workload/responsibility etc.** Got it typed, and on Sunday went to Delhi, and I gave my suggestion for implementation of this upgrading in the hands of Sh. Bammi, at his residence.

The upgrading was thus implemented on Northern Railway, within a short period, more or less matching with my suggestions. The total increase was 27% posts.

#### **27.0 NEXT PHASE OF STRUGGLE - STARTED:**

No doubt we achieved a good number of higher grade posts through these recommendations and specially introduction of highest grade of Rs.840-1040, but we were not satisfied, as our main objective of getting equality with our counterpart mechanical supervisors was still far away, and we were nowhere nearer to them in respect with total higher grade posts even in grade Rs. 840-1040 we were given only 8% posts, whereas in all other technical supervisors, it was 10%.

We therefore, did not relent, and started our struggle with more intensity. Step by step success gave us encouragement and energy and were able to get realize the administration their folly to ignore important cadre like TXRs. As usual we started to meet higher authorities, explaining the injustice of not treating this cadre equal to other technical supervisors of equal status. Continued in sending memorandums, passing resolutions, raising parliament questions and so on. Sh. Suraj Bhan MP-our president as was always in the forefront of our campaign. Rather he spearheaded our struggle to greater heights.

#### **27.1 AN IMPORTANT & INTERESTING EPISODE:**

Sh.Suraj Bhan, during this period, not only wrote many letters to MS,CRB and to MR. but met CRB &MS personally too. He specially raised the issue of less percentage of posts in Rs.840-1040 grade .by writing a letter to MR. It was sometime in 1977,and after the end of emergency, and formation of Janta Party Government, Sh. Madhu Dandwatehad taken over as Minister of Railways. In reply to one of such letter of his, he wrote that much has been done for TXRs promotions. In respect with grade Rs.840-1040, TXRs have

been brought **almost equal to other technical supervisors**. Those days, with all English version letter, a hindi version letter also used to be sent to MPs. In hindi version, the translator perhaps by mistake, forgot to mention **“LAGBHAG” for almost and it became “SAMKAKSH LA DIYA GAYA HAI” instead of “have almost been brought nearer”**. I pointed out this fact to Sh. Suraj Bhan. He immediately asked me to tear away the English version letter. With this hindi letter in his hands, he went to MS, and asked him that MR has given him this reply, but TXRs are given only 8% posts in Rs. 840-1040 against 10% to all others. He raised his hands and told, he cannot do much in this. Only MR, who has given this assurance, can do something. Sh. Suraj Bhan, then arranged a meeting with MR and asked directly to him **“Dandwate sahib, I just want to ask one question, MR is head of the Railway, or CRB/MS are higher than MR. MR with surprise asked what is the matter, Sh. Suraj Bhan then showed him the letter written by him, that TXRs have been brought equal, whereas the Board has refused to recognise this letter of yours.**MR replied let me see the matter. After a few days, the letter for raising the percentage of grade **Rs.840-1040, from erstwhile 8% to 10% was issued. Another big example of Sh. Suraj Bhan ji’s contribution for our up-liftment.**

#### **28.0 NEXT and FINAL PHASE of OUR STRUGGLE:**

in this phase of our struggle, no new strategy was adopted. We just adopted and continued with our old system, i.e. Delegations, memorandums, extensive discussions, Delegations, letters from MPs, Parliament question and so on. The only thing which can be said is that we did not relent in our efforts and continued our campaign with full confidence in ourselves. Therefore it will be suffice to mention that after sometimes some very positive results were achieved.

Meanwhile, however, it is important to mention that in the end of 1977, having failed to get the benefit of higher grade, against ex cadre post of HTXR Control joined as WORK STUDY INSPECTOR in one grade higher i.e.

grade Rs.550-750, in HQ office only, which was located on the same first floor, as Mech. Deptt. Just after my departure from Mechanical. the post of Addl. CME (C&W) was upgraded to full SAG grade - as Chief Rolling Stock Engineer, (CRSE) and luckily Sh. K.G.UPPAL our old mentor & well-wisher joined as CRSE.

In early 1978 perhaps, on account of our relentless efforts, we got a good news. The Railway Board, once again took a resolution in All India CMEs Conference held at Railway Bd., to constitute a Committee - as last time" TO LOOK INTO THE ASPECT OF PREVAILING STAGNATION IN TXRs CADRE". This time however it was not a 3 member committee, rather it was constituted as One man Committee. That one man head of this committee, was fortunately our CRSE, Sh. K.G. UPPAL only. Naturally we felt jubilant as Sh. Uppal was quite aware of discrimination to the TXR cadre and keen to do justice with a positive approach. Soon the notification was issued to Zonal Railway GMs/CMEs, with a request to feed all concerning information/ concerns regarding stagnation in TXR cadre to this committee.

