

JCM (on Pension matters)

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Secretary (Pension) at Lok Nayak Bhawan, on 25.9.2014. On behalf of the Staff Side, the following comrades attended.

- Com. Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary, AIRF.
- Com. Raka Dasgupta, President, AIRF.
- Com. S.K. Vyas, Advisor, Confederation of CGE and Workers.
- Com. KKN. Kuty, President, Confederation of CGE and Workers.
- Com. Srikumar, General Secretary, All India Defence Employees Federation.

After the introduction of the members of both official and staff side, the Action taken Statement placed by the official Side of the meeting held on 4.2.2014 was taken up for discussion.

1. Abnormal delay in the issue of revised PPO to Pre 2007 pensioners/family pensioners. It was reported that about 26000 PPO of pre 1990 and 10,000 cases of pre-2006 retirees are still awaiting the issuance of revised PPO. It was reported that the main reason for the delay is the non availability of records in the case of pensioners. The Staff side demanded the supply of Department wise break up of the figures to enable them to take up the issue with the concerned department. This was agreed to. The Staff side further stated that the issue should not be viewed from the statistics angle and the official side must appreciate that in the case of pre 1990 cases, the pension remains unrevised for about 20 to 25 years. It may be that some of the retirees/family pensioners might have expired during this period. The staff side also requested the official side to appreciate the agony and difficulties of these pensioners. The lack of availability of records should not be taken as an excuse. After some further discussion, it was agreed that by the end of 2014, all pending cases would be cleared. In the case of Railways, the pendency is about 25000 and in the case of Defence the reported figure was 85,000. It was however noted that serious efforts have been made by both the Ministries to bring down the number of pending cases drastically.
2. Revision of commutation table. The proposal of the official side was to refer the matter to the 7th CPC, which the Staff Side objected as unreasonable and bereft of any purpose. The Staff Side pointed out that the 6th CPC had devised the new commutation table whereby the commutation benefit had been drastically reduced. When there had been a reduction in the commutation benefit, the tenancy period of commutation ought to have been reduced. The 6th CPC has gone on records to state that the period must remain 15 years as there will have to be sufficient room for cross subsidisation. The Staff Side pointed out that when the commutation time was fixed at 15 years long time back, the mortality rate was much higher than it was today and therefore, there had been no justification for the recommendations made by the 6th CPC. They also pointed out that the official side in an earlier meeting had agreed to refer the matter to an expert committee and subject their recommendation to discussion with the Staff Side. The 6th CPC was not an expert body on this matter and they had to depend upon a professional agency. The Staff Side for this reason objected to the Official Side proposal. The Chairman, after due consideration, wanted the Finance Ministry to appoint an

- expert committee and refer the issue to that committee to consider the demand in the light of the interest rate, morality rate, life expectancy etc.
3. Equitable gratuity under Rule 50 of Pension Rules. The suggestion made by the Staff Side was to change the slab system by introducing a slab upto 11 years and another upto 20 years. Taking into account the fact that the last slab system was introduced on the basis of the recommendations of the 5th CPC, the issue might be referred to the 7th CPC. The Department of Pension has already referred the same to the 7th CPC and the Staff side has been assured to be supplied with a copy thereof.

NEW ITEMS:

(A) Increase in Family Pension. The demand of the Staff Side was agreed to be specifically referred to the 7th CPC.

(b) Cashless and hassle- free treatment in recognised hospital. The Official side agreed to ensure that the pensioners are not put to any difficulty in the matter by the recognised hospitals. When the staff side pointed out that the Health Ministry had not been paying the dues to the recognised hospital and that has led to the denial of cashless facility, the Health Ministry denied the same. The Staff side wanted the Health Ministry officials to immediately convene a meeting as the last meeting has been held more two years back. The Health Ministry has decided to look into the matter and explore the possibility of convening such a meeting within a month's time.

(c) Finalisation of family pension cases within a specified period.

The official side pointed out that the procedure has been simplified and liberalised. The Staff Side pointed out that the delay is caused more by the attitude than on any factual deficiency. They, therefore, suggested for the introduction of a provisional family pension scheme as is the case with the pension for those who face inquiry proceedings. They suggested the grant of 75% of the family pension immediately on receipt of application and the rest after the scrutiny of the claim. They also asked for a time frame for finalisation of the claim in as much as the applications must be disposed of within three months.

The meeting was concluded with a vote of thanks to the Chair.