

**Minutes of the Meeting held via Video Conferencing with
Representatives of the Bar Associations and
Advocates practising at RCT Delhi, Ghaziabad and Lucknow
Benches on 21.01.2021 at 2.30p.m.**

Present:

S.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Sh. K. S. Ahluwalia	Hon'ble Chairman, RCT, Delhi
2.	Sh. Vijay Kumar	Hon'ble Member (Tech.)
3.	Sh. Sunil Mathur	Hon'ble Member (Tech.)
4.	Sh. S.K. Sharma	Hon'ble Member (Tech)
5.	Smt. Aashima Mehrotra	Registrar
6.	Smt. Sarah Jayal Sawkmie	Addl. Registrar
7.	Sh. K.P.S Nirwal	Asstt. Registrar
8.	Sh. N.L. Gandhi	PS to Hon'ble Chairman
9.	Sh. Devinder Bhardwaj	Chief Office Supdt
10.	Smt. Sonal Behl	Court Master
11.	Sh. Lakshmi Narayan	Court Master
12.	Sh. Jitender Vikram Singh	Court Master
13.	Sh. Shashi Bhushan Gupta	Sr. Clerk

Advocates and Representatives of Railway Claims Tribunal Bar Associations

S.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Smt. Ashima Sood	Treasurer, Bar Association of RCT/Delhi
2.	Sh. Dushyant Swaroop	Member, Bar Association of RCT/Delhi
4.	Sh. Anupam Srivastava	Railway Advocate
5.	Sh. Saurabh Gupta	Railway Advocate
6.	Sh. Salek Chand	Railway Advocate
7.	Sh. Sunil Kumar Singh	Advocate
8.	Smt. Neelam Srivastava	Advocate
9.	Smt. Anju Bagai	Advocate

10.	Sh. Rajvir Singh	Advocate
11.	Sh. M.P.Rana	Advocate
12.	Sh. N.K. Gupta	President, RCT Bar Association, Delhi
13.	Sh. S.A Khan	Advocate
14.	Sh. Vinay Sharma	Advocate
15.	Sh. Upjeet Singh	Advocate
16.	Sh. Madan Pal	Advocate
17.	Sh. M.S Bhatia	Advocate
18.	Sh. Rajan Sood	Advocate
19.	Sh. M. Hussain	Advocate
20.	Ms Laxmi Thapa	Intern of Sh. P.K. Singh, Advocate
21.	Sh. Rajesh Sharma	Advocate
22.	Sh. Sukhdev Singh	Advocate
23.	Sh. Subhash Sachdeva	Advocate
24.	Sh. S.P Singh	Advocate
25.	Sh. B.S Mahur	Advocate
26.	Sh. R.K Agnihotri	Advocate
27.	Sh. A.K Gautam	Advocate
PO Office		
S.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Sh. J.N. Meena	Presenting Officer, RCT, Delhi
2.	Ms. Sarv Mangla	CLA for respondent

1. As decided in the previous meeting held on 23.11.20, a meeting was organised on 21.01.21 with the advocates practicing at RCT, Delhi which included the office bearers of the three Bar Associations namely Bar Association of RCT/Delhi, Bar Association of erstwhile RCT/ Ghaziabad and the Association of Railway Advocates. The main agenda of the meeting which was to decide on the resumption of

physical court hearings in line with the SOP of the District Courts.

2. The meeting commenced with the Registrar, RCT, Smt. Aashima Mehrotra, extending a warm welcome to all the participants. She briefed the participants about the agenda of the meeting and the need to resume physical hearings in light of the orders of the Delhi High Court and the decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases in Delhi.
3. The Bar Association representatives were requested to state when they are ready to participate in the physical court proceedings.
4. The majority of the advocates expressed their inability to appear in the physical court hearings. This was due to the train operations not being fully restored resulting in the litigants and witnesses being unable to appear before the Tribunal in Delhi.