### **28.1 - MY ENTRY IN THE SCENE:**

After issue of the notification, Sh. Uppal, called me from Work Study Cell. He then asked me 'Bansal, do you know that I have been appointed as head of ONE MAN Committee constituted to look into the issue of stagnation in the cadre of TXRs. I said yes sir I know. then He said you constantly keep bothering me & telling about injustice to your category regarding career promotions. Now there is a chance. But merely telling your problems, will not do. You prepare some revealing details to pin point your problem in such a way, that it makes the issue crystal clear. so that I am able to make some recommendations.

28.2 In next three four days, as I had already told that I had collected all the details of all TXRs of N.Rly., **I calculated various details of career progression with the existing status of posts available in our cadre. By**

doing the plotting of career progression of each TXR of N. Rly. 1253 strong cadre in numbers.. I, calculated that on the basis of their retirement dates, the following persons shall retire in so and so grade. Then so and so persons shall be promoted vice them on the basis of their seniority. All permutation and combination were used for these calculations. Then the similar calculations were done if we are given same percentage of higher grades as is given to other technical Supervisors. I calculated the percentage of persons retiring in first grade, with so many years of working, how many rose to second grade and then retired. The length of service spent for getting promotion to second grade from first grade, how much total service spent before retirement. Similar calculations for 2nd to 3rd grade and so on above. All such calculations were done if higher upgrading percentage is granted. and finally summery was prepared showing the percentage Retiring in first grade and all grades separately, along withlength of service spent in each grade (average) and similar calculations with proposed higher percentage. It was a seven-eight typed pages - in my own special famoustypewriter —with two pages summery over it. It will be appreciated that, it was done for all the 1253 TXRs of N.Rly. plotting their imaginary promotions and as per their retirement dates. I was ably assisted by Sh D.R.Sharma in this difficult exercise. After its compilation I felt proud of my work and it gave me tremendous and satisfaction. Finally I gave a note, that though all these conclusions are based on the data of N.Rly. only, but the status over Indian Railways shall be more or less same as truth is universal if based on facts.

When. I submitted, this statement to Sh. Uppal next day, -though he was a man of very soft voice, and very cool, never spoke much words, but he was much excited after looking this presentation and appreciated me like anything and said “ yes Bansal. I just wanted such information only. It is just wonderful”

28.3 He then said to me, that he cannot use/quote this information given by you directly. Now you get it vetted by Personnel Deptt. I suggested to him that for this purpose, you please use your status of Addl. CPO, he was Addl. CPO in HQ P. branch before coming on promotion, as CRSE, and also using your status of a Chairman of Rly. Bds. committee, and ask the SPO/ Mech. to submit the position within 2-3 days otherwise he will be suspended. Same was done. SPO/Mech. then called his dealing person(of TXRs) and repeated the words used for him.

28.04 As expected Sh. P.S SOHAL - dealing clerk - who used to come daily on foot from Shakurbasti to HQ offices, reached at my residence in the evening at Subji Mandi station - 8 KM distance on foot. Saying "Bansal Sahib Bacha lo : I said that how can I know all this as I am working out of Mechanical Depp. for long time. He said" Bansal Sahib, I know that you have all such information". I then said give me 1-2 days. After about 2 days, I gave him the already prepared statement. He immediately went to SPO/Mech. and submitted the complete statement taken from me under his file. SPO was very much pleased. with prompt action. However he wanted to verify the correctness of the statistics, and he asked 3-4 questions to Sh. Sohal. Then ultimately he told frankly, and said that I got this prepared from Sh. Bansal, SPO then called me and said '**Bansal sahib I am thankful for preparing this statistics. But to be doubly sure, I would like to verify its correctness. He asked me then 3-4 questions by quoting 3-4 names and I was able to show to him in the statement correctly.**' He was much pleased. and signed on the same statement in my presence. He was much obliged to me. He then immediately went to Sh. Uppal, and submitted the paper. Thus my job was accomplished.

28.5 The basic inputs, in the form of my papers submitted to him - were now available with him. The details and statistics were called from all zonal Railways, and after some times, the final report was submitted by Sh. Uppal

to Rly. Bd. After due processing and all mandatory approval/sanctions at different levels, the notification was issued.

## **29.0 FINAL, GOLDEN ACHIEVEMENT FOR TXRs CADRE:-**

TXR CATEGORY, finally got for what they were struggling for the last 17 years. It was surely a great struggle waged right from 1962 and at last the aim of theirs for total equality with technical supervisors specially with our counter parts Mechanical Supervisors. **Not only same upgrading percentage and same promotional prospects, but the remarkable feature of this recommendation was that it totally abolished any chances of discrimination in future too.** As you know, though we were given the grade of Rs. 205-280 in 1972 itself, but the recommendations given by the 3rd Pay commission-1973, opened the Pandora box again, by their recommendation of lower grade Rs. 380-640 to TXRs as compared to grade Rs. 425-700 to all other technical supervisors. As already mentioned we had to resort to Work to rule, campaign even to press our demand of equality. It was because all the earlier Pay commissions, used to discuss and decide for each category separately i.e. separate chapters for Chargemen, IOW, PWI, S&T, and Electrical supervisors and so on. **Through this recommendation, this was reduced to only two cadres, i.e. Technical cadres and non-technical cadres. All such discussion shall now be in two portions only. Thus we achieved a permanent solution to our problem of equality.**

