



FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN OF PAKISTAN

Report on Pakistan Railways in Regard to Mal-Administration in Settlement of Pension Claims and Allotment of Accommodation to its Employees and Suggested Measures for Improvement



36 - Constitution Avenue, Islamabad, Pakistan.
Ph: +92-51-9217206-10, Fax: +92-51-9217224



M. SALMAN FARUQUI,
N.I.
Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan

No. 1(10)/HWM/2015

4th June, 2015

My dear Minister,

In order to identify endemic issues that become subject matter of public complaints and for making recommendations concerning remedial measures for systemic changes, I recently constituted various Standing Committees in the Regional Offices in pursuance of the mandatory requirement of Article 18 of President's Order No.1 of 1983.

I am pleased to forward a report on Ministry of Railways prepared by a Committee in the Regional Office, Lahore comprising Mr. Ali Arif, Senior Advisor and former Secretary to the federal government and Special Secretary to the Prime Minister as well as Mr. Aftab Habib, Director General and Additional Secretary to the federal government.

I am sure you will find the report to be informative and useful and I look forward to the feedback of the concerned authorities.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Saad Rafique,
Minister for Railways,
Islamabad.



FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN

**REPORT ON PAKISTAN RAILWAYS IN REGARD TO
MAL-ADMINISTRATION IN SETTLEMENT OF
PENSION CLAIMS AND ALLOTMENT OF
ACCOMODATION TO ITS EMPLOYEES AND
SUGGESTED MEASURES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

36-constituion Avenue, Islamabad, Pakistan
Ph: +92-51-9217206-10, Fax: +92-51-9217224

REPORT

Primarily, the Committee was constituted to make recommendations and suggest remedial measures with reference to Pension and Accommodation issues of the Railway Department.

The **Committee** constituted for the **Recommendations and Remedial Measures** to be suggested as regards the Railway Department, had an in-depth study of the apprehensions, grievances and complaints of the Pensioners of the department.

The **Committee** also studied the delay in the **modalities and procedures** involved in the completion of pension documents till the final stage when pension is paid to the applicant. In this respect, the committee had detailed discussions with the officers of the Railway Department.

With this background, the Committee, in the first instance, probed into the factors which cause **grievance to the pensioners** and secondly, to identify **classification of retirement cases**, the **objections raised** during process of pension cases and the **remedial measures** for redressal of the pensioners' grievances.

In this context, a **brief survey** was conducted in order to pick up a few pensioners' cases, for which the General Manager, Pakistan Railways, was contacted, who deputed the concerned officials, including the Chief Personnel Officer, Pakistan Railways and the Divisional Personnel Officer, Pakistan Railways, Lahore Division, to facilitate the Committee.

1. GRIEVANCES OF PENSIONERS:

The following three pensioners were called by the Committee :-

- a. Mr. Amjad Siddique s/o M. Afzal Siddique, [CNIC # 35202-2481002-9]
- b. Mr. Shah Nawaz s/o Ch. Umar Din, [CNIC # 35202-7255924-9]
- c. Mr. Magbool Ahmed s/o M. Ramzan, [CNIC # 35301-1871177-3]

As a result of interaction with the pensioners, the nature of **Grievances** and **Complaints** were assessed as under :-

- a. A sizeable number of employees/staff posted in the Pension Section have been in their positions since a considerable long period of time. Consequently, they become corrupt, lazy and arrogant in their attitude while dealing with the old poor pensioners.

Three instant cases as regards the non-payment of pension (**pending since past one year**) are quoted below:-

- 1. Pension/HQ/19764
- 2. Pension/HQ/24206
- 3. Pension/HQ/28121
- b. The Railway Department does not have its own **Online Banking System**. They have **borrowed the online system** from the Auditor General of Pakistan's Office. The funds to the tune of Rs. 30.5 million given to the Railway Department are lying un-utilized resulting in delay in the payment of pension.
- c. In case where a pensioner dies, the pension is transferred to the heirs of the pensioner. In such cases, Succession Certificate is required from the Civil Court which takes considerable time. Thus, the pensioner **runs to and fro** between the **Civil Court** and the **Railway Department**.
- d. The **Bank Cell** of the Pension Section was created in the Headquarters Office to monitor the pension payment but practically **it is not functioning**, causing delay in the payment of pension.
- e. There were **many complaints** also regarding the **apathetic attitude** of Accounts/Pension Branch of Pakistan Railways.
- f. **Corruption** and **illegal gratification** is sought at every level.
- g. If the requisite documents are in complete, **gratification is sought**.

