

Tamil Nadu Electricity Board Engineers' Sangam



தமிழ்நாடு மின்சார வாரிய பொறியாளர் சங்கம்

Regd. No. 124/MDS (Recognised)

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24.01.2023

To

The Chairman

Work Load and Wage Revision Committee

TANGEDCO

Chennai – 2

Respected Sir,

Sub: Wage Revision 2019 Proposal given by Board – Opinion and further points of our Sangam – submission regarding.

Ref: Letter No. 52295 / A16 / A161 / 2019 – 15, Dated: 10.01.2023

Wage Revision for Employees of the Board is due from 01.12.2019. 2nd round of discussion with Unions was held on 09.01.23 having held the 1st round of discussions earlier on 15.09.2022. After the persistent insistence by the Unions during the last discussion Board has given the written proposal on Wage Revision vide reference cited.

We sincerely thank the management for the same and submit the reply containing apprehensions and suggestions of our Sangam on the proposal given by the management.

1. Implementing Govt. Scale of Pay for the future Recruits:

Board has opined to implement Scale of pay of the Govt. of Tamilnadu to the employees of the Board to be recruited in future. This would not only create disparity but also a downgrade from the present condition.

Downgrading the scale of pay for the new recruits would be totally absurd and spell disaster as discrimination in pay between two persons belonging to the same category will affect the Board works not only on day to day basis but also on a long run.

Moreover comparing Power men who work 24 x7 on par with their counterparts elsewhere in other Govt. departments, doesn't augment well as they work in a

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confined area on a specific timings. This is the reason why Pay Scales of Power are placed above their counterparts in other Govt. departments.

In simple terms there is no guarantee for a Power Employee to return back home while he steps out for office every day. This is no exaggeration and it is real fact. This factual condition should be deeply considered during implementation of this proposal.

If at all there is a need for bringing uniformity in the Scales let the categories which are receiving less pay than their counterparts in Govt. be paid equally if not highly. To cite a case we would like to point out that Technical Assistants in Board are being paid less than their counterparts in Govt. and our plea for setting it right is pending for decades.

While the Power Employees are not guaranteed of returning home due to the nature of work, this proposal to downgrade the Scale of Pay for the new recruits creating disparity within categories is a big step backwards and demoralize them totally.

Hence for the wellbeing of the Board, our Sangam totally objects this proposal.

2. Implementation of Outsourcing Policy:

Tamilnadu Electricity Board is a well-established firm catering the need of the General Public and the Industries in the State with quality power at affordable rates for well over 6 decades.

The success of the firm is due to various factors from technical expertise, skilled and dedicated employees at all levels, collective team work with never say die spirit and much more. An established power network is being built by this team.

All the said factors would be effective and applicable only when the employees at whatsoever level have the **feeling of my organisation** in his heart and mind. This feel will come only for those employed on permanent basis.

Above all safety to Personnel and Equipment can be ensured only when work is being carried out by the permanent employees. We have substantiated this to the Board on numerous occasions during the discussion held with us through various facts and figures.

The Govt. and the Public Sectors like TNEB are duty bound to give employment for its people particularly for those in the educated section. TNEB plays a major role in it and any decision to go for outsourcing will totally have its ill effects on the status of the people.

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Demerits of Outsourcing enumerated by us earlier is being reiterated below:

Numerous posts covered under the Work Load settlement is being planned to be outsourced which will spell doom on the organisation. The Board is least bothered about the repercussions on long term and concentrates on short term only. It is against the Work Load Settlement between the Board and the Unions. We sternly and vehemently oppose this decision which is not only shocking but sinister in nature.

Substations and Distribution Sections are covered under the Work Load Settlement and sanctioning of Posts pertaining to these areas are governed by this Settlement. Hence Board is duty bound to discuss with Unions in this regard if at all any need arises for making a change, rather than taking decisions unilaterally.

Due to this action on outsourcing, Board has not only violated the settlement blatantly but also defeated this concept by breaking the relationship. Moreover, the Outsourcing of these sensitive areas covered under Work Load Settlement and select areas in Thermal and Hydro Stations, will lead to disaster on a long term and derail the existing network of Electrical System which are well established in TANGEDCO.

