CHAPTER VI

PERMANENT NEGOTIATING MACHINERY
AT THE ZONAL LEVEL
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All the issues that come up for discussion in the meetings of collective bargaining at grass-root level of a divisionalised organisation may not be settled due to various reasons. In such a condition, the issues may be referred to the next higher level for arriving settlement. Issues relating to policy matters and/or concerned to the entire zone are discussed at the zonal level collective bargaining of the organisation. Further, collective bargaining at the middle level is a tool for achieving coordination between the issues to be discussed at the grass-root level and apex level of the organisation and it enables the administration at apex level to concentrate on crucial items. The collective bargaining at middle level in Indian Railways is in the form of P.N.M. at zonal headquarters level.

A. PROCEDURE OF FUNCTIONING OF PERMANENT NEGOTIATING MACHINERY AT ZONAL HEADQUARTERS LEVEL

The P.N.M. rules provide that the meetings at the

headquarters level may be conducted either jointly or separately with the recognised unions\(^1\). But actually the representatives of each union meet the zonal railway administration separately in order to discuss and settle employee problems under P.N.M. at this level.

The origin of most of the subjects included in the P.N.M. meetings at the headquarters level can be traced to the branches of the recognised unions, as the issues unsettled at divisional level are referred to the zonal level unions by the respective divisional unions. Cases which are to be settled only at the zonal headquarters level are referred by the divisional unions along with unresolved issues directly to the unions at zonal level\(^2\). The zonal unions, immediately after receiving the grievances, may represent them through a memorandum to the zonal railway administration. If the reply given by the administration at the zonal railway is not found satisfactory or if it is found similar to that of the lower level

\[^1\] Railway Board's Circular to General Managers, No.E(L) 56 NM 1-6, 21 July 1958.

\[^2\] S.C.R.E.S., "Instructions on the Functions of Branch and Divisional officebearers" (Mimeo), Central Office, Secunderabad, 1971.
administration, then the issue may be treated as a
dispute qualifying for its inclusion in the agenda of
P.N.M. meetings to be held at the zonal level.

The present chapter deals with working of Permanent
Negotiating Machinery at the zonal level of the South
Central Railway. The performance of this machinery can
be studied by analysing the number of meetings held,
subjects discussed and the nature of disposal of items.

B. NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD AND SUBJECTS
DISCUSSED IN ALL ZONES OF INDIAN RAILWAYS

The zonal railway administration conducts the
P.N.M. meetings at this level where it meets the two
recognised unions separately viz., South Central Railway
Employees Sangh and South Central Railway Mazdoor Union.

A review of the number of meetings held and subjects
discussed in all the zonal railways is presented before
making a detailed analysis of working of P.N.M. at South
Central Railway. Table 6.1 shows the number of meetings
held and subjects discussed at all zonal railway systems
during 1966-67 to 1985-86. It is observed that the number
TABLE 6.1: RAILWAY-WISE NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD AND SUBJECTS DISCUSSED AT ZONAL HEADQUARTERS LEVEL UNDER PERMANENT NEGOTIATING MACHINERY DURING 1966-67 to 1985-86

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Central (a)</th>
<th>Eastern (a)</th>
<th>Northern (a)</th>
<th>Northeast (a)</th>
<th>Northeast Frontier (a)</th>
<th>Southern (a)</th>
<th>South Eastern (a)</th>
<th>Western (a)</th>
<th>South Central (a)</th>
<th>Total (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-67</td>
<td>80 97</td>
<td>69 924</td>
<td>78 3,527</td>
<td>26 550</td>
<td>30 961</td>
<td>63 2,283</td>
<td>50 1,263</td>
<td>114 2,764</td>
<td>70 1,643</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>5 150</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>3 90</td>
<td>2 60</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>5 150</td>
<td>9 270</td>
<td>7 210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>7 210</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>3 90</td>
<td>3 90</td>
<td>7 210</td>
<td>5 150</td>
<td>10 290</td>
<td>4 120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>7 210</td>
<td>2 60</td>
<td>3 90</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>4 120</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>5 150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>9 270</td>
<td>7 210</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>2 60</td>
<td>2 60</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>9 270</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>6 180</td>
<td>5 150</td>
<td>5 150</td>
<td>2 60</td>
<td>4 120</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>4 120</td>
<td>8 240</td>
<td>8 190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114 1,117</td>
<td>80 1,834</td>
<td>112 4,553</td>
<td>38 910</td>
<td>44 1,381</td>
<td>100 3,393</td>
<td>741,983</td>
<td>158 4,074</td>
<td>100 2,493</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Zonal Railway under study.*

(a) : Number of meetings held.

(b) : Number of subjects discussed.

NOTE: Data relating to Central Railway for the period 1967-68 to 1985-86 are not available.

SOURCE: Narrative reports of General Managers of Zonal Railways and Reports of General Secretaries of respective Zonal unions.
of meetings held and subjects discussed in Central Railway declined from six and 119 to five and 97 respectively during 1965-66 to 1966-67. This was perhaps due to the formation of South Central Railway with certain divisions of Southern Railway and Central Railway. During the same period, the number of meetings held and subjects discussed at Southern Railway also declined from three and 76 to two and 51 respectively. The number of meetings held and subjects discussed were highest (12 and 190 respectively) in 1966-67 in Eastern Railway. This was perchance due to referring more number of items to this level which were unsettled at the divisional level. The number of meetings held and subjects discussed in North Eastern and Northeast Frontier Railways were the lowest compared to other railway systems. Settlement of more number of issues at the divisional level and size of employment may be responsible for this trend in these zonal railways.