- h. The applicant pensioner is **scared** and **apprehensive** to **approach** the Pension Section.
- i. Occurrence of **in-ordinate delay** in the receipt of pension without any legal justification.
- j. The **corruption** emanates from the **highest level to the lowest**.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF RETIREMENT

- a. Superannuation Retirement at 60 years.
- b. Premature Retirement (at employee's request after 25 QS)
- c. Death in Service
- d. Invalided or Incapacitated on Medical Grounds

Factors in respect of Superannuation retirement, premature retirement, common problems and objections raised in pension cases were noticed as under:-

a. SUPERANNUATION RETIREMENT

- a. **Notification** must be issued **six months before** retirement.
- b. **Maintenance of Service Record** (Personnel File, Service Book, Fixation Statements, leave Account etc.)
- c. Letter should be **written to concerned employee** to submit pension papers duly completed in all respects within a week after the Settlement letter.
- d. After completion of Service record, case should be sent to Head of Pension for **arrangement of settlement** dues.
- e. After receipt of Pension papers, Head of Pension may send the case to the Accounts Office within 7 days.
- f. Accounts Office may **examine the papers** and **verify** it within 7 days.

- g. After verification from Accounts Office, the case should be sent to Accounts Officer/Pension for audit and arrange payment **before 15 days** of the expiry of the date of Retirement of the concerned employee.
- h. Accounts Officer/Pension should **arrange the payment** on the expiry of date of superannuation.

b. PREMATURE RETIREMENT

- a. The employee's request for premature retirement must reach the Personnel branch.
- b. Head P-1 must process the case within 3 days for clearance. Similar procedure should be adopted by Head P-2 in case of Class-IV staff and Head/P-5 in LPR.
- c. The respective branches should **clear the case** within 5 days.
- d. On receipt of satisfactory clearance, the case should be forwarded to the concerned officer for **obtaining his approval**.
- e. The Concerned Officer should give his approval within 3 days.
- f. The Accounts Officer should return the case within 7 days after verification.
- g. The respective section should forward the case to the **sanctioning authority** within 5 days after verification of qualifying service.
- h. The sanctioning authority must give the sanction within 3 days.
- i. After sanction, the next day, Notice should be issued before 2 months of retirement.
- j. Accounts Officer should return the case within 7 days to the Personnel Branch.

- k. Head of Pension section should send the case to Accounts Officer/Pension before 15 days of Retirement of employee for audit and final payment.
- l. Accounts Officer/Pension must arrange the **payment on due date**.

3. COMMON PROBLEMS/OBJECTIONS IN PENSION CASES

- a. Non availability of **Medical Fitness Certificate** and **appointment letter** (both are required by the Accounts branch).
- b. Date of Birth differs from that in the **Service Book** and **CNIC**.
- e. Objection raised by the Accounts with regard to upper age and under-age **relaxation**.
- f. Previous **fixation statements** are demanded by the Accounts on promotion.
- g. **Late submission** of Pension papers by the retired employees.
- h. Late submission of **LPC** by the respective cost centre supervisors.
- i. **Debits** against the employees proceeding on retirement.
- j. Late receipt of Succession Certificate from the family of deceased employee.

As per the **Terms of Reference** (TORs) of the Committee, the areas, in the light of survey conducted, as part of the study, are as under:-

a) TO IDENTIFY MAL-ADMINISTRATION IN CASES RELATED TO PENSION:

The noticeable **factors** of mal-administration causing delay in the payment of Pension to Railway Employees occur due to :-

- 1) Non-availability of **Statement of Service** and **verification** thereof.
- 2) In-ordinate delay in the Cheques by the Accounts department in verification of service due to non-availability of records.

