



Editorial

LOOKING BACK AT YEAR 2019 AND LOOKING FORWARD TO YEAR 2020 WITH RENEWED HOPE

Carrying with us the saddest memories of the year that failed to offer anything concrete to cheer about and became part of the history, we now look forward with renewed hope and expectations from yet another New Year that has already stepped in. The year 2019 had proved to be really disappointing, since the much-delayed revision of pay scales of the serving BSNL employees and consequent revision of pension of the absorbed BSNL pensioners again remained elusive. The BSNL pensioners along with the serving employees also had an agonising period, since not a single case for reimbursement of their medical claims was settled. Even the pensioners who switched over to CGHS did not receive reimbursement of their claim against huge one-time subscription paid to the CGHS authorities. The serving employees were even denied payment of their monthly salaries in time for months together. Never before, did we experience such a harrowing time. The year 2019 would, therefore, always be remembered as the darkest year.

BSNL, as an Organization, which was on the point of total collapse because of severe financial crunch, however could see some rays of hope along with MTNL when Government decided to infuse several thousand crores of rupees along with some concrete measures with the intention to bring both BSNL and MTNL back on track. One of the measures

proposed was to offer VRS to the employees who have crossed 50 years of age in order to drastically reduce the establishment cost which was projected as occupying major portion of the expenditure. This process has already been initiated and at the end of this month almost 80,000 serving employees of BSNL will turn pensioners.

BSNL has already planned for huge outsourcing of work which were being hitherto executed by the serving employees. Outsourcing, however, is not a new term in BSNL. Functions like Security services, customer care services through Call Centres, housekeeping services, cable laying and maintenance work and Annual Maintenance Contract of its equipment including AC units were outsourced long before. While outsourcing has now become unavoidable, it is not known if BSNL has learnt any lesson from its past experience of outsourcing and its shortcomings. While cable laying was outsourced decades back, cable maintenance including fault repair, jointing of cables etc is being done in the name of manpower assistance through contracts. There have been umpteen number of cases of improper maintenance, shoddy fault clearance, inflated and false claims and complete dependence on the labourers employed by the agencies. In many cases, the regular staff are left at

the mercy of these agencies. Lack of control, supervision and monitoring by the concerned authorities and nexus with these agencies resulted in lower than expected realisation of benefits and results. The outsourced Call Centres, while functioning as the interface between BSNL and its customers, failed to appreciate the need and requirement of the customers making them totally disappointed, prompting them to switch over to the private operators.

We, however, do not believe that there would be any appreciable change in the above scenario when BSNL goes for major outsourcing. After all, BSNL and MTNL will have to depend on the same ITS Officers on deputation from DOT who failed to lead these PSUs from the front and allowed both BSNL and MTNL to gradually sink. These Officers, being rank outsiders, have nothing at stake with the future of BSNL and MTNL. As such, the much needed commitment, accountability and sense of belonging and responsibility towards BSNL have always been found missing in them. Unfortunately, it is DOT and BSNL Management which knowingly allowed this situation to continue all these years. We may not forget that in the year 2013, DOT itself drew a plan to make BSNL and MTNL free from ITS deputationists by the year 2022. But contrary to its own plan, DOT pumped in more and more ITS Officers on deputation over the years and did not allow both these PSUs to create their own respective managerial cadres. Unless the Government looks into this area, revival plan of BSNL and MTNL may be proved to be a non-starter.

Apart from VRS, the revival plan also includes start of 4-G services, monetization of assets and merger of BSNL and MTNL starting with treating

MTNL as the subsidiary of BSNL. Government needs to get these implemented at the earliest. More importantly, BSNL needs to clear pending electricity, vendor and other dues immediately to bring back its towers into life in order to offer uninterrupted mobile services to the customers. The broad band services through Fibre to Home should also be the priority area not only to retain the existing customers and but also to attract new customers.

BSNL must also draw a concrete and time-bound plan primarily to boost the morale of its remaining employees on whose shoulder BSNL want to sail through. The long-awaited Pay Scale revision followed by pension revision should not face any hurdle now, since following execution of VRS – if the CMD, BSNL is to be believed, there would be annual savings of over Rs. 7500 crores on account of salary payment. Further, BSNL will have to pay much lesser amount to DOT as pension contribution. The long overdue issue of pension contribution on actual pay needs to be settled without further delay. A serious and concerted effort in this area is the need of the hour. BSNL must also clear all the pending medical claims at least before 31st March, 2020 so that no problem is encountered in furnishing Income Tax Returns.

The historic All India Conference of AIBSNLREA which was held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November 2019, has already laid down the agenda for the Association for the coming years. The Association will continue to strive hard to reach the goal by taking up these issues, as and when required, with the appropriate authorities and follow them up for their logical conclusion. Let us hope that the year 2020 brings some cheers to the BSNL IDA pensioners.

INCREASE IN IDA W.E.F. 1.1.2020

According to calculations based on All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers, IDA is to increase w.e.f. 1.1.2020 by 5.3% for CPSEs where last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.2007 and by 8.8% where last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.1997.