As such the great struggle started in 1962 **reached its finale. This struggle not only gave us equal grade and same promotional prospectus, pride and prestige/self-esteem, and better image for the cadre, but gave us many other advantages.** We could learn self-confidence, the importance of unity, team work, self-sacrifice and of course all round development of our personality. The confidence gained through our struggle, developing organizing abilities, inter action with higher authorities, MP's and media have gone a long way to groom our personalities to shoulder higher responsibilities in diverse fields and scenarios. With this result, a

large number of persons could enhance their status of education by doing AMIE and for better promotional prospectus outside cadre. **These achievements** gave us tremendous family respect, affection and **social** relationship are continuing even today.(I am able to call the wives of members by their first names). We have a large family of nephews, and nieces, and also love of large number of parents/elders/sisters. Due to a healthy **atmosphere** created by this, we secured good merits in all fields. You will be astonished to know that after the start of merit based selections for Gazetted cadre **during** 1980, in first such selection, there were 4 TXRs **out of** total 5 posts, in **second selection** 5 out of 9 posts. I was perhaps the first person to rise as Chief Mechanical Officer, later on many more persons rose to this status. If I start giving the names of persons promoted to Gazetted cadre -**SAG**, Selection Grade, Dy.CME's, DME's and AMEs etc. it will be very long list. **It is pertinent to mention here that this faster rise promotions was possible due to introduction of Limited Departmental Competitive Exam as per recommendation of Third pay Commission. Since it was a merit based competitive exam so members of our cadre excelled in every selection year after year.**

Not only this, many of us went to **other** organizations in higher status. It was surely a very big achievement by the cadre who started their career as second class supervisors and were not considered fit to call them as **Apprentice Engineers even. With pride we can say that our colleagues got rapid promotions not only in Gazetted cadre of Railways but proved our worth outside Railways through open selection.** One of us became Judge and retired as Law secretary, one as Commander in Navy, another became Class I **officer through UPSC and Retd. as CME.** A very large numbers got adjusted in RITES, CRIS, DFCCIL, RVNL and PUs from N.Rly. Similar was the situation in all Zonal Railways.

**Dear brothers!this is the story of your struggle in nutshell. It reminds me the words of Brad Meltzar, He said, "When you believe in something,**

fight for it. And when you see injustice, fight harder than you have even fought before “Perhaps our struggle was inspired with this inspiring thought. This is how we rose to present respectful status through our grit and determination .It gives us only one message that anything is possible to achieve if we all stand together with confidence and have a consistent fight. Consistency plays a major role in every endeavour. I wanted to say much more but I am not able to find suitable words but to say “Justice is sweet and musical but injustice is harsh and discordant.”

This justice and struggle for equality was not possible but for the patronage given by Sh. Suraj Bhan, Hon’ble Member of Parliament who later rose to become Union Cabinet Minister and Governor of States. In fact he was the important channel between our Association and Railway Board Members and above all Minister for Railways. Otherwise who would have listened to us directly. So we pay our sincere thanks and gratitude for his able guidance and patronage.

Though the recommendations and approval on various issues were given by Pay Commissions and Railway Board from time to time but the spade work and processing was done at HQ level Sh. K.G.UPPAL - Dy.CME (C&W) and then CRSE/NR, Sh. S.M.BAMMI, NR, Sh. R.K.SABBARWAL NFR, Sh. R.N.GUPTA of CR were quite sympathetic to our demands and gave deserving recommendations as members of nominated committees. Similarly, Sh. H.D.Bhalla, ED(RS) and Sh. S.C.MISHRA first as GM NR and then as MM also gave necessary approvals. We are indeed indebted to them for their sympathetic consideration at critical junctures.

In addition to it, large number of officials of Rly. Bd., HQ and other large numbers of very active persons of Indian Railways have played important role to uplift the TXRs cadre. It’s not possible to mention names of all of them but we pay our heartfelt thanks to each of them.

**Lastly**, all the TXR cadre spread over Indian railways especially leaders and warriors of the struggle, who performed their role to perfection at various occasions as per the need of the hour. The unity and solidarity shown by all of them with the cause and the team fighting for the combined cause made our cause easier at countless occasions, is salutary. So you all are warriors and you all are winners without any doubt.

**I must confess that without the support/ contribution of TXRs in general, our fraternity, our brothers who stood as rock in every phase of our struggle nothing was possible to achieve. So I bow my head with respect for their all our support and contribution.**

**If there were failures, it was due to my weakness and limitations and all success is YOURS! GOD BLESS US ALL!**

**So**, the great struggle started by a few persons in 1962 came to an end with sufficient gains for entire C&W cadre. Hence, I can afford to quote the famous couplet of great poet Mazrooh Sultanpuri that reads as under:

**Main akela hi chala tha jaanib-e manzil,**

**Log saath aate gaye aur carvan banta gaya.**

Which means that when I started my journey towards my destination, I was all alone in my efforts but as I made progress, others came forward and joined me and we became a force to reckon with.