- 3) **Delay** in the issuance of Last Pay Certificate which keeps completion of Pension Papers un-finalized.
- 4) **Un-necessary delay** caused in Issue of Pension Payment Authority or Family Pension in cases of death of a pensioner.
- 5) Non-drawal of Pension.
- 6) Check & up-dating of Paid Pension Bills.
- 7) **Delay in payment** of Provisional Pension and Gratuity.
- 8) Wrong deduction from Gratuity.
- 9) Non-payment of Provisional Pension as per rules till settlement of Final Pension.
- 10) Un-due delay in issuance of G.P.

Fund and other service dues.

- 11) **Unjustified delay** in the revision of Pensionary Benefits announced from time to time.
- 12) Commutation of **Pension not on time**, thus delaying the restoration of commuted portion of pension.
- 13) Late payment of arrears of Pensionary Benefits.
- 14) Delay in the transfer of dues from one Treasury to another.
- 15) Late payment of cases where it is to be made through Post Offices/Banks which should be timely made.
- 16) **Pensionary benefits** granted to Railway servants in respect of their services but still generally **not implemented** under one or other categories relating to :-
 - i) Superannuation/ Retirement Pension.
 - ii) Compensation Pension.
 - iii) Invalid Pension.
 - iv) Commuted Pension.
 - v) Ex-gratia Pension.

- vi) Death-cum-retirement Gratuity.
- vii) Service Gratuity Other than (Extra-Ordinary) Gratuity & Compassionate allowances/grants and (viii) Family Pension/ Death Gratuity.

b) **TO PROBE INTO THE CAUSES OF ALLEGED DELAYS WHILE DEALING WITH THE AFORE-MENTIONED CASES :-**

It is worth mentioning that the detailed rules regulating the grant of Pensionary Benefits are contained in the **Manual of Railway, Pension Rules** and extant orders issued from time to time including the **Internal check** on such payments which cover verification that the qualifying conditions governing the grant of a pension have been fulfilled, the calculation of amount of pension is correct, the incidence and allocation is correct but these aspects too, are not followed timely. Indeed, delay in payment of pension causes serious hardship to the employees. In the study, efforts have been made to identify the alleged causes for delay in processing the pension cases.

While getting first hand information from recently retired Railway employees, it has been found that the **delay** and the **hardship** which they have to face during processing of their pension cases, causes them frustration because it affects their livelihood and disturb their entire plan worked out by them for the post-retirement period.

The **causes for complaints** by the employees and their families focus on the long delays in accessing the pension's payroll despite government's increased annual funding. On average, in Railways, it takes several months to access the pension's payroll, instead of the stipulated time period fixed for it.

There is **in-ordinate delay** in the pension processing activities for receiving and approving the pension applications, verification, assessment and payment of settlement dues entitled to newly retired public servants. The Railway Administration attributes the failure on their part due to non-cooperative attitude by the employees to get their documentation done correctly and on time.

On the contrary, from the **feedback obtained** during informal survey carried out by the Committee, it was learnt that:-

Firstly, the employees are not fully conversant with the procedural stages.

Secondly, this weakness is exploited by the concerned staff and the Welfare Wing of the Personnel Branch who are supposed to provide proper guidance and assistance to them which is not readily available. Instead, the concerned staff paint such a **horrifying picture** to the employees as if the delay in the non-submission of correctly filled papers and documents by them would cause them immense loss and delay in the grant of pension to them.

This situation forces the employees to seek help from the concerned staff even by offering illegal gratification. What difficulties are experienced in the Railway Department, occur in other govt. departments as well.

c) **TO TRACE THE OVERALL DEFICIENCIES IN THE SYSTEM :-**

The report reveals long pension processing time. The **delay** is attributed to the **factors** as under:-

1. Lack of a Communication Strategy.
2. The failure by the Agency to update the existing records of employees in order to commence timely pension processing.
3. The unreliable **Pension Information Management System** which needs to immediately acknowledge receipt of pension applications whereas, it was found that too much time is taken by the Agency to acknowledge receipt of pension applications instead of the period of 14 days normally required for it. It was observed that the concerned officials take long time to process on file the application letters and documents for their compilation in the list meant for submission to the competent authority. It was felt that either the time limit allocated to sub-offices and branches for submission of application forms was too short than required for **effective monitoring and supervision** of these activities.