Hence the thought, concept and plans for outsourcing in sensitive areas and important posts whatsoever needs to be dropped and Board needs to honour the settlement made with unions on 22.02.2018, the one which is the dream of each and every employee of the Board presently so as to maintain industrial peace and harmony.

Hence, if not for the safety of the Personnel but considering the safety of Board equipment and stability of power network this proposal needs to be reconsidered before implementation. Also without knowing the area to be outsourced and the posts to be outsourced it is hard to give a thinking for this proposal.

Hence our Sangam totally rejects this proposal for the wellbeing of the Board.

Note:

Copy of the points presented by us enumerating the ill effects of Outsourcing during the discussion held with Board on 24.09.2020 is being herewith attached.

3. Wage Revision Benefits:

Hike of a meagre amount of 5% is totally unacceptable and well below the standards allowed to the Board Employees in the previous wage revisions throughout these 6 decades.

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Power Employees have done an exemplary work during the COVID pandemic risking their lives and prove their mettle yet again like their war footing work carried out during natural calamities in restoration of power year after year.

Time and again Govt. and Board had rewarded its Employees befittingly during Wage Revision for their committed work.

It is this due recognition which drives them day in and day out while carrying out their official duties. The same should be followed during this Wage Revision too.

It is our duty to point out that, Power Employees are boiling over denial of front line worker status to them during the COVID period. Many families have lost their breadwinners and put up in a very pathetic condition where their wards have not even attained the age of claiming compassionate appointment.

A reasonable increase in Wage revision would be a solace to the Power Employees recognizing their services at least now and reward through this wage revision.

Hence a **minimum hike of 20%** will be a reward to the employees who deserve this amount for having put up a brave service risking their lives during the COVID pandemic.

Moreover we emphasize that the increased pay should be effected for everyone including all Employees from its due date of 01.12.2019 and all benefits should be paid right from the due date.

4. Extending of Wage Revision to Class – I & II Employees:

It is perplexing to note in the final part of point #3 stating that hike in wages are applicable for "*Employees who are covered under the Industrial Disputes Act alone*" which indirectly means Class - I & II Employees are not entitled for this hike.

The same matter has been reiterated in other words in point #4 that revision of wages will not be extended to Employees who are not covered under Industrial Dispute Act and the Government's recommendation and Pay Commission alone will be extended to Class – I and II employees.

We feel very sorry to register that this matter wasn't revealed to us by the Wage Revision Committee on both occasions of the discussions held with us. Board is duty bound to inform of this decision to the Unions which forms a bridge between the Employees and the Management.

Class – I & II employees consists of all categories including Engineers. Unlike other departments where Engineers and top brass Officials restrict themselves within office. Whereas Board Engineers at all levels work in the field day in and day out 24 x

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7 and other top brass Board Officials including the Directors are forced to come to the field during emergency.

Physical presence of Class – I & II Officers in field risking their lives during natural calamities has minimized the period of restoration work. Time and again these achievements have received praise from the Government and the General Public.

Alienating Class – I & II Officers from the benefits of Wage Revision will be disastrous and paralyze the Board at all levels in all corners. The management should not even think of this demarcation even in its dreams.

So the benefits of Wage Revision should be extended to all including Class – I & II Officials on par with the Class – III & IV employees from 01.12.2019.

5. Abolition of Unutilized Posts:

Huge number of posts are lying vacant in almost all categories in all posts including Shift, Maintenance and Office areas. The vacancies are compensated by sharing of load by the available incumbents and also by employing retired persons and outsourcing for a short period.

It is pertinent to note that this additional burden can be shouldered only for a short period and not permanently. Board should realize this and stop going in for abolishment of posts lying vacant for quite some time and go in for a periodical recruitment.

Anyway rather than rejecting this proposal outright we are ready for a discussion with the Board in this regard.

Apart from the reply to the points put forth by Board in its proposal we are submitting the additional point in the Wage revision for kind consideration.