Increase in number of meetings held and subjects discussed

1. Secunderabad and Solapur divisions were separated from Central Railway and merged in South Central Railway.

2. This was largely due to the merger of Vijayawada and Hubli divisions of Southern Railway into South Central Railway.
from two and 54 to four and 308 respectively from 1968-69 to 1973-74 in Southern Railway was mainly due to the result of the dissatisfaction of Loco Running Staff and other category-wise employee unions in this railway\textsuperscript{1}. Increase in number of meetings held and subjects discussed to eight and 240 respectively in the same railway in 1985-86 was perhaps due to accumulation of pending items. Number of meetings held and subjects discussed in South Eastern Railway fluctuated widely during 1966-67 to 1985-86 which was probably due to irregularities in conducting P.N.M. meetings. Further, it is observed that the number of meetings held and subjects discussed in all the zonal railways during 1969-70 were lower compared to the preceding years. This may be due to the fact that A.I.R.F. and its affiliated unions working in the various zonal railways were suspended from participating in P.N.M. meetings for their involvement in the token strike in July, 1968\textsuperscript{2}. The number of meetings held and subjects discussed were lowest in 1974-75 in all the zonal railways. The reason being the suspension of

\textsuperscript{2}Eight unions affiliated to A.I.R.F., took part in the token strike of September 19, 1968.
A.I.R.F. and its affiliated unions in all the zonal railways in 1974 for their participation in the General Strike in May 1974. It is also clear from the table that the unions in Northern, Western, Eastern and Southern Railways were more active in discussing a large number of subjects.

C. WORKING OF P.N.M. AT SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY HEADQUARTERS

(i) NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD AND SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:

The Permanent Negotiating Machinery has been working at the South Central Railway headquarters since its formation in 1966-67. The number of meetings held and the number of subjects discussed at the zonal headquarters of South Central Railway from 1966-67 to 1985-86 are presented in Table 6.2. Large number of meetings (seven) were held and subjects (173) were discussed at this level during the year 1966-67 perhaps to discuss the problems relating to promotions, transfers, redeployment of manpower benefits etc., which arose due to the formation of South Central Railway. The number of meetings held and subjects discussed

1. The reason for this situation has already been explained.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>S.C.R.M.U</th>
<th>S.C.R.E.S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Meetings</td>
<td>Number of Subjects Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-81</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1,116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** Minutes relating to Permanent Negotiating Machinery meetings held between South Central Railway Zonal Level Administration and S.C.R.M.U and S.C.R.E.S from 1966-67 to 1985-86.
decreased from five and 145 to three and 87 respectively during the period from 1967-68 to 1968-69. This was due to the fact that S.C.R.M.U., had lost recognition for its participation in the Central Government Employees' Strike held in September, 1968. The average number of meetings held and subjects discussed again dwindled to two and 58 respectively in 1970-71. This may be on account of rift in the leadership of two recognised unions (S.C.R.M.U. and S.C.R.E.S.) which led to litigation in the Court of Law. The average number of meetings held and subjects discussed increased to five and 136 respectively in 1973-74 which was probably due to the initiative taken by the South Central Railway administration in redressing accumulated grievances during the preceding year. The number of meetings held and subjects discussed again fell to the lowest level i.e., two and 55 respectively in 1974-75 which was due to suspension of S.C.R.M.U. for its active involvement in the General Strike of May 1974. The position was, however, regained during the following years. The number of meetings

1. Narrative Report of General Manager, 1968-69, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, p.120.
hold and subjects discussed increased to seven and 206 respectively in 1975-76 and they were six and 180 respectively in 1976-77. This was perhaps due to the cooperation between the two unions in solving the post-strike problems\(^1\). The number of meetings held and subjects discussed declined to four and 120 respectively in 1978-79 which was probably due to sporadic signs of mild militancy between the zonal railway administration and the two recognised unions in South Central Railway\(^2\). Although the number of meetings held increased to maximum permissible limit (eight), the number of subjects discussed (190) were below the maximum permissible limit (240) in 1985-86. This may be due to non-submission of

\(^1\) Narrative Report of the General Manager, 1975-76, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, p.129.

\(^2\) It was stated by the General Manager that "from some unrecognised unions, there was a threat of work to rule etc., which did not materialise. But, the general tendency which has come to notice recently is the inter-union rivalry even between the recognised unions. This inter-union rivalry has increased to such an extent that the stand taken by one union or proposal sponsored by one union are being objected to or stalled by the other unions, with the result that it becomes very difficult for the administration to take a decision". (Narrative Report of the General Manager, 1978-79, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, p.138.)
subjects by the divisional level branch unions.\(^1\)

It is criticised by the administration that the trade unions did not include the fullest number of permissible items on the agenda due to the internal problems.\(^2\). Thus, though the number of meetings held are in accordance with the permissible limits in some years, the number of subjects discussed are less than the permissible limits. The correct situation can be assessed

(b) It has been criticised by the General Secretary that "the administration at lower level have taken decisions unilaterally on policy matters without caring to consult the representatives of the organised labour. Various grievances represented in writing were neither attend to nor replied. The spirit of understanding each others' point's of view is getting eroded at lower levels due to the unhelpful and negative attitude of the administration. The grievances which could be solved were abnormally delayed and finally referred to the headquarters office for decision and in the process the employees were put to untold hardships. (Report of the General Secretary, S.C.R.E.S., 13th General Body Meeting, Guntakal, 6-8 February 1986, Part I, p.13.)

