



EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION
EMPLOYEES' PROVIDENT FUND ORGANISATION
MINISTRY OF LABOUR and Employment, Government of India
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February 23rd, 2019

To,

**The Central P.F. Commissioner,
Head Office, EPFO,
Bhavishya Nidhi Bhawan,
NEW DELHI 110066**

**Subject: Mis-utilisation of scarce & stretched
resources of EPFO for non-EPF Act related activities**

Sir,

The Government of India has recently launched the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-dhan (PM-SYM) — a pension scheme for unorganised workers. It is a central sector scheme administered by the Ministry of Labour & Employment and implemented through the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and the CSC e-Governance Services India Limited (CSC SPV). Though a member of the EPF Scheme has been specifically barred from being a member of the PM-SYM, EPFO's role has been defined by the Ministry of Labour & Employment as to provide a facilitation centre to give full information to the Unorganised Workers (UW) about the Scheme, its benefits and the procedure to be followed, at their facilitation desks / help desks.

2. As you are aware, EPFO is a specialised agency with a clear-cut mandate to implement the provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, and the schemes framed thereunder. Sir, as you have recently joined EPFO, you might not be aware, that EPFO has undergone a radical transformation in past few years. Only a few years back we were taking over a month's time in settling PF claims, making payments to individual members by way of issuing individual physical cheques to their bank accounts, PF accounts would not be updated and account slips of the members would not even be issued altogether for years, monthly pension was being credited towards the second half of the following month, EPF contribution was deposited by employers through physical challans in the bank and they would be required to submit multiple monthly and yearly returns to EPFO to physically reconcile the same. Indeed today's EPFO bears no resemblance to the organisation as it was barely 10 years ago. This radical and rapid organisational transformation is a result of continuous hard work of the officers and staff of this organisation under inspired and focused leadership.

3. Above transformation has reposed the faith of our stakeholders in the organisation and even increased their expectations from us. Therefore, it is required that we move forward and meet their expectations, however, in certain matters it appears that we are losing momentum and sliding back.

4. The issue of delay of over six months in crediting of interest in members' PF accounts for the year 2017-18 when the same exercise was completed overnight a few years back is unpardonable in eyes of our members. How do we explain that the same exercise which was completed in just one night earlier, could not be completed over multiple months now?

5. Similarly, there exists multiple vacancies against sanctioned strength of officers and staff in most offices including head office. The issue was even raised in the Parliament recently. These shortages are severely effecting our day to day performance. However, no concrete time-bound steps to rectify this alarming situation are in sight.

6. There are ongoing agitations by EPS 1995 pensioners across the country. The demands raised by many such agitators may not be justifiable but we have failed to even educate our own officers on how to address the issue. And neither have we provided our field offices with any standard operating procedure to deal with the crisis of recalculation of numerous PPOs in view of the RC Gupta case.

7. Thus, when we are already facing a number of crisis level issues of our own which we are statutorily required to deal with, it makes absolutely no sense to take on new *begaar* issues of another organisation.

8. Today our officers are being appointed district-level nodal officers for a scheme which is exclusively for non-EPFO members!!! It is pertinent to ask as to how can EPFO justify the salary of our officers & staff towards man-hours spent on this non-EPFO

scheme. Our offices have been directed to provide facilitation centres, provide office space to CSC, put up banners, etc. for PM-SYM, but how can EPFO justify this illegal expense from our Fund. It is the statutory mandate of EPFO to utilise the Fund created by the EPF & MP Act towards the implementation of EPF & MP Act exclusively. In fact by utilising this Fund for such extra-statutory activities and that too without the approval or even knowledge of CBT, EPF, we, in EPFO, may have inadvertently committed breach of trust and violated our own statute.

9. Many of our offices are so burdened with regular work of claim settlement that these offices routinely open on week-end and official holidays, with most of the officers and staff spending a substantial amount of their holidays in the office itself. Now, many of these officers and staff have been directed to spend their official as well unofficial time in enrolling beneficiaries in an LIC scheme. The time and effort spent in doing so is time and effort that has been diverted from their statutory duties and denying timely service to our actual stakeholders whether they be employers or members of our schemes.

10. Sir, as our Chief Executive Officer we look towards you to lead the organisation from the front, and to ensure that EPFO does not violate its statutory mandate by utilising its scarce human and financial resources in activities not sanctioned by the law. It is time that we move forward with further improving our service delivery to our actual stakeholders.

11. It is regretted to state that if we are unable to find our true path soon, then in larger organisational and public interest, there shall be no option left with us but to escalate this issue to the Parliament by filing an appeal before the Petitions Committee and bring to their notice the continued violation of the mandate of an Act framed by the Parliament.

Thanking you.

Yours sincerely,



[Saurabh Swami]
Secretary-General

Copy to:

Hon'ble Members, CBT, EPF ——— with request to ensure that the mandate of EPF & MP Act is not violated by mis-utilising the scarce & stretched resources of EPFO.