



A) ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN WAGE DETERMINATION :

Almost all labour problems revolve around the wages. The standard of living, economic well being of worker, his relative efficiency, labour cost - all pertain to this problem. Wages are often an important source of disputes between labour and management. In M.S.R.T.C. wages are determined by central office in consultation with recognised trade unions. The trade unions in M.S.R.T.C. control wages and the determination of dearness allowance through the means of collective bargaining. It can not be denied that unionisation with its impact upon wages has tended towards preventing the rate from being lowered, if not raised.

Two important settlements were made for this purpose. First settlement was effective from 1/4/1950 and second was effective from 1/4/1980, under these settlements various benefits were granted including revision of pay scales, increase in dearness allowance, medical facilities, provident fund, gratuity, various other allowances, leave concession, free pass concession etc.<sup>1</sup> Settlement takes place after every four years.

Recently, negotiations with different unions were held during the year mainly for a new settlement. The new settlement was signed on 19/12/1985. The highlights of financial benefits given to employees are given below.

LABOUR SETTLEMENT (1985)  
For Class III and Class IV Employees  
Period 1984-88

Before Settlement	Revision of pay scales Pay + Dearness Allowance	After Settlement
Rs.191	Minimum in the lowest pay scale	Rs.286
Rs.310	Maximum in the lowest pay scale	Rs.524
Rs.410	Minimum in the highest pay scale	Rs.505
Rs.945	Maximum in the highest pay scale	Rs.1575
<u>Dearness Allowance</u>		
Rs.1.50	Index D.A. Rate over 501 Point	Rs.1.80
<u>Service Increments</u>		
5 yrs upto 12 yrs service		1 Increment
12 yrs upto 19 yrs service		2 Increment
19 yrs and more		3 Increments
<u>Rate of Increments Doubled</u>		
Rs. 4/-	Minimum rate in lowest pay scale	Rs. 8/-
Rs. 7/-	Maximum rate in lowest pay scale	Rs.14/-
Rs.20/-	Minimum rate in highest pay scale	Rs.40/-
Rs.30/-	Maximum rate of increment in highest pay scale	Rs.60/-
Once in a year of 2 months duration	Free passes	Two passes of one month dura- tion in a year

-----

Thus, the trade unions in M.S.R.T.C. are quite successful in safe guarding the economic interests and providing the amenities of civilized life e.g. a better home, more leisure, better conditions of work etc.<sup>2</sup>

In order to ensure that the various settlements are observed and the real benefits are given to the workers a 'Joint-Committee' is appointed to deal with all matters and disputes arising out of settlements. The committee is to ensure that the service conditions of the workers are not cordial relations are maintained between the employees and management. The decisions taken in these meetings are binding on both the parties.<sup>3</sup>

**B) ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN LABOUR WELFARE :**

Labour welfare activities influence the sentiment of the workers. When worker feels that the employers and the state are interested in their happiness, his tendency to grouse and grumble will steadily disappear. The development of such feeling paves the way for industrial peace.

Welfare measures will improve the physique, intelligence, morality and standard of living of the workers which in turn, will improve their efficiency and productivity.

The trade unions can play an important role in the field of labour welfare. But unfortunately only two unions viz. M.S.T. Kamgar Union and M.S.T. Employees Union (INTUC) has done some

work in this field. M.S.T. Kamgar Sanghatana has provided funds for contingencies like sickness, death etc. Rs.500/- are given to each employee from this fund under the said contingencies. It organises social and cultural gatherings.

M.S.T. employees union (INTUC) has organised credit co-operative societies, housing societies etc. It has provided funds for medical help. It organises annual social and cultural gatherings.

Other unions are far from providing labour welfare facilities. M.M.K.Federation organises training programmes for its members whereas, Chalak-Wahak Sanghatana and Castribe Karmachari Sanghatana has done nothing in this field.

Though the trade unions in M.S.R.T.C. have not provided much welfare facilities at their own, they have obtained lot of labour welfare facilities through settlements. The settlement arrived at in 1950 proved useful in this direction. Summing up, present welfare facilities enjoyed by workers is the outcome of the efforts of the trade unions. Following labour welfare activities are undertaken by M.S.R.T.C.

1. Staff Institutes :

Five staff institutes are opened at Dapodi, Pune, Nasik, Dhule and Solapur. These are equipped with facilities of indoor and outdoor games.

## 2. Labour Welfare Centres :

21 Labour Welfare Centres are opened at different divisions. The following major activities are undertaken at the Welfare Centres by the Lady Welfare Instructor, who is in charge of the Welfare Centre.

- i) Montessory classes for the children of S.T. Employees.
- ii) Sewing and embroidery classes for ladies.
- iii) Cooking demonstrations.
- iv) Sports events for children of S.T. employees.
- v) Arranging two picnics in a year for the family members and children of S.T. employees.

## 3. Recreation Centre, TV sets, Film shows :

Three Recreation Halls are provided at central office, Bombay, Divisional stores, Kurla and Divisional Office, Thana. Arrangements for playing games e.g. carrom, table tennis are made at these places.

Five film projectors have been provided one each at Aurangabad, Kolhapur, Pune, Nagpur and Central Office, Bombay. TV sets have been provided at Divisional Office, Thane; Central Workshops, Dapodi; Central Training Institute, Bhosari and Pune Divisional Office.

## 4. Restrooms :

Rest-rooms have been provided at depots and at the divisional workshops to enable the workers to relax during their rest periods.

5. Medical facilities :

In all, 154 Medical dispensaries are functioning satisfactorily under Honorary Medical Officer assisted by full time Compounder at Divisional Headquarters and part time Compounders at Depots. A Pathological unit is also functioning in the dispensary at central office, Bombay. The total expenditure on medical expenses was to the tune of Rs.392.31 lakhs.