2. Opinion was expressed by the management representatives at the time of interview during October 1986 and March 1987.
by calculating the average number of subjects discussed in each meeting. It is observed from this table that the average number of subjects discussed per meeting varied from 21 to 30 during the period under study. However, the accurate picture can be drawn by calculating correlation coefficient between number of meetings held and number of subjects discussed during the period under study.

Correlation coefficient between number of meetings held and number of subjects discussed during the period from 1935-67 to 1935-86 in South Central Railway (r) is calculated.

Correlation coefficient between number of meetings held and number of subjects discussed (r) =

\[
\begin{align*}
r (X, Y) &= \frac{\frac{1}{n} \sum XY - \bar{X} \bar{Y}}{\sqrt{\left( \frac{1}{n} \sum X^2 - \bar{X}^2 \right) \left( \frac{1}{n} \sum Y^2 - \bar{Y}^2 \right)}} \\
&= \frac{1}{n} (5811.177 - 5.778 (159.922)}{\sqrt{\left[ \frac{211.781}{6} - (5.778)^2 \frac{151496.82}{6} - (159.922)^2 \right]}} \\
r &= +0.89
\end{align*}
\]
It is observed from the calculation that the coefficient of correlation is +0.89. This clears that the relationship between number of meetings held and number of subjects discussed is positive and the degree of relationship ($r=+0.89$) is high. It is viewed that the number of subjects discussed are mostly in accordance with the number of meetings held. Thus, the criticism of the administration is tenable.

However, it is felt that the two unions did not take initiative in holding maximum number of meetings and in discussing maximum number of subjects. This table also shows union-wise analysis of number of meetings held and number of subjects discussed in South Central Railway during 1966-67 to 1980-85. As per the P.N.M. rules, each union at the zonal headquarters level has the chance of conducting four meetings and ventilating 120 subjects in the P.N.M. meetings in each year. It is observed from the table that S.C.R.M.U., ventilated a total number of grievances accounting to 731 in 31 meetings and the number of subjects discussed by the S.C.R.E.S. were 912 in 39 meetings during the period 1966-67 to 1980-81.
whilst they were expected to present individually 1,800 items (120 x 15 years) in 60 (4x15) meetings. It is further observed from the table that the total number of subjects discussed by S.C.R.M.U. and S.C.R.E.S., were 385 in 15 meetings and 465 in 15 meetings respectively whilst each of the unions was expected to ventilate 600 (30x4x5) items in 20 meetings (4x5) during the period 1981-82 to 1985-86. Thus, the performance of two unions in conducting number of meetings and discussing number of subjects was below the targets. The reasons for this trend are suspension of unions from participating in meetings due to their involvement in strikes, delay in preparing agenda due to non-submission of subjects by the branches of S.C.R.M.U., administrative delays, rivalry between two unions etc. As suggested earlier, the administration should change its policy of suspending the unions from participating in P.N.M. meetings. It is further suggested that the unions should improve their functioning particularly in the areas of information system and management functions. Further, it is suggested that the two unions should go hand in hand in order to improve their bargaining strength.
(ii) DISTRIBUTION OF ISSUES ACCORDING TO THE NATURE OF SUBJECTS DISCUSSED

The working performance of P.N.M. can also be judged by analysing nature of subjects discussed in addition to number of meetings held and number of subjects discussed.

Table 5.3 presents subject-wise analysis of items discussed at the P.N.M. meetings held between the administration of South Central Railway and S.C.R.E.S., and S.C.R.M.U., separately during the period 1965-67 to 1985-86. Subjects discussed in P.N.M. meetings at this level are analysed with a view to find out causes and frequency of disputes.

Recruitment and Classification

Number of items relating to 'recruitment and classification' constitute the single largest category, accounting for 13.31 per cent of the total items discussed, at this level during 1966-67 to 1985-86. The unions raise the issues relating to recruitment when the administration do not fill the sanctioned strength or when the

<table>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>(b)</td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Recruitment and Classification</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Transfers</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Working hours</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Working conditions</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Leave &amp; Holidays</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Other service matters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Wages &amp; Salaries</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Dearness Allowance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Bonus</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Incentives</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Other Allowances</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Railway Quarters</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Sanitation</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Employee Relations</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Facilities to Union</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Mechanisation</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Other Benefits</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Amenities</td>
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<td>72</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Labour Legislation</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>731</strong></td>
<td><strong>912</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) S.C.R.M.U.
(b) S.C.R.E.S.

**SOURCE:** Minutes relating to P.N.M. meetings held between S.C.R.M.U., S.C.R.E.S and South Central Railway Zonal Level Administration during 1966-67 to 1985-86.
sufficient strength of the staff is not sanctioned. For instance, about 33.00 per cent of Class III and 17.00 per cent of Class IV sanctioned strength was not filled up in 1979-80. Resultantly, the issue was brought to the P.N.M. for discussion and settlement. Similarly, the actual number of posts estimated were 948 whereas the administration sanctioned 729 posts only. Consequently, the issue was brought for discussion.

Classification according to the skills, abilities and qualifications result in the economic perceptions and employment status of employees. Hence, these issues are, generally, brought for discussion in P.N.M. meetings. To cite an illustration, S.C.R.M.U. demanded for classification of Heaters under semi-skilled employees as administration classified them as unskilled employees.