Therefore, the **deficiencies in the system** result in the pension cases not being disposed off expeditiously. Objections, if any, should be raised on the first occasion and not **piecemeal** and **settled** expeditiously so that the beneficiary receives his dues without delay.

d) **PROCEDURES LAID DOWN IN THE SYSTEM :**

1) **Statement of Service for Non-gazetted Staff.** On receipt of the application for pension in the prescribed form, the head of the Office/Department immediately prepares a statement of the applicant's services in accordance with the instructions to enable the Accounts Officer to verify the service.

2) **Statement of Service for Gazetted Staff.** The Service Records and leave accounts of Gazetted Officers are maintained by the Accounts Officer who should send the Service Record and Leave Account of the person concerned to the Head of the Department to enable him to prepare the **Statement of Service**. The Statement of Service should show all the important events; the temporary and officiating service period or any other factor **affecting the emoluments** of the Railway servants. It should be clearly seen that:-

- a) The **statement shows** not only the periods which count as qualifying service but also all periods of leave, suspension, overstayed etc., which do not so count.
- b) If the **date of confirmation** has been determined i.e. deemed date of confirmation, the fact should be clearly mentioned in the statement.
- c) The details of the case to be given in the remarks column. The statement shows date, month and year of the various appointments, promotions and reversions. For the purpose of adding together the broken periods, a month is reckoned as thirty days.
- d) Periods which count as **qualifying service**, [in terms of Chapter IV of the Manual], are clearly indicated and that full details of the nature of posts/service and the relevant para under which the same qualifies is indicated in respect of each period in the remarks column.

- e) If the **emoluments drawn** in an officiating appointment count in full for pensionary benefits (under para 501 of the Manual) all details regarding the officiating appointment are given.
- f) The total of the periods of the **qualifying service** shown in the statement tallies with the total service less the non-qualifying service shown in the statement tallies with the total service less the non-qualifying periods shown in the statement.
- g) In the column "how verified" the particulars of records such as verification certificate in the service book/pay bills, a quittance rolls/office orders, collateral evidence/affidavit, etc., are mentioned.

3) **Verification of Service by Head of the Office/Department :-** The head of the Office/Department is required to verify the service of Non-Gazetted staff recorded in the Statement of Service. The head of the Office/Department shall also verify the **portion of service**, if any, of a Gazetted Officer rendered in Non-Gazetted capacity. The service of a Gazetted Officer rendered in the Gazetted capacity should be verified by the Accounts Officer personally.

4) **Check of Service by the Heads of Offices :-** The heads of offices are required to verify service annually and record a Certificate regarding the service verified, in the Service Book. From which service is verified, the verification should be done in the manner laid down i.e. from the application of the employee supported by collateral evidence of contemporary employees etc. These documents relied upon by the Head of the Office in **verifying the service** may be accepted in Accounts Office. The **test-check** should be conducted by the Accounts Wing in the manner indicated below :-

- a) It should be seen that the **Annual Certificate** (consolidated certificate also for past service has been recorded in every Service Book and that the Certificate has been signed by the head of the office.
- b) The **entries** in the **Service Books** should be test checked to see that they are correct. For this purpose, the Service Books of employees who are

due to retire within three years from the date of inspection, should all be test checked while in other cases the entries regarding qualifying service in the Service Books should be test-checked in a percentage of the employees, the percentage being so regulated that each Service Book comes under the test check at least thrice or four times before the employee attains the age of 57 years i.e., three years before the age of Superannuation.

(c) A percentage of the entries relating to past service for which a **consolidated certificate** is recorded by the head of office should also be test-checked preferably with the paid pay bills etc., if available (in the case of offices located at the Headquarters of the Railway/Division) or office copies thereof and other available Establishment Records e. g. Office Orders. The percentage of entries to be test-checked should be fixed by the Financial Advisor and Chief Accounts officer. The test-check should be so regulated that all Service Books containing the consolidated certificate are subjected to test check in the course of two to three inspections.