Additional Points on Wage Revision:

- Annual increment to be enhanced from the present rate of 3% to 5%.
- One increment as Service weightage per 9 years of service to be allowed throughout, vice 9 – 18 – 27 and 36 years of service.
- Double increment for Selection Grade on completion of 9 years of service to be continued and double increment for Special Grade to be brought up from 20 years to 15 years of service, so as to compensate the affected who are starved of promotions even after a period of one and half decades.
- HRA and CCA to be allowed on par with Central Govt. Pay Commission.
- Medical Allowance to be enhanced from present amount of Rs. 300/- to Rs. 600/- per month.

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- All the existing allowances should be doubled.
- Time Bound promotions to be allowed ensuring a minimum of 3 promotions in the service career.
- On par with Remote Hydro Allowances for Hydro Stations, Special Allowances to be allowed for other areas of the Board for distribution, Substations etc. situated in the same geographical area as that of the Hydro Station.
- Special allowances to be allowed for Distribution Sections, Substations and other areas of the Board situated in hills on percentage basis as allowed to Hydro Generating Stations.
- Monthly Thermal Incentive Allowance paid to Thermal Power Stations to be delinked from Plant Generation and paid as Thermal Allowance irrespective of Plant running status.
- Hotline allowance should be allowed without restrictions in ceiling.
- TA Bill to be enhanced and allowed without restrictions in ceiling.
- Conveyance Allowance to be newly allowed for all field Engineers and Staff members.
- Special Allowance to be newly allowed for all field Engineers and Staff members working in Special fields like Lines, MRT, Special Maintenance, GRT, Cables and other important fields.
- City Compensatory Allowance – CCA should be extended for all Corporations.

All the additional points on Wage Revision, listed above are the reiteration of our demands submitted earlier on 15.09.22 during the 1st round of discussion which needs to be considered positively.

We have also reiterated the other pending genuine demands put forth by us during the 1st round of discussion held on 15.09.22.

Pending Demands to be fulfilled:

1. Sanctioning of Posts as per Settlement:

Formation of new sections as per the present Work Load and Wage Revision Settlement is still pending for 61 sections which is to be carried out swiftly before the forthcoming settlement. Moreover this reorganizing exercise should be carried out annually without fail. Utmost care should be taken during this exercise and retrenchment of posts should be avoided considering the future growth of the electrical network.

Sanctioning of new posts for newly commissioned Substations and upgraded Substations is still pending whose count is above 140 Nos. affecting not only the operation and maintenance works but also the distribution of power network. This too has to be carried out immediately.

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2. Sanctioning of Technical Assistant Posts for each Distribution Section:

In the earlier Work Load and Wage Revision Settlement, the Technical Assistant posts were allowed in each Urban Section of Chennai Electricity Distribution Circles /South, North, West, Coimbatore Electricity Distribution Circle/Metro, South and North, Madurai Electricity Distribution Circle and Madurai Metro Electricity Distribution Circle, Trichy Electricity Distribution Circle/Metro, Erode Electricity Distribution Circle and Salem Electricity Distribution Circle.

Among the areas which weren't covered in the earlier settlement, creation of Technical Assistant posts for remaining Urban Sections and all Rural Sections needs to be considered as agreed, by sanctioning of Technical Assistants post for all other Distribution Sections.

Presently the works carried out in Distribution Sections are mostly related to computer based works, notably GIS Mapping, ERP, Online application etc. Having a Diploma qualified technical person like a Technical Assistant to handle these works would aid the Board work in many ways to ease the procedure and also to satisfy the consumers.

Hence sanctioning of Technical Assistants posts to all Distribution Sections would be very much beneficial to the Board under the prevailing working conditions which we insist to be considered.

3. Adopting of Government Scale for Technical Assistants:

Adopting of Government Scale for Technical Assistants in the Board is pending for quite long. Implementing the same was agreed during 2014 Wage Revision talks but kept pending with an assurance that the Government Scale of Technical Assistants 9300 - 34800 / GP 4200 will be recommended to Wage Revision and Work Load committee which is yet to be implemented.

Sangam insists implementation of this accepted genuine demand at least in the forthcoming Settlement.