Training

The issues related to 'training' have been 1.56 per cent to the total number of items discussed.

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Central Railway administration has been criticised since a long time by the unions that supervisors working in the zone were not provided with training facilities to get themselves trained in the techniques of supervision and human relations. It is also felt that even in case of workers (technical), the training facilities are found inadequate to achieve the targets fixed by the administration. For instance, the number of employees to be sent for training during 1935-86 was 4,993 but number of employees trained were 3,653 only. This is, largely, due to inadequate internal training facilities. The unions, therefore, demanded the administration in the P.N.M. meetings to provide external training facilities more extensively.

**Promotion**

This item cover the issues related to both seniority and promotion. The percentage of issues related to this subject accounts for 8.26 to the total number of issues ventilated. Most of the promotional cases dealt with the


administration at South Central Railway headquarters level were carried from the lower levels. Hence, it is suggested that the zonal administration may reclassify the items which will be discussed at the divisional level based on the nature of items and competence of the administration at divisional level to dispose of the items. It is observed that though the South Central Railway administration succeeded in creating the avenues for promotions for Class III and above levels, Class IV employees were left with limited promotional opportunities due to their low educational background. Hence, this issue was included in the agenda for discussion.

As the seniority is the basis for promotion, disputes arise frequently in preparing the lists of seniority. For instance, S.C.R.E.S., represented that there should be equitable seniority in the cases of Technical Boilers throughout the railway instead of adoption of divisional seniority. It is also demanded by the union that common seniority principles should be

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1. As observed from the minutes of P.N.M. meetings held between S.C.R.M.U., S.C.R.E.S. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, 1976 to 1990.
applied for Ticket Collector's and Travelling Ticket Examiners. On the other hand, the union also opposed the combined seniority for Station Master's and Assistant Station Master's. This item is widely discussed in P.N.M. meetings because of its crucial nature.

Transfers

'Transfers' is another important subject for discussion as it accounts for 7.02 per cent of the total subjects discussed. Personnel factors and regional preferences of railway employees working in the South Central Railway were mostly responsible for the transfers at the time of its bifurcation from the Central Railway. The same factors are also responsible for most of the transfers at the time of creation of new divisions viz., Guntakal and Hyderabad. For instance, the unions demanded for inter-divisional transfers in P.N.M. meetings at the time of bifurcation of Hyderabad division from Secunderabad division for the optees working in the above two divisions.

1. Minutes of P.N.M. Meeting between S.C.R.M.U. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Sub No.9 23 and 24 August 1977.


S.C.R.M.U. demanded the administration in P.N.M. meetings to transfer back those employees who have been given penal transfers at the time of token strike held in 1968 and the General Strike held in 1974. As such, this item figured frequently in the P.N.M. discussions.

**Working Hours**

'Working hours' is another important subject of discussion at the zonal level P.N.M. meetings. Although the issues relating to this subject accounts for 1.07 per cent of the total items discussed, considerable importance is attached to it in view of its effect on employees leisure time and capabilities. S.C.R.M.U. urged the South Central Railway administration to reduce the weekly working hours from 48 to 47 1/2 hours. But the administration expressed its inability to agree to the proposal. Similar incidents resulted in ventilating the demands relating to working hours to the tune of 1.07 per cent to the total number of items discussed.

1. These issues have been settled on the directions issued by the Railway Board.
Working Conditions

The percentage of issues discussed under this category to the total number of subjects discussed constitutes 4.05. Congenial working conditions increases the employee contribution to the organisation. But it has been complained by the unions that the deteriorated working conditions in most of the divisions of South Central Railway have not only contributed to unsafe working but also causing great strain on railwaymen\(^1\). For instance, S.C.R.E.S. brought to the notice of the administration (by discussing in P.N.M. meetings) that the shortage of materials and spares, elimination of intermittent train examination points, running of sick rolling stock have resulted in unsafe working to railway employees\(^2\).

Leave and Holidays

The issues relating to this subject accounts for 4.65 per cent of the total items discussed. Leave and holidays which provide a pause in the working activity

\[\text{-------------------}\]


2. Ibid.
help the employees to relieve himself from monotony and boredom. As such, unions demand the management to provide required leave and holidays. For instance, S.C.R.M.U. represented to the administration that the unauthorised absence among the casual labourer was mainly due to non-allowing them to avail leave due to them. Therefore, it demanded the management (in P.N.M. meetings) to grant leave to casual labourers also.

**Other Service Matters**

The percentage of issues related to this item constitute 0.92 to the total items discussed. This subject include the issues relating to commutation of pension, gratuity, provident fund and the like. The contributions made by the employees and employer, during the service period to the above funds should be accurately refunded to the employees (immediately) after their retirement, without any delay. It is, however, found that the administration is delaying these payments on the one or the other reasons. The unions strongly opposed the attitude of administration in this respect. For instance,

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it was found that at the time of retirement the employees were supposed to get 'no claim certificate' from all the places where they worked throughout the period of their service. This ultimately resulted in undue delay in the settlement of the dues. Hence, the unions, in order to waive this restriction, invited the management's attention to this routine issue by discussing it in P.N.M. meeting.

Pay Scales

The percentage of issues relating to wages and salaries constitute 5.62 to the total items discussed. Although the pay scales of railway employees are fixed by the Railway Board, certain anamolies arise at the time of actual re fixation of pay. Pay scales of the employees of lowest categories like, proof Readers, Store Men, Kalasis and Shunters are usually fixed by the zonal administration. The union demanded the administration in P.N.M. meetings to avoid anamolies in the payment of remuneration to employees working in various zonal railways.

