



National Federation of Indian Railwaymen

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Affiliated to :

**Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)
International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)**

No. IV/NPS/PFRDA BILL/2019

Dated: 11/03/2020

Shri Narendra Modiji,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,
South Block,
Raisina Hill,
New Delhi-110011

Respected Sir,

Sub: Exemption of Railways from National Pension System (NPS) and restoration of Old Liberalized Pension Scheme in Railways-reg.

The Government of India had introduced New Pension Scheme (NPS) now known as National Pension System (NPS) w.e.f. 01/01/2004 which is contributory based and has been made applicable to those appointed/joined in Central Government Departments/Organizations from 01/01/2004. However, a few organizations/categories of Central Government employees were specifically exempted from the purview of NPS on consideration of special, riskier and more onerous nature of duties.

The National Federation of Indian Railwaymen (NFIR) has been urging upon the Railway Ministry since long that the Railway employees be exempted from National Pension System (NPS) as the nature of duties being performed by them are onerous, riskier and very complex like Armed Forces in the Country. The Railway Ministers Shri Mallikarjun Kharge and Shri Suresh Prabhu have considered the valid justification given by NFIR seeking exemption of Railways from NPS and had sent communications vide letter dated 29th March, 2014 and 12th November 2015 to the Finance Minister, Government of India to consider the case of Railways and grant exemption from NPS for restoring the Old Pension Scheme w.e.f. 01/01/2004. It is however unfortunate that the Central Government has not positively considered the proposals sent by two Railway Ministers. In this connection, NFIR mentions the role of Railways/Railwaymen as below in brief:-

During the British period, the Railways was conceived and operated as an auxiliary wing of the Army. It is an accepted fact that by virtue of its complex nature, the Railways require high level of discipline and efficiency to perform its role as prime transport mode. Indian Railways is an operational organization required to run round the clock on all the days under any circumstances. The Railway employees have to work in inhospitable conditions braving extreme weather, unfriendly law and order scenario and enhanced risk associated with the Railway operations itself. Like Armed Forces, many Railway employees have to stay away from their families for long period while performing duties in areas where minimum living facilities are lacking. The nature of duties of Railway employees has been critical and complex while the hazards involved are also very high. The number of deaths of Railway employees in the course of performing duties is larger as acknowledged by the Chairman High Level Safety Review Committee (HLSRC) Dr. Anil Kakodkar in his report presented to the Railway Ministry, Government of India. Besides, large number of Railway employees lose their lives, while hundreds sustain serious injuries in the course of performance of their duties. It needs to be appreciated that the nature of duties of Railway employees is inherently highly risky even during peace time, they also perform functions of critical importance during war times and times of natural calamities, in moving men and material across the country to maintain supply of essential commodities and safeguard the integrity of the nation.

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The above mentioned valid grounds have been considered by the two Railway Ministers and felt that Railways should be exempted from National Pension System (NPS) as the pension outgo (Old Pension Scheme liability) is being met with by Indian Railways from its internal resources and there will be no additional financial burden on the Central Government.

Hon'ble Prime Minister may kindly appreciate that the wages, allowances etc., of the Railway employees are met with through internal resources by the Ministry of Railways itself through its earnings generated by providing service to the customer. It is no exaggeration to place on record that the duties and responsibilities and accountability of Railway employees are akin to the Defence Forces of the country while hazards involved are also equal to the Armed Forces who safeguard the borders of our nation. Statistics reveal that on an average two Railwaymen get killed per day in the course of performing duties for ensuring services and the number injured/disabled while performing duties is very much on high side. Therefore, the Rail workforce deserve social security on par with armed forces duly restoring Old Pension Scheme in the Railways.

I trust that the Hon'ble Prime Minister would kindly consider the above merits and take steps towards exempting Railways from NPS and restoring the Old Pension Scheme.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr. M. Raghavaiah)
General Secretary

Copy forwarded to the Hon'ble Finance Minister, Government of India, North Block, New Delhi-110001 for information and necessary action please.

Copy forwarded to the Hon'ble Minister of Railways, Rail Bhavan, New Delhi for information and necessary action please.

Copy forwarded to the Chairman, Railway Board, New Delhi for information and necessary action please.

Copy forwarded to the Member Staff, Railway Board, New Delhi for information and necessary action please.

Copy forwarded to the Executive Director (IR), Railway Board, New Delhi for information and necessary action please.

Copy to the General Secretaries of affiliated Unions of NFIR.

Media Centre/NFIR.