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**RAA-DL/32/2025**

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To  
Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw  
Hon'ble Minister for Railways  
Government of India

**Subject: Urgent demand to revoke the Railway Board's decision on re-engaging retired staff on daily basis for posts like Loco Pilot**

Hon'ble Minister,

I write to express my deep concern and strong condemnation of the decision taken by the Railway Board on 19th August 2025 to re-engage retired staff on a daily basis for the highly sensitive posts of Loco Pilot, Assistant Loco Pilot, and Train Manager. This decision not only undermines the safety and efficiency of Indian Railways but also reflects a complete abdication of responsibility in addressing the long-standing crisis of vacancies in critical operational categories.

As you are aware, after a prolonged gap since 2018, recruitment to the post of Assistant Loco Pilots was announced only in January 2024. Even then, the process has been excruciatingly slow. Meanwhile, each year over 4,000 loco pilots retire, and more than 50,000 railway employees across categories superannuate, leading to a steep reduction in the permanent workforce. Today, there are over **3 lakh vacancies in Indian Railways**, including more than **33,000 running staff posts (over 23% of sanctioned strength)**

The crisis has already resulted in dangerous working conditions where loco pilots are being denied adequate rest, weekly offs, and are subjected to punitive measures for unavoidable lapses caused by overwork. The High Level Safety Review Committee (2012) as well as subsequent expert committees categorically recommended that safety category posts should never be left vacant, and that adequate crew strength must be sanctioned whenever new trains are introduced. Yet, instead of expediting recruitment, the Railway Board has chosen the regressive path of daily-wage re-engagement of retired personnel to run trains — a move that endangers passenger safety and insults the nation's unemployed youth who are awaiting fair recruitment opportunities.

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I urge you to immediately:

1. **Revoke the Railway Board's order dated 19th August 2025** permitting re-engagement of retired loco pilots on a daily basis.
2. **Direct the Railway Recruitment Boards to complete the pending recruitment processes on a war footing**, so that the sanctioned vacancies are filled without further delay.
3. **Ensure that safety category posts such as Loco Pilots and Train Managers are never filled on temporary or contractual basis**, in line with the recommendations of various safety review committees.

I request your urgent intervention in this matter.

Regards,

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