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2. Information is furnished by the management representatives at the time of interview during October 1986 and March 1987.
Dearness Allowance

The issues related to this item constitute 0.76 per cent to the total issues discussed. Though the item is of crucial importance and is discussed at the Railway Board level, the dearness allowance of the lowest category employees is fixed by the zonal administration.

Bonus

The percentage of issues related to bonus accounts for 0.88 to the total items discussed. The issues under bonus after 1979 seems to arise mainly because of delay in the payment of declared bonus which was probably due to financial constraints. The unions demanded the payment of bonus without causing undue delays. Further, certain categories of employees are not eligible to receive bonus. For instance, in 1980 S.C.R.M.U. demanded in P.N.M. meetings, for the payment of bonus for employees belonging to Railway Protection Force as they were not covered by the bonus scheme of the railway.

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Incentives

The issues relating to incentives account for 4.45 per cent of total subjects discussed. When a worker works for more than 9 hours in a day or more than 48 hours a week, he is entitled for an extra payment in the form of overtime incentive. The overtime incentive shall be paid at the rate of twice of ordinary rate. The rate followed in the railways is only one and a half times of ordinary wages. It is also felt that though the workers worked beyond 54 hours in a week, they were denied the overtime allowance. Hence, S.C.R.E.S. demanded the payment of legitimate overtime allowance.

Railway Quarters

The percentage of issues relating to railway quarters constitute the second largest category accounting for 11.11 of the total items discussed at the South Central Railway headquarters P.N.M. meetings. The issues concerned to this subject are related to the provision of railway quarters, repairs to quarters etc. It has been criticised

by the unions that inadequate provision of railway quarters is a common problem in almost all the divisions of South Central Railway. In view of inadequate number of quarters, the unions demanded in P.N.M. meetings that large scale construction of residential accommodation has to be launched to providing living accommodation to atleast 75 per cent of the railway workforce. For instance, S.C.R.M.U., brought to the notice of South Central Railway administration that there is inadequate accommodation for the staff working in Secunderabad and Hyderabad divisional offices including the staff at the headquarters.

Welfare

Another important subject constituting 2.57 per cent to total items discussed is related to welfare activities. The issues are related to the measures like canteens, consumer cooperative societies, issues of passes and privilege tickets for both employees and their children, hospitals, schools and colleges for the children of railway employees etc. It has been criticised by employee representatives that 'the children of railway employees are

1. Minutes of P.N.M. meeting between S.C.R.M.U. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, Sub. No.12, 30th September and 1st October 1932.
experiencing considerable difficulties in getting admission even in elementary schools\textsuperscript{1}. It is also felt that the railway administration is delaying even the implementation of common welfare measures. Hence, the unions demanded the administration to providing welfare measures to the required extent in P.N.M. meetings.

**Sanitation**

The percentage of issues which came under this category accounts for 6.02 to the total number of items discussed. Improper sanitation facilities affect the health of the employees. It has been criticised by the employees that the sanitation has been utterly neglected particularly in railway colonies. The trade unions in P.N.M. meetings demanded that effective drive is urgently needed in the provision of drainages better lavatories in the railway quarters and in improving the above conditions.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} Opinion expressed at the time of interview during October 1936 and March 1937.

Amenities

Another 6.78 per cent of the items of the total issues discussed relate to the amenities. The discussions over this issue cover provision of rest-rooms, toilet rooms, uniforms, battery lights etc. The unions demanded in P.N.M. meetings for the supply of the above at periodical intervals. Issues regarding these items arose when the administration failed to supply them at frequent intervals. For instance, S.C.R.M.U. demanded for supply of uniforms and 'kamblies' to the workers to protect themselves from winter effects.

Other Allowances

The issues relating to this item constitute 4.45 per cent to the total items discussed under P.N.M. meetings. Allowances under this category include night shift allowance, risk allowance, washing allowance, cycle allowance, milk allowance, bad climate allowance, special allowance etc. The trade unions demanded in P.N.M. meetings to avoid anomalies in the payment of the above allowances compared to

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other organisations. For instance, S.C.R.M.U. demanded for the payment of bad climate allowance to the employees of South Central Railway as the employees in Andhra Pradesh Government Services are being paid bad climate allowance.

Other issues

Trade unions also discussed the issues like employee relations (0.80 per cent to the total), facilities to the Unions (0.72 per cent to the total), mechanisation (0.40 per cent to the total), labour legislation (0.44 per cent to the total) and miscellaneous items like workload distribution etc.

It is observed from the above analysis that some of the issues which could be discussed at divisional railway level like sanitation, welfare measures, quarters etc., are discussed at the zonal level P.N.M. meetings of South Central Railway. Further, the routine matters like anomalies in pay fixation, payment of dearness allowance,

1. Minutes of P.N.M. meeting between S.C.R.M.U. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, Sub. No.5, 14 and 15 November 1985.
transfers, seniority/promotion could be discussed at divisional level. Both the management and unions would have taken sufficient care in settling the issues at the divisional level itself. Hence, it is suggested that both the management and the unions should take sufficient care in preparing the agenda. It is further suggested that the divisional level administration should be encouraged to settle routine issues at their level which in turn provide the scope for effective functioning of P.N.M. at zonal level.