(d) Besides the above, the first year of permanent service and all previous qualifying service should be checked in the case of employees who are confirmed in the period intervening between the two inspections [the last inspection and the one on Hand]. This check, should, however, cover all employees who **entered into service**. The inspection party should record in every Service Book inspected by them a clear Certificate to the effect that "**Entries Nos.....covered by the certificate by the head of office for the period ending have been checked**".

5) **Check by Accounts Department of Qualifying Service :-** In Accounts Office, the qualifying service is checked in the following manner :-

- a) Category of Employees Check to be applied at the time of **local inspections** and,
- b) Check to be applied in the Accounts Office at the time of verification of pension keeping in view the **factors as under:-**

- i) Employee who entered service to see that the **consolidated certificate** for service from the date of appointment to the last date of the financial year is available.
- ii) To check first year of **permanent qualifying service** and all previous qualifying service preceding the date of option & the annual certificate of verification of service is recorded by the head of Office (including temporary staff).
- iii) To test-check **accuracy of consolidated certificate** recorded by head of office relating to past service from the date of appointment to the last date of the financial year preceding the date of option.
- iv) To test-check accuracy of certificate relating to service from the year of date of option onwards, particularly in case of staff due to retire within three years.
- v) To see that **annual certificate** of verification of service is recorded by the head of office (including temporary staff).
- vi) To check last one year **qualifying service**. Where, however, it brings to light any discrepancies or where there have been variations in the scale of pay of the applicant during the last three years, a meticulous scrutiny of the Service Book, should be conducted, in addition to the verification of the last year's service.
- vii) To check fully the first year of permanent qualifying service and all previous qualifying service. Where, however, the **certificate of test check** required to be **recorded** by the accounts inspection party in the service book are missing for any reason e.g. in reconstructed records, the **following checks** should be exercised in the Accounts Office at the time of verification of Pension application :-
 - 1) First year of permanent qualifying service and all previous qualifying service.
 - 2) The **last three years** of qualifying service.
 - 3) One or **two intermediate years** selected at random.

- 4) Verification of service in the case of non-availability of records. If paid vouchers or other documents are not available in the Accounts Office for the selected period, the verification may be made from the documents made use of by the Executive Offices.
- 5) The date of birth, and the date of beginning of service, as shown in the Application Form and the service Statement must be checked with the Office Order containing the appointment of the employee or old Gradation Lists etc. and in the absence of these, with the Service Book Register.

Last Pay Certificate:- In the case of ordinary pension, the Last Pay Certificate, with a clear certificate of “**No Demand**” if no dues are outstanding, or a list of outstanding, as the case may be, should be attached. Pension sanctioned to the minor children will be paid through their natural guardian, if any, otherwise through their de-facto guardian on production of Indemnity Bond.

Invalid Pension:- The pension allowed prematurely during service on medical grounds is determined by the nominated Medical Board but in this context too, the employees should not suffer on account of delay in the decision for grant of pension dues. A system needs to be streamlined where no injustice is done and at the same time, intentional or malafide grounds should be plugged in to let the employees avail benefits to which they are not entitled on merit.

Death of Pensioner:- Whenever the death of a pensioner/recipient of pension is intimated the facts should at once be noted both in the Check Register of Pension Form and necessary action taken by the Accounts Officer.

6) REVISION OF PENSIONARY BENEFITS:

In cases, where a **Pensionary benefit** already sanctioned has to be enhanced as a result of fresh facts coming to notice at a later date, or a fresh order taking retrospective effect, neither a fresh formal application, nor a fresh printed application is necessary. The payment to arrears of Pensionary benefits actually due to a deceased Railway servant may be made to the beneficiary. The

F.A.&C.A.O. any Divisional Accounts Officer will forward to the concerned Director of Accounts (Postal), under intimation to the pensioner, with the following documents:-