6. Housing :

The corporation has built houses from its own funds and also hired blocks from private parties. Advantage is also taken of the HUDCO loans and subsidised industrial housing scheme for this purpose. Such tenements are given to the employees on concessional rents. The number of such tenements is 3676.

7. Prizes and Scholarships :

This scheme is also implemented by M.S.R.T.C. According to this scheme prizes are given to the children of S.T. employees who secured 60% or more marks in S.S.C. or equivalent examination, in order of merit.

8. Holiday Homes :

One Holiday Home is provided by the corporation at the Hill Station at Mahabaleshwar. During the year 1985-86, 136 employees with their families took the advantage of the same.

9. Free Passes :

State Transport Employees are given free passes for travelling by State Transport Bus for themselves and upto 6

members of their family twice in a year to move any where, wherever buses are operated by the Corporation.

The State Transport Employees are also given duty free passes for a distance of 40 kilometers from their houses to the places of work.

10. Advances :

The employees are granted advances for purchasing bicycles, cars as well as for purchasing or construction of houses. Once in a year festival advance is also given. All these advances are recovered in easy instalments.

11. Ex-Gratia Payment :

The Corporation pays ex-gratia amount to it's employees in lieu of bonus. The payment is made at the rate of 8.33% with a ceiling of Rs.1,600/-.

12. Allowances :

Under various settlements, the employees are granted various allowances like, line allowance, night allowance, washing allowance, night shift allowance in addition to the normal allowances.

13. Sports :

Sports are conducted by the Association of State Road Transport Undertakings. The association organises the tournaments of Table Tennis, Badminton, Athelitics, Kabbadi etc.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to above facilities best workers awards are given by the corporation. Various schemes for workers education are sponsored by the corporation. Aim of such schemes is to educate the workers on their rights and responsibilities, various laws, working methods etc.

Thus, the trade unions in M.S.R.T.C. are very sensitive and careful in guarding the rights of their members.

C) ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN PRODUCTIVITY :

Productivity is an issue of crucial importance in every concern. It is important because it is only way for lowering the production cost of the transport services and thereby lowering the fares. Higher productivity is the key to higher living standards. Higher productivity helps to reduce the cost of production and thus results in increased profit, which helps for the expansion of transport services by expansion of investment. Wages or salary paid to workers is generally based on productivity of the workers. Increased productivity means increased wages. It leads to shorter working hours, improvement in working conditions, more leisure to enjoy the goods and services and greater work satisfaction.

Productivity does not aims at harder work but more productive work. It is not through increasing the workloads, but it is a multiprolonged attack on waste and it takes in its stride the objective of improvement of working conditions,

avoidance of fatigue and drudgery and affording greater job satisfaction. There is always a better and easier way of doing a job, and it is the task of productivity drive to seek that way.<sup>5</sup>

Trade unions in M.S.R.T.C. can do a lot for increasing the productivity. Trade union is a bridge to maintain smooth and amicable relations between the labour and management. They can develop the philosophy of work, in order to foster a spirit of co-operation, diffuse education and develop a strong band of committed workers to enhance productivity. A practice of arranging regular meetings at division, workshop and depot level amongst workers and managers to understand the problems in working and how to overcome difficulties, saving of time, materials, labour etc. will be useful. It can also arrange for training and other programmes for the improvement of efficiency of skilled and semiskilled workers. Trade unions can do this by maintaining industrial peace and by acting as a change agent between management and workers.

Trade unions in M.S.R.T.C. are certainly contributing for increasing productivity. Every union is trying to develop spirit of co-operation among the workers, inspite of the union rivalry. During informal discussion with employees and union leaders researcher found that every employee has a proud and being the servant of M.S.R.T.C. and each one of them is thinking for the good future of M.S.R.T.C. This type of loyalty is scarce and it is cultivated by the trade unions only.

In M.S.R.T.C. Kolhapur Division, regular meetings of the union representatives with management are conducted to discuss the problems in work and method to overcome the problems. Generally meeting with every union is held once in two months. This practice definitely helps to achieve higher productivity.

Trade unions in Kolhapur Division are trying to secure all the things which are necessary for maintaining contented workers, which is a pre condition of the productivity.

On the other hand, the trade unions in Kolhapur Division, do'ot arrange the training programmes at their own, for skilled and semiskilled workers.

The role of change agent in increasing productivity is also not very well performed by the trade unions in Kolhapur Division. Here is a case which has taken place in June, 1988, may support the researchers argument. In June 1988 Management of Kolhapur Division decided to change the schedule of the duties of traffic employees. As per the new schedule every employee (specifically Driver, Conductor) of traffic branch has to complete the minimum run of 150 kms per day. Previously average of two or three days run was considered for this purpose, but as per the new schedule average run was not considered. For example, if a Driver completed 100 kms run on Monday and 200 kms on Tuesday, it was treated that he has completed his duty. But as per new

schedule, though the these days run of a driver is 200 kms, he has to complete the run of 150 kms on Monday also and vice-versa.

Here, in this case, instead of acting as a change agent between the management and workers, the trade unions opposed the management for the new schedule.

Thus, it can be concluded that the trade unions in Kolhapur Division are contributing well in increasing productivity. But much more can be achieved in this field, if the trade unions play their role effectively.

REFERENCES

1. Shelke, K.B. - 'Growth and Development of Passenger Bus Transport in Maharashtra'. Ph.D. Thesis, 1983, p.102.
2. Administration Report - M.S.R.T.C., 1985-86, p.40.
3. Shelke, K.B. - op.cit., p.103.
4. Administration Report - op.cit., pp.41-43.
5. Bhagoliwal, T.N. - 'Economics of Labour and Social Welfare'. Sahitya Bhawan, Agra. Ed.1978, p.453.