Railway trade unions criticise that, 'though the railway administration allows them to ventilate as many as 240 issues per year, it never pays adequate attention on the discussions of issues in P.N.M. meetings. Consequently, many items are kept pending and some items are rejected'. But railway management points out that all the genuine demands raised in P.N.M. meetings are settled in employees' favour. In view of this contradicting opinions of the unions and the management an attempt is

1. Opinions were collected at the time of interview during October 1986 and March 1987.
2. Opinions were collected from the management representatives during October 1986 and March 1987.
made to enquire into the nature or disposal of issues discussed in the P.N.M. meetings held at South Central Railway.

(iii) NATURE OF DISPOSAL-WISE ANALYSIS

Table 6.4 presents the nature of disposal-wise number of items discussed in Permanent Negotiating Machinery meetings between South Central Railway administration and S.C.R.M.U. on the one hand and S.C.R.E.S. and South Central Railway administration on the other during the period from 1966-67 to 1985-86. It is observed from this table that the replies of the administration to the largest percentage of items discussed in the meetings held with S.C.R.M.U. and S.C.R.E.S. respectively were under consideration (13.26 and 15.47), agreed to consider (18.28 and 19.68), position explained by the administration (5.47 and 7.63) deferred (12.37 and 11.55) and rejected (7.35 and 4.29). A detailed analysis of the nature of disposal gives clear idea in this matter.

Action already taken

Sometimes, items on which decision was already

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<td></td>
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<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Action already taken</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Settled in favour of Union</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Under process</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Under consideration</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Agreed to consider</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Position explained by Administration</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Administration required further information</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Deferred</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Referred to Railway Board</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Referred to Committee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Referred to Local Bodies</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Referred to the Railways</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Dropped</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Fall outside the scope of Agenda</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Referred to Court of Law</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>731</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) South Central Railway Mazdoor Union (S.C.R.M.U)
(b) South Central Railway Employees Sangh (S.C.R.E.S)

SOURCE: Minutes relating to P.N.M. Meetings held between S.C.R.M.U., S.C.R.E.S. and South Central Railway Zonal Level Administration during 1966-67 to 1985-86.
taken may be brought for discussion perhaps due to (i) ignorance and/or communication gap between the unions and the administration and (ii) management may take action after the item is included in the agenda but before the item is brought for discussion. For instance, when the issue regarding filling up of Class III and Class IV vacancies in most of the departments was brought for discussion, the railway administration had already conducted trade tests for filling up of the above vacancies. Similarly, when the issue relating to payment of kilometreage allowance was brought up by the union, the railway authorities had already issued orders for payment of the above allowance to the respective divisional headquarters. Hence, these issues have been disposed of in the form of 'action already taken'. Issues disposed of under this head constitute 6.70 per cent to the total number of items disposed.

1. Minutes of P.N.M. meeting between S.C.R.M.U. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Sub. No.25, 18th and 19th December 1978.

Settled in Favour of Unions

The percentage of issues disposed of in this form account for 13.80 to the total items disposed of. The issues are settled in favour of employees because of the effective replies given by the Unions at the time of conducting negotiations and/or on the merit of the case. On the other hand, the administration settles the issues in favour of employees with a view to providing facilities or benefits. For example, when the issue regarding the provision of rest-room facilities for the staff working was raised, the administration agreed to provide staff rest-rooms throughout the railways in order to provide benefits to employees\(^1\). Since administration accepted the proposal of the union, it was disposed of the form of 'settled in favour of union'.

Under Process

Another 7.86 per cent of the issues ventilated in the P.N.M. meetings during the period under study were under process. Although the discussions are concluded

\(^1\) Minutes of P.N.M. meeting between S.C.R.M.U. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, Sub. No.5, 25 and 26 November 1981.
and agreements reached relating to certain issues in the P.N.M. meetings, certain formalities should be completed before they are implemented. This process requires certain amount of time. Meanwhile, the unions may again include the same items in the agenda due to their ignorance. For instance, the management was processing the issue of confirmation of employees when it was demanded by the union to convert temporary posts into permanent ones in certain departments like Electrical, Mechanical etc. 

Hence, the issues relating to confirmation were disposed of in the form of 'under process'.

Under Consideration

Items disposed of under the head 'under consideration' constitute the second largest category, accounting for 14.48 per cent to total items discussed. These are the issues which were neither agreed nor disagreed but they were under examination whether to be agreed or not. For instance, an issue of payment of bad climate allowance was raised by the union when the administration sent the

item for financial concurrence to divisions before accepting the proposal. Hence, the issue was disposed of in the form of 'under consideration'.

Agreed to Consider

This is the single largest category which constitutes 19.05 per cent of the total items disposed of. Whenever the unions meet the administration with their proposals, the administration realising the importance and magnitude of the problem may reply that in the present conditions it is not possible to take any decision. However, in due course decisions may be taken on such proposals. For instance, when the union demanded condonation of break-in-service due to the participation in an illegal strike by staff (1981), it was stated by the administration that the cases will be considered on humanitarian ground and on merits of each case.

1. Minutes of P.N.M. meeting between S.C.R.E.S. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, Sub. No. 9, 10 and 11 January 1980.

Position explained by Administration

Next in importance is the disposal of issues in the form of 'position explained by the administration' which account for 6.66 per cent of the total issues disposed of. Instead of disposing the issues in any one of the forms available, the administration as a true bargainer explains the real situation as to why the proposals cannot be accepted by it. The issues, therefore, disposed of under the category of 'position explained'.