Sh. B.S Mahur also stated that the cases in the Applicant Evidence stage are mostly listed in the month of March, 2021 onwards. Therefore, these cases can be taken up in the month of March through physical court hearings. In the meantime, the WS, framing of issues and arguments cases can continue to be taken up in the virtual court hearings.

Sh. Hussain, Sh. A.K. Gautam, Smt. Ashima Sood were in agreement that physical court hearings should commence from March 1st onwards when train services are restored. The Railway advocates namely Sh. M.S Bhatia, Sh. R.K. Agnihotri and Sh. Anupam Srivastava said that since the applicant advocates have informed that their clients cannot be physically present in the Tribunal for Applicant Evidence before March due to unavailability of trains, therefore physical hearings should resume only in March. Sh. N. K. Gupta also agreed with the above but added that a meeting should be held on 25th February to discuss the same further. A few other advocates also suggested that a prior meeting can be held in the 3rd or 4th week of February, 2021 so as to decide about the further course of action.

Hon'ble Chairman, however stated that since most of the schools, colleges, malls and local courts are open, therefore it would be in the fitness of things that physical court hearings should also commence in RCT, Delhi. All the advocates thereafter agreed that till 28th February, 2021, virtual court

hearing should continue and from 1st of March, 2021 onwards regular physical court hearings should commence without any need for holding a prior consultative virtual meeting.

5. The three Hon'ble Members (Tech.) were asked about their views on the matter. They all expressed their eagerness to hold physical court hearings on the pattern of district courts, but stated that they would comply with the majority opinion of the advocates in resuming physical court hearings from 1st March, 2021 onwards.
6. Agreeing with the unanimous view of the majority of the attendees and Members of the Tribunal, Hon'ble Chairman in consultation with the Bar Association representatives and lawyers present directed that regular physical court hearings shall commence at Delhi Bench from 1st March, 2021. Till then, virtual court hearings shall continue as is being done at present.
7. Upon commencement of physical court hearings, the modalities of the functioning of the two courts needs to be fixed. Whether a particular Bench should take up evidence cases exclusively and the other Bench WS, Issues and Arguments cases or arguments and evidence cases should be taken up simultaneously by both the Benches on alternative days would have to be decided.

A direction was issued to the representatives of the respective Bar Associations to hold consultations among themselves and within a week submit a written proposal to this effect to the Registrar of the Tribunal so that further specific directions can be issued in this regard.

8. In order to streamline the Registration process, after consulting all the advocates present, Hon'ble Chairman directed that advocates can get the objections in the claim applications removed on two designated days in a week. Advocates would be able to contact the concerned Registry staff to remove the objections in the claim applications filed by them on every Monday and Thursday. This would free the staff to utilise the other working days to perform other duties like scrutiny and online registration.
9. Some of the advocates expressed their difficulty in getting cooperation from the banks. They mentioned that at the time of verification of bank accounts of the claimants, the Claims Department demanded that the email IDs and mobile

numbers of the banks are to be stated. The banks were however reluctant to provide them with this information resulting in a lot of problems for them.

In this regard, Hon'ble Chairman suggested that if the advocates agreed, efforts could be made to get the policy changed to enable claimants to open accounts in the Post Office Banks as well since they are offering similar facilities as banks and are also available in remote locations thereby being accessible to the claimants.

The advocates gave their consent to take up the matter with the concerned authority for introducing the Post Office Bank scheme.

Directions were issued to the Registry officers to explore all the possibilities in this regard and to take up the matter with Railway Board for inclusion of Indian Post Bank in the list along with nationalised banks for the deposit of decreed/award amount passed by the Tribunal.

10. The proceedings of the meeting concluded with the Vote of thanks to the Chair and all the attendees.



(Aashima Mehrotra)
Registrar

Dated: 27.01.2021

Copy to: Presenting Officer, RCT Delhi
RCT Web Portal

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