4. Creation of Technical Assistant / Civil Post:

Technical Assistant post is the entry level post for Diploma holders in the Board. While this post is available for Electrical and Mechanical Branches, it doesn't exist for Civil Branch. Hence the persons with Diploma / Civil qualification are utilized in other RWE categories. We have been representing continuously for creation of Technical Assistant / Civil posts.

During the talks held for RWE avenues of Hydro Circle in the year 2013 this matter was brought up and it was ascertained that nearly 100 plus qualified Civil diploma

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holders are working without proper post and promotional avenues in accordance with their acquired qualification.

The Hydro committee looked into this demand seriously with an eye of utilizing these Diploma Holders for Surveying, Estimating, Pole casting yard and other field related works pertaining to Civil areas. The matter was decided to be put up in the Work Load and Wage Revision.

In continuation to the above, discussion was held with the Chief Engineer / Personnel on 23.02.2016 and it was agreed to create Technical Assistant / Civil post principally. The commitment was made by the Chief Engineer / Personnel on 23.02.2016 and minutes was communicated to our Sangam vide CE/Personnel Lr.No.7087/36/G43/G431/2016,Dt.04.02.2016.

The pending demand needs to be considered at least now by creation of Technical Assistant / Civil post.

5. Awarding of Common Designation among AE / JE I Grade:

Awarding of Common Designation for Assistant Engineer / Junior Engineer I Grade posts by naming them as Assistant Engineer (G) / Assistant Engineer (D) as per the orders of the labour tribunal and substantiated by the Hon'ble High Court of Chennai, is pending implementation despite nil financial implication.

The matter was agreed upon by the respected Chairman cum Managing Director during the discussion held with us on 07.10.2021 and still pending implementation.

6. Awarding of Assistant Executive Engineer (Non - Independent) Posts:

Based on our persistent representation, Assistant Executive Engineer (Non - Independent) re - designation has been awarded recently to Junior Engineer / Mechanical I Grade who had completed more than 15 years of service in the same post on par with the re - designation extended to their counter parts in Electrical discipline few years ago.

We sincerely thank the management for the same.

The same needs to be extended to the Junior Engineer / Electrical I Grade who had completed more than 14 years of service currently in the same post.

Moreover Board should extend an advance increment to these re – designated Engineers, as it would be very much beneficial to these persons who are really starved of promotions for almost 2 decades.

7. Revival of Construction Wing:

Distribution Sections are the heart of our Board as it's these offices which are in direct contact with the consumers. Apart from Operation and Maintenance of the

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Sections, lot of other works are being carried out like Improvement, DCW, and EOS etc. Moreover welfare schemes by State Govt. and Grant schemes by Central Govt. like RDS, UDAY needs to be carried out.

Such works needs to be executed by a separate wing after evolving of estimates by the Distribution wing. Presently all the works listed above are being carried out by O&M Sections, which is a burden to them in addition to their day to day activities.

Revival of construction wing will put an end to this ordeal and they can be utilized effectively for executing such additional works.

Hence the construction wing may be revived for the better functioning of the Section Offices to fulfill the needs of the consumers satisfactorily and thereby improve the image of the Board.

8. Creation of FOC Call Centers:

FOC call centers of round the clock operation are mandatory for all Metro and Urban areas for better service to the consumers. Creation of such call centers with proper and adequate staff may be allowed in the forthcoming settlement.

9. Enhancement of Earned Leave Ceiling:

Ceiling limit of Earned Leave should be raised from the present 240 days to 300 days, considering various aspects including work load.

10. Special consideration on Earned Leave:

Like any other Government Employee, Board Employees too aren't entitled for encashment of Earned Leave for the past couple of years during the COVID period. While Employees of other departments were allowed to avail earned leave, Employees of Board weren't allowed to avail so, having being listed in essential department. Hence this leave gets lapsed.

Accounting of this unclaimed leave needs to be maintained separately (for availing of leave only) in addition to the already allowed 240 days would be a reward to the sincerely working Power Employees in due recognition of their committed work.

It is pertinent to point out that frontline workers status too was denied to Power Employees despite being fully eligible. Considering this demand positively would at least serve as a compensation.