Administration Required Further Information

The percentage of issues disposed of in this form were 5.26 to the total number of issues disposed of. Sometimes, adequate data and supportive information may not be provided either at the time of preparation of agenda or at the time of discussion by the unions. In such situations, the administration disposes cases under the head, 'administration required further information'. For instance, when the union pointed out that there are inordinate delays in the settlement of pension, gratuity, provident fund dues, the administration suggested that the unions should present specific cases
before discussions are held on this subject. Therefore, the item is disposed of in the form of 'administration required further information'.

Deferred

The administration disposed of 11.91 per cent of the total issues discussed in the form 'deferred'. The administration sometimes attended the P.N.M. meetings without thorough knowledge and preparation about the decisions to be taken at the meetings. Sometimes administration expresses its inability to take immediate decisions in view of the absence of the officer concerned in the meeting. A few times the union representatives themselves request the administration to defer the item as the time allotted for discussion is inadequate and sometimes they wish to discuss with some other authority.

Referred to Railway Board

The percentage of issues disposed of to the total items discussed in the nature of 'referred to Railway Board'.

1. Minutes of P.N.M. meetings between S.C.R.E.S. and General Manager, South Central Railway, Secunderabad, Sub No.8, 28th and 29th June, 1982.
Board account for 2.73. Issues may be referred to Railway Board, in which case the zonal administration is not the competent authority to settle it. The unions criticised the zonal administration for unnecessarily forwarding the items to Railway Board. It is also felt that the issues were referred to the Railway Board in many cases in spite of the fact that the zonal railway authorities are competent to settle the matters. For instance, the issue of supply of calculators was referred to the Railway Board though the administration of South Central Railway is competent enough to settle the issue\textsuperscript{1}. Hence, the issue has been disposed of in the form of 'referred to the Railway Board'.

**Referred to Committees**

Some issues have been referred to committees for final disposal when the administration required expert opinion and discussions. For instance, when the issue regarding the non-payment of overtime arrears to Gatemen arose the administration appointed a committee to go into this aspect.

\textsuperscript{1} Minutes of P.N.M. meeting between S.C.R.M.U. and General Manager South Central Railway, Secunderabad, Sub. No. 17, 28th and 29th June 1982.
Referred to Local Bodies

The percentage of items referred to Local Bodies account for 0.96 per cent to the total items disposed of. The Railway administration referred certain items like construction of water tanks and buildings to the State Government and Local Bodies like Corporations and Municipalities where their approval is essential in finalising them.

Dropped

The percentage of issues dropped from the discussions of P.N.M. meetings account for 2.57 to the total items discussed. Although cases with extreme expectations have been included in the agenda, either the unions or the administration may feel that continuing discussions in respect of such issues may not result in any agreement. Hence, the cases may be dropped from the discussions.

Rejected

The percentage of issues related to this category account for 5.66 of the total items disposed of. In respect of a few proposals made by unions, the administration
expressed its inability to accept them on the ground that they involve huge financial commitments and settlement of such issues won't be possible under present rules.

Railway administration did not settle certain issues as they were outside the scope of the agenda. Further, certain issues were referred to the Court of Law as their settlement required the judgment of the legal authority.

**Performance of the Permanent Negotiating Machinery**

The performance of the Permanent Negotiating Machinery at the South Central Railway headquarters level can be judged by assessing the number and percentage of items settled in favour of employees and number and percentage of items disposed of to total items discussed which are presented in Table 6.5. The percentage of items settled in favour of employees to total number of items discussed by S.C.R.M.U. during 1966-67 to 1985-86 varied between 14.64 and 30.59. This percentage varied from 18.97 to 38.33 in case of S.C.R.E.S. Thus, it can be
TABLE 6.5: PERCENTAGE OF ISSUES SETTLED IN FAVOUR OF UNIONS AND DISPOSED OF TO THE TOTAL ISSUES DISCUSSED IN P.N.M. MEETINGS HELD AT SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY HEADQUARTERS DURING 1966-67 TO 1985-86

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>(1) No. of issues discussed</td>
<td>(2) No. of issues settled in favour of Union</td>
<td>(3) Percentage of (1) to (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30.39</td>
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</table>

* Items settled in favour of Union include "Action already taken" and "Settled in favour of Union".

** Items disposed of include "Action already taken", "Settled in favour of Union", "Dropped", and "Rejected".

SOURCE: Minutes relating to P.N.M. Meetings held between S.C.R.M.U., S.C.R.E.S and South Central Railway Administration.
observed from this table, that percentage of items settled in favour of S.C.R.E.S. to total are greater than that of S.C.R.M.U. Accurate conclusions can be drawn by calculating the coefficient of variation¹ in respect of items settled in favour of S.C.R.M.U. and S.C.R.E.S.

Coefficient of variation of items settled in favour of S.C.R.M.U. :

Coefficient of variation \( \frac{\sigma}{\bar{x}} \times 100 \)

\( \frac{5.7641}{17.0221} \times 100 = 33.86 \) per cent

1. (i) This technique of coefficient of variation is applied to measure the relative variation in the efficiency of S.C.R.M.U., and S.C.R.E.S. in respect of number of items settled in favour of the unions.