- i) Pension Payment Order (disburser's portion).
 - ii) Copy of photograph/joint photographs.
 - iii) Specimen signatures duly attested.
 - iv) Application from the pensioner.
- e) **TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGEST REMEDIAL MEASURE SO AS TO BRING ABOUT IMPROVEMENT IN THE IDENTIFIED AREAS AS AFORESAID**
1. **REMEDIAL MEASURES:**
- a. As per check list of pension papers, issued by the Finance Division, medical Certificate and appointment letter of the employee is not mentioned in the **check list** while submitting the pension cases to the Accounts Officer/Pension for audit and payment.
 - b. **Verification of the service record** may be done **once a year before the retirement** of an employee so that payment could be arranged within the stipulated time period.
 - c. **Date of birth** in different cases differs from that of mentioned in the CNIC of the employee. In such cases, list of the employees is required to be prepared and intimated to the staff concerned **to correct their CNIC from NADRA.**
 - d. **Completion of service record** in all respects is necessary before one year of retirement, as in-complete service record creates paramount problems in the finalization of the pension cases.
 - e. **Outstanding debits** if any should be decided four months prior to the retirement of an employee.

- f. The **Online Banking System** of the Railway Department should be **activated** at the earliest to ease out the procedural formalities.
- g. The **Bank Cell** of the department should be immediately **activated** and sufficiently staffed to facilitate the pensioners.
- h. The entire **pension system** should be **fully computerized** so that there is less room for corruption and delays.
- i. The **over-hauling** and **computerization** of the pension system would also result in educating the pensioners and consequently, they would no longer be dependent on the staff/officials of the Pension Section.
- j. There should be yearly **shuffling/posting** of the **pension staff/officials** so that corruption is minimized.

Keeping the above facts and shortcomings in view, it is stated that presently, Pakistan Railways has 85,000 Personnel in service, while the number of pensioners is about 150,000 who have to **wait in long queues** every month in front of the nominated branches of National Bank of Pakistan (NBP). The pensioners have been directed to open their accounts in any branch of the NBP near their homes and submit their account numbers to the relevant railway offices so that their pension could be transferred to them directly. The period of four months before retirement is enough to overcome and resolve the service objections.

- 1. Any **objection raised** by the Personnel and Accounts Branches during this period shall be sent to the concerned employees who will be asked to come back with reply within 30 days' time limit.
- 2. **Computerization** process for the employees from 1 to 16 grade should be completed. The computerization process, once implemented, would provide relief to the affected employees whose deficiencies in the Service Record will be settled by 30th of June each year, not to be changed or altered without notice to the concerned employees for their replies, if any.

3. The Computerized System should introduce **Online Alert System/SMS** which should keep issuing warning alerts to the employees six months before retirement so as to enable them to update their own date.
4. One officer of the Personnel Branch should be nominated as '**focal person**' who should be the incharge responsible to take care of the employees' pension cases and should coordinate with the Accounts Branch to overcome any shortcomings prior to settlement of the pension case.
5. The employees once issued cheques about payment of their settlement dues etc. must be honoured by the banks and the Railways Administration should ensure that there is **no excuse** for any budgetary constraint so that no single case is delayed due to budgetary constraint.
6. CEO/Sr. General Manager Railways for any lapse at any later stage, will be **personally responsible** to ensure implementation.

f) **OBSERVATION OF THE COMMITTEE:-**

The Committee has examined and looked into these aspects in-depth and after thorough **examination of all pros and cons**, has arrived at the conclusion as stated above. It needs to be mentioned that to achieve these goals, the Committee has placed these factors as part of the Report aimed to be incorporated into the Railway Pension System.

If the System is to work and function successfully, it is necessary to **develop policies, systems and structures** that facilitate efficient and effective performance to ensure a fair, equitable, transparent and prompt system of computation and payment of pension and other **terminal benefits**. It is learnt that to facilitate the retired employees, Pakistan Railway has already decided to introduce new system for its pensioners but it is not being followed/implemented. Under the new system, the monthly pension of the retired employees of Pakistan Railways will be transferred directly to their personal bank accounts. Despite the fact, the pensioners are supposed to open their accounts in any bank branch near their homes, so that it is then possible

to transfer pension amount directly to the Bank, the **procedure is still not being followed and implemented in letter and spirit.**