11. Reactivation of MRT Laboratories:

MRT division presently comprises of Protection, Special maintenance, Metering in HT & LTCT wings.

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Earlier a decade ago MRT labs were involved in full swing for testing of Energy meters utilizing the test benches in MRT lab by employing Technical Assistants for this sensitive work. This testing work played a major role in Board's revenue minimizing its leakages. For reasons best known to the Board this procedure was stalled.

Presently the need for this testing procedure has risen again after the introspection of the top level management in this regard to arrest revenue leakage.

Board has issued instructions for testing of all released meters from O&M sections which involves receiving, testing and devolution of released meters apart from entering of data in software. These works are more sensitive in nature as it is revenue related as said earlier.

Hence MRT lab needs to be reactivated and additional Technical Assistant and other supporting staff including sub store needs to be sanctioned for carrying out such a sensitive work which fetches more income to the Board. This may be allowed during the forthcoming settlement please.

12. Formation of Separate Maintenance Wing for RMU:

Ring Main Unit - RMU were inducted in the Electrical network of Chennai in the year 2006 and during the year 2013 in other Metro Cities. The purpose of this unit is not only for reducing the down time of the power network but also keeping in mind the modernization and beautification of the metro cities. Introduction of 400 Nos. RMU in OMR road by Tamilnadu Road Development Corporation speaks volumes of its importance.

Totally around 13,000 Nos. of RMUs have been erected in TANGEDCO throughout these years. Among them 50% of the units belonging to 2006 lot and 75% of the units of 2013 lot are only in healthy condition. Most of the faulty RMUs are in repairable condition but couldn't be repaired for want of separate wing to look after these works.

Sanctioning of a separate wing to look after these RMUs would do good not only for the power network but also lift the image of the Board among public as it reduces breakdown to a greater extent. Sanction may be accorded for the same during the forthcoming settlement.

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GENERAL MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE

1. Withdrawal of BP 2:

Ill effects of BP 2, dated: 12.04.2022 which has totally shrunk the power and size of the Board has been highlighted by all Unions including our Sangam. Even the unions were forced to go in for an agitation for withdrawal of this draconian order.

Withdrawal of this draconian order is imminent not only to keep up the assurances given to the Unions but also to maintain industrial peace and harmony.

2. Withdrawal of Orders on Cancellation of Internal Selection:

To the utter shock of its employees particularly the lower and middle level staff, issuing of orders (Per.) FB TANGEDCO Proceedings No.5; dated 7th July 2022 withdrawing promotion by internal selection is highly cruel as it spells doom to the five decade old rights.

The order is contradicting the advocacy of the State Govt. which encourages its citizens to keep on studying not only to acquire knowledge but also to enlighten their lives thereby improving their socio economic status.

Hence the controversial order crushing the aspirant employees needs to be withdrawn bringing light upon the individuals and their families.

3. Withdrawal of orders on Amendment to Service Regulation 94 and 98:

Amendment to Service Regulation was issued vide orders (PER) FB TANGEDCO Proceedings No. 18; Dated: 02.06.2020. The said order is sinister in nature affecting, only select categories including our Diploma Engineers.

Promotions are totally based on vacancies and this order would hinder the actions of the Administration in filling up of vacancies. This would reflect much on the field where certain posts of importance are kept vacant for quite long, affecting Board works.

While our community are ready to give their all-out efforts for the wellbeing of the Board such orders totally affects their spirit and demoralizes them.

Hence withdrawal of this Amendment to Service Regulations 94 and 98 of Tamilnadu Electricity Board may be done immediately allowing the 6 decade old practice to continue in the Board forever.

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4. Tripartite Settlement:

Based on G.O. 100, Board had initiated the process of Tripartite Settlement which has been kept on hold for quite long for want of clarifications. The draft on this subject presented by Administration to Unions were duly reverted back after due suggestions.

The process is to be expedited and Settlement may be entered at the earliest with due consideration of the points suggested by the Unions.

Yours Sincerely,



(**V.S.SAMPATHKUMAR**)

General Secretary