(ii) This technique is developed by Karl Pearson. It is most commonly used to measure the relative variation of two or more series. The series for which coefficient of variation is lesser is said to be more consistent or efficient. Coefficient variation is obtained as follows:

Coefficient of variation \( \frac{\sigma}{\bar{x}} \times 100 \)

Where \( \sigma \) = standard deviation of the series,

\( \bar{x} = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{n} \)

\( \bar{x} = \text{Arithmetic mean of the series} \)

\( \bar{x} = \frac{1}{n} (x_1 + x_2 + \ldots + x_n) \)
Coefficient of variation of items settled in favour
of S.C.R.E.S. \[\frac{7.8458}{24.589} \times 100\]
\[= 31.90\ \text{per cent}\]

It is observed from the coefficient of variation that the performance of S.C.R.E.S. is better than that of S.C.R.M.U. in getting their demands met. The percentage of items which were not settled in favour of employees was ranging between 69.41 and 85.36 in case of S.C.R.M.U. while the figures for S.C.R.E.S. were 61.67 and 81.03. This shows the administration lethargy and disinterest in the settlement of issues of employees in Permanent Negotiating Machinery meetings.

Number and percentage of items disposed of to the total number of items discussed are also shown in this table. It is clear from the table that the percentage of items disposed of to the total items discussed varied between 18.39 and 41.18 in case of S.C.R.M.U. while it fluctuated between 25.22 and 41.67 in case of S.C.R.E.S.

At this juncture, the calculation of coefficient of variation will give meaningful conclusion. Hence,
Coefficient of variation is calculated in respect of items disposed of.

Coefficient of variation of items disposed of in case of S.C.R.M.U.  
\[ \frac{8.1742}{23.289} \times 100 = 35.099 \text{ per cent} \]

Coefficient of variation of items disposed of in case of S.C.R.E.S.  
\[ \frac{9.1220}{30.555} \times 100 = 29.354 \text{ per cent} \]

It is observed from calculation that the coefficient of variation in respect of items disposed of relating to S.C.R.E.S., is less (29.35 per cent) compared to that of S.C.R.M.U., (35.10 per cent). It can be concluded that S.C.R.E.S., is efficient in getting the items disposed of compared to that of S.C.R.M.U. This is probably due to the efficiency of the Union and the sympathetic attitude of management towards the union. Another important factor which can be observed is that the number of items discussed (varied between 49 and 90) are less in case of S.C.R.M.U. than that of S.C.R.E.S. (varied between 61 and 120). This perhaps indicates more activity on the part of S.C.R.E.S.
compared to S.C.R.M.U. It may also be analysed that more number of items discussed by S.C.R.E.S., were disposed of 'in favour of Union', while more number of issues discussed by S.C.R.M.U., were disposed of in the form of 'rejected'. This may be due to favourable attitude developed by the South Central Railway administration towards S.C.R.E.S. It can also be perceived from this table that the percentage of outstanding items ranged between 56.82 and 81.11 which is a symptom of imperfect functioning of the machinery at the South Central Railway level.

The working of P.N.M. at the South Central Railway level has had its impact on human resources management in the zone, despite the observation that the functioning of P.N.M. is not to the satisfaction of both employees and management. Settlement of some issues in employees' favour in P.N.M. meetings led to the creation of additional posts, appointment of additional staff, filling up of existing posts, establishment of training schools, revision of promotion policy, change in working hours, upgrading of various posts, additional provision for welfare measures etc.

1. Details of impact of P.N.M. on human resources management in South Central Railway are presented in Appendix-II (A and B).
CONCLUSION

It is established from the analysis that number of meetings conducted and number of subjects discussed are less than the permissible limits. A few of the issues which could be discussed at the divisional railway level like sanitation, welfare measures, railway quarters, facilities to the unions, other benefits, amenities etc., are discussed at the zonal level P.N.M. meetings of South Central Railway level. The routine matters of the issues like anomalies in pay fixation, payment of D.A., transfer orders, preparing promotion/seniority lists, providing proper working conditions could also be discussed at divisional level. Both the management and the unions would have avoided discussing such issues at the zonal level and they would have discussed relatively important issues at this level which would have enhanced the performance of P.N.M. at South Central Railway. Hence, it is suggested that both the unions and management should take proper care in preparing agenda in order to enhance the performance and status of P.N.M. at South Central Railway level. Railway administration pointed out that the absence of cooperation and coordination between the
two unions, undue delay in preparing and finalising the agenda, discussion of insignificant issues for quite a long time in the P.N.M. meeting by the Union leaders are responsible for ineffective functioning of Permanent Negotiating Machinery at South Central Railway headquarters level. But the trade Unions criticised that the administration attended the meetings several times without adequate preparation, required data and information. In addition, administration is quite reluctant to organise informal meetings to settle the problems or to expedite the disposal of items in the P.N.M. meetings. Unions also criticised that discussion on some issues was closed unilateral without their approval. Further, union leaders felt that the play safe policy of the administration resulted in referring of the items to the Board level which could be settled at the South Central Railway headquarters level itself. The other factor pointed out by the unions for the limited success of P.N.M. at the South Central Railway is the negative attitude developed by the administration towards the unions.

Although most of the issues discussed at South Central Railway headquarters level are related to routine
subjects, management did not settle them in favour of employees. Even out of the issues discussed many of them kept pending over the years. Management is interested in disposing the issues in the forms other than settling them in employees' favour, though settlement of most of the issues may not involve financial commitment on the part of administration. Hence, it is suggested that management should be sympathetic towards employees.

It is further noted that the management is discriminative in dropping the issues and settling them in employees' favour, such type of discrimination will mar the morale of employees. Hence, it is suggested that management should not give any scope for discrimination between the two unions.