g) **ALLOTMENT OF RESIDENCES**

1. **TO IDENTIFY MAL-ADMINISTRATION IN CASES RELATED TO ALLOTMENT OF RESIDENCES :-**

- a) Allotment of accommodation to officials, as in other departments and Organizations, is an area which becomes a cause for **serious complaints.**
- b) When contacted, the Administration came forth with the viewpoint that the employees about to retire use all their **influence** to continue **occupying the same accommodation** through its allotment to any of their children serving in the department.
- c) In their efforts to achieve their target, they do not consider the fact whether the category of the house is entitled to their son/daughter or not or whether it will affect the next applicant **waiting in queue** for the house allotment according to his entitlement.
- d) There is a category fixed to **determine the entitlement** and also the accommodation, whether it belongs to which branch of employees, such as, Workshop Division or Lahore Division or any other Division of Railways.
- e) There are a number of issues of allotment of Railway residences which **need to be investigated.** From the Administration side, there are complaints against employees to have sub-let the official Railway Accommodation to private and un-authorized persons.
- f) The accommodation in Mayo Gardens Colony, for example, is controlled by the DGM which is allotted to officers with the approval of GM. In some cases, **addition/alteration** is made in clear violation of rules without approval of the competent authority.
- g) It was noticed that **no serious efforts** are made by the Railway authorities to investigate into the complaints regarding unjust allotment of quarters/accommodation since these are allowed to continue with the connivance of the concerned staff.

- h) In some cases, it is **not checked** whether the original allottee is residing or not.
- i) The rules and regulations with regard to the inspection of the houses are often **ignored** which give benefit to **illegal occupants** at the cost of the genuine applicants for the accommodation.
- j) Under rules, only the original allottee has the right to reside in the accommodation. Employees entitled **on merit** for allotment of quarters are kept waiting for years on the **waiting list**.

2) **TO TRACE THE OVERALL DEFICIENCIES IN THE SYSTEM :-**

In a few cases, it was reported that the allottees were forced to vacate their houses without giving them any notice and without providing any **alternate accommodation** if due, especially when the vacation was ordered to carry out the demolishing work to construct new houses at the site.

It was also found that extension was granted to retain the residences after expiry of lease period although there existed **no solid justification** for it. On the other hand, notices issued for vacation are not complied with by the occupants thus, causing delay to the new allottees in **getting possession** of the accommodation.

It was also learnt that residential quarters and bungalows of Pakistan Railways are **sub-let for commercial use** for which heavy rents are received by the allottees but no action is taken against them since this practice is allowed to exist under the '**umbrella**' and '**patronage**' of the concerned staff.

There is seldom any inquiry ordered by the Railway administration against the offenders. The Railway employees below grade 17 become entitled to allotment of Quarters after three years of services while officers of grade 17 and above are allotted bungalows from the date of appointment.

There has been a practice by officers in possession of bungalows who sub-let their quarters/rooms to persons who use it for **undesirable activities**. In some case the matter is reported to the Railway Police but no action is taken against them.

To the **disadvantage of Railways**, a few officers have occupied rooms of the Rest houses for long periods without paying the dues which remained recoverable. Officers transferred to other Divisions, keep possession of accommodation at both places, old and new place of posting which tantamount to mal-administration. In some cases, allotted quarters in the non-pooled category are cancelled and given to the staff posted with high-ups in violation of the rules.

3) **THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS ARE MADE BY THE COMMITTEE:-**

- a) The residences are less in number than the demand by the Railway officials. As such, the **entitled staff** and officers remain without official accommodation. But this problem can be minimized to some extent, if greater **vigilance is observed** to check the mal-practices of wrong allotment and un-authorized possession.
- b) If allotment is made entirely on merit and '**out of turn**' allotment is completely eliminated, situation will improve.
- c) To cope with the **allotment situation**, new construction of houses for all the categories should be taken up by allocation of required budget for this purpose.
- d) The procedure for **requisition facility** to all the employees be simplified.
- e) **Renovation work** for the quarters in dilapidated condition should be taken up on priority.
- f) Wherever possible, after survey and proper study, the **House Rent Allowance** should be **increased** as much as possible so that the Railway employees who own houses may be **encouraged** to occupy them instead of **renting** them out.

