To

Shri R K Upadhyay,
Chairman and Managing Director,
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited,
New Delhi 110 001.

Sub: **Unilateral withdrawal of STD facility from concessional telephones of retired/retiring employees of BSNL/DoT– Case of Calcutta Telephones**

Ref:(1) BSNL Corporate Office letter No.7-1/2012-PHA dated 4.1.2013
(2) CTD letter No.CAM-4030/Interconnect usage/concessional tele./2012-13 dated 15.01.2013

Sir,

We are extremely shocked over the manner in which Calcutta Telephones has ordered for withdrawal of the STD facility from the concessional telephone connections of retired/retiring employees of BSNL/DOT even by refunding the security deposit vide its letter cited under reference (2) above (copy enclosed for ready reference). This action is purportedly based on the stated decision of BSNL circulated vide letter under reference (1) above – though we find that there was no such specific instruction from BSNL Corporate Office to disconnect the STD facility from the telephone connections given to the retired/retiring BSNL/DoT Employees. Further STD/ISD facilities to the retired DoT Employees were granted subject to fulfillment of other commercial rulings vide DoT Order No. 30-36/2002-PHP dated 5.3.2002 which has also not been withdrawn by the Administrative Ministry.

2. The facility of concessional telephone to retired/retiring employees was first granted by the DoT even before formation of BSNL. The facility was actually the result of prolonged struggle and negotiation by the DoT
employees and allowed as a goodwill gesture with the approval of the then Minister of Communications Shri Ramvilas Paswan. Later BSNL laid down its own policy to provide concessional telephone connection to the retired BSNL employees vide its Office Order No. 2-7/2007-PHA dated 20.07.2007 and allowed, as at Para (9) of this Order, to provide STD/ISD facility on the request of its retired employees subject to payment of security deposit as applicable to an ordinary subscriber.

3. Now the decision to withdraw the STD/ISD facility by Calcutta Telephones seems to be arbitrary and also taken in a haste without considering the following facts:-

(a) The concession provided to the retired/retiring employees are only in regard to waival of rent and installation fee, with a fixed amount of free calls which is different for different categories.

(b) Otherwise, these connections are equivalent to those of the ordinary subscribers. Hence withdrawal of a facility for which a security deposit has already been paid will be illegal and will amount to breach of trust and breach of agreement between BSNL and a subscriber, even if the security deposit is refunded as specified in the Order issued by Calcutta Telephones.

(c) The retired employees are paying towards the calls made in excess of the free calls like an ordinary subscriber. This is a definite source of revenue to BSNL. The decision to withdraw the STD facility will limit the calls made by the retired employees which will result in loss of revenue to BSNL.

(d) The retired employees will be forced to go for alternate telephone connections for making STD/ISD calls which will defeat the very purpose of providing concessional telephone.

(e) The BSNL letter cited under reference (1) says that the decision has been taken to reduce expenditure towards Inter-connect Usage Charges. BSNL’s concern appears to be that in respect of the calls made, within the free call limit, from the concessional telephones to the telephone numbers of private service operators, BSNL will have to pay the IUC charges but will not receive any payment from the retired employees. It is the same situation in respect of all the ordinary subscribers as some free calls are admissible for all categories of landline connections. Can BSNL impose similar restriction to disconnect STD/ISD facility even against payment on ordinary subscribers too to reduce expenditure on IUC charges? Will it not be an unwise decision?

(f) Again, BSNL receives IUC charges for the calls originating from subscribers of other operators and terminating in BSNL numbers including those of retired employees. Are there any data to establish
that outgoing calls are more than incoming calls from subscribers of other operators? In the absence of such data, reducing IUC charges appears to be only a bogey for denying the existing benefits by BSNL to its own retired employees and also of DoT.

(g) The above decision of Calcutta Telephones will drive the retired/retiring employees, being let down by its Organization, to move to the Private Operators to get telephone connections with STD/STD facility – thus increasing their subscriber base and also revenue at the cost of BSNL. It will also have an impact on the broadband connection of BSNL.

(h) The STD/ISD facility is provided to the retired BSNL employees on payment of prescribed security deposit as per the decision of the Management Committee of BSNL and circulated vide BSNL Corporate Office letter No. 2-7/2007-PHA dated 20.07.2007. Thus Calcutta Telephones cannot take an arbitrary decision to act against the above, unless Corporate Office modifies its own policy decision which is applicable to all.

4. We strongly feel aggrieved by the above orders since this is not the way an organization should treat its retired employees on whose hard work and dedication the organization has been built and developed over so many years. Moreover, BSNL’s financial position is no way to improve by withdrawing the STD/ISD facility from the concessional telephone connection of the retired/retiring employees. We earnestly request you to kindly intervene immediately and to cause withdrawal of the orders referred to above.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

(S Basu)
General Secretary

Encl: As stated
Copy to:

(1). Shri R. Chandrasekhar,
Secretary, DoT,
New Delhi

(2). Shri N K Gupta,
Director (CFA),
BSNL Board.

(3). Shri A K Sanghi,
Sr. General Manager (Admn),
BSNL Corporate Office.
OFFICE ORDER

To
The All Area DGM(NWOs)
Calcutta Telephones, BSNL

No. CAM-4030/ Interconnect usage/concessional tele./2012-13 Dated:- 15.01.2013

Sub:- Withdrawal of STD facility from concessional telephones of retired/retiring employee of BSNL/DOT.

Ref:- BSNL HQ letter no 7-1/2012-PHA dtd. 04-01-2013 issued by DGM(WI&S)

As per BSNL HQ letter dtd. 04-01-2013 under reference regarding proposal to reduce the expenditure towards interconnect usage charges, the Competent Authority of Calcutta Telephones has decided to withdraw STD facility & ISD facility (if any) from all concessional telephone connections of retired/retiring employees of BSNL/DOT. All Area DGM(NWO) are requested to make arrangement to withdraw STD & ISD (if any) from the telephones as per the list enclosed herewith. In case any retired employee deposited security deposit for STD/ISD facility against that concessional number, the security deposit may be refunded.

A compliance report may be sent immediately to the undersigned for onward transmission to BSNL HQ.

Enclosure :- Area wise list of concessional telephone nos. enclosed.

Copy for kind information to:--

1)CGM, CTD
2)PGM(CFA)/PGM(CM)
3)General Manager (NWO-West/South).
4)All Area DGM(NWO),
5)All Commercial Officers
6)SDE(CR-I)
7)Office Copy.