



National Federation of Indian Railwaymen

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**Affiliated to : Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) &
International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)**

No. NFIR/IV/Coordination Committee/S&T/10

Dated: 29/08/2025

The Chairman & CEO,
Railway Board,
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Sub: Strengthening of S&T Maintenance activities-reg.

Ref: Railway Board's letter No. 2023/Sig/17-Sig Equip/Maintenance-Part (1) dated 06/05/2025 addressed to the GMs of NFR, ECoR, SWR & WR.

Kind attention is invited to the instructions issued by the Railway Board vide letter dated 06/05/2025 addressed to the General Managers of four Zones (NFR, ECoR, SWR & WR), deciding to launch a pilot project on one Division each of the Zones "in the name of strengthening the S&T Maintenance activities relating to execution of certain non-critical activities etc.," through the process of outsourcing and deployment of private Officials.

Representations are being received from S&T Staff working not only in the four Zonal Railways but also in other Zones through our Affiliated Unions against the said decision. In this context, Federation invites Railway Board's attention to the following points:-

- The Staff of S&T Department perform duties relating to installation and maintenance of various equipment which come under the purview of critical safety activity. The Supervisors, Engineers and Technicians working in this Department have to perform duties of arduous nature as they are called upon to rectify the fault detected even at midnight for safe running of trains.
- The complexity of the nature of work can be assessed from the fact that introduction of advanced interlocking is the prime responsibility of the staff of this Department. For completing this assignment these staff are given highest level of intensive training at different institutes in the Zonal Railways and also in IRISSET.
- Railway Board may appreciate that many accidents have taken place in the recent past at different locations where aspect of safety was compromised. During inquiries in these accidents, failure of signal/gear or both have also been highlighted as the cause of accidents. Such errors have been mentioned in the reports of the inquiries as "human error" where S&T Staff has been penalized.
- A large number of modifications are being carried out in the infrastructure of S&T Department for the purpose of implementing modern signalling system and installation/operation of applications of Kavach, Electronic Interlocking, Automatic Block Signalling, Intermediate Block Signalling etc, besides Interlocking of Level Crossing Gates.

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- It will not be out of place to mention that the modern signalling systems as mentioned above require safe maintenance and troubleshooting at short notice.

Railway Board should admit the fact that the outsourcing staff coming from private agency may be Supervisor or field Engineer or Technician cannot successfully fulfill the tasks expected from a SSE/JE/Technician recruited and trained by Railways and working for the systems. Federation (NFIR) contends that the adventurism shown in Board's letter dated 06/05/2025 relating to execution of certain activities along with supply of material, deployment of technical teams at major stations on contract basis will not yield expected results in the absence of trained and qualified Railway manpower of S&T Department and such experiment would be counterproductive. The proposal dated 06/05/2025 of Railway Board deserves to be shelved in all fairness more particularly for ensuring efficient and safe running of passenger carrying as well freight trains.

Federation (NFIR) also desires to convey that large number of vacancies in various categories are existing in the S&T Department all over Indian Railways. Added to this non-compliance of Yardsticks prescribed by Railway Board has been causing strain to the systems, while S&T staff are heavily overburdened. Outsourcing or contracting would cause safety hazard situation.

NFIR, therefore, requests the Railway Board (CRB & CEO) to kindly intervene and see that instructions dated 06/05/2025 are withdrawn in the interest of efficiency of systems on Indian Railways. Federation also requests that action, on priority, to fill existing vacancies and create additional posts as per norms be ensured.

Action taken in the matter may kindly be apprised to the Federation.

Yours faithfully,


(Dr. M. Raghavaiah)
General Secretary

Copy forwarded to the Member (Infra), Railway Board, New Delhi for necessary action please.
Copy to the General Secretaries of Zonal Unions of NFIR.
Media Centre/NFIR.