ISSUES TAKEN UP

AIBSNLREA WRITES TO UNION FINANCE MINISTER REQUESTING TO TAKE CARE OF THE SENIOR CITIZENS/PENSIONERS IN THE UNION BUDGET AND SUGGESTED CERTAIN MEASURES TO GIVE RELIEF: AIBSNLREA has urged Union Finance Minister to give some reasonable reliefs to the Senior Citizens in general and the Pensioners in particular to mitigate their hardships in the ensuing budget to be presented in the Parliament. Besides suggesting to exempt income up to Rs. 12 lakhs from Income Tax, deduction under Section 80 TTB of Income Tax Act be raised to 1 lakh, standard deduction limit for Income Tax be raised to Rs. 1 lakh, income tax deduction limit for senior citizens under Section 80 D be increased to Rs.1 lakh for medical expenditure, deduction allowed under Section 80-C be raised from Rs.1.5 lakhs to Rs. 4 lakhs, income Tax slab rates be lowered, the Association also urged to exempt pension from Income Tax. The Association has further urged to introduce Special Deposit Schemes for Senior Citizens with higher fixed rates of interest and to raise the limit of maximum deposit in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme, 2004 to Rs 30 lakhs. [\[View posting dated 27.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

AIBSNLREA AGAIN TAKES UP WITH PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA THE ISSUE OF RAISING THE LIMIT OF MAXIMUM DEPOSIT IN SENIOR CITIZENS SAVING SCHEME AND HIGHER RATE OF INTERESTS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS IN VARIOUS FIXED DEPOSIT SCHEMES: AIBSNLREA has again represented to the Prime Minister of India on the issue of raising the limit of maximum deposit in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme and offering further higher rate of interests for senior Citizens in various Fixed Deposit Schemes basing on the reply that the Association had received from Reserve Bank of India on its earlier representation to the Prime Minister [View also posting dated 11.12.2019 in this website]. The Association has maintained that RBI has categorically stated that ‘the issue of raising limit of maximum deposit in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme does not fall within the purview of RBI’. It has further stated that in terms of para 8 (b) of its Master Direction, “banks shall, at their discretion formulate term deposit scheme specifically for resident senior citizens, offering higher and fixed rates of interest as compared to normal deposits of any size.” In the above background, the Association has requested that Department of Economic Affairs, which introduced the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme 2004, now raise the ceiling limit of maximum deposit in the Scheme to Rs. 30 lakhs. Similarly, to begin with, let Post Office and PSU Banks raise the additional interest for Senior Citizens in all Fixed Deposit Schemes from 0.50% to at least 1% to mitigate extreme hardship of the Senior Citizens in general and the pensioners in particular. [\[View posting dated 21.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

AIBSNLREA WRITES TO PRIME MINISTER ON THE ISSUE OF RAISING THE LIMIT OF MAXIMUM DEPOSIT TO RS. 30 LAKHS IN SENIOR CITIZENS SAVINGS SCHEME FOLLOWING

RBI'S RESPONSE THAT THE ISSUE DOES NOT FALL WITHIN THE PURVIEW OF RBI: AIBSNLREA has addressed a letter to Prime Minister of India following a letter received by the Association from RBI informing that 'the issue of raising limit of maximum deposit in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme does not fall within the purview of RBI' [View also postings dated 10.09.2019 and 09.12.2019 in this website]. The Association has contended that the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme was introduced by Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs) by promulgation of 'Senior Citizens Savings Scheme Rules, 2004' by a Gazette Notification GSR 490 (E) dated 2nd August 2004 Published in Gazette Of India Extraordinary, Part II- Sec 3(I) and thus, any change in the provision of the Rules is within the sole jurisdiction and competency of Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs) alone. But surprisingly, the Appeal dated 09.09.2019 of the Association to raise the limit of maximum limit in SCSS was forwarded to Reserve Bank of India which is not connected with the issue. The Association has now urged Prime Minister to intervene and advise Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs), which introduced the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme, to favourably consider the Appeal. [\[View posting dated 11.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

AIBSNLREA TAKES UP THE CASE OF NON-DISPOSAL OF REVIEW PETITION OF SMT M S LUMBA, RETD AGM, GUJARAT CIRCLE WITH SECRETARY (PENSION): AIBSNLREA has taken up the case of Smt M S Lumba, Retd AGM, Gujarat Telecom Circle with Secretary (Pension), who had to face departmental proceedings while in service without giving her reasonable opportunity to defend herself for which she had to obtain an Order from CAT Ahmedabad. Thereafter, the second IO appointed by Gujarat Telecom Circle conducted inquiry proceeding and finally reported that charges were not proved. But the CGMT differed with the findings and imposed penalty on her. Her appeal to Director (HR) was disposed of by GM(Pers), BSNL Corporate Office stating that "the Appellate Authority i.e. Director (HR), BSNL Board has found no merit in the Appeal filed by the executive." Her further appeal against this Order and subsequent reminders to CMD, BSNL did receive no response. The Association has now sought the intervention of Secretary (Pension) in the matter. [\[View posting dated 10.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

NON-AVAILABILITY OF THE LIST OF NODAL OFFICERS CONCERNED WITH GRIEVANCES OF PENSIONERS IN VARIOUS MINISTRIES/DEPARTMENTS IN THE WEBSITE OF DOP&PW-AIBSNLREA TAKES UP THE ISSUE WITH MINISTER OF STATE (PP): AIBSNLREA has since addressed a letter to Minister of State (PP) pointing out that the List of nodal officers concerned with grievances of pensioners in various Ministries/Departments' as uploaded in DOP&PW website is completely blank giving an impression as if DOP&PW has withdrawn the decision that each Ministry/Department nominate Nodal Officers to deal with the grievances of the pensioners pertaining to the concerned Ministry/Department. The Association has further pointed out that this tantamount to blocking a channel for the pensioners to get their grievances redressed and requested that "Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare collect and prepare the list of Nodal Officers concerned with grievances of the pensioners from various Ministries/Departments and upload the same in its website for the benefit of the pensioners". [\[View posting dated 05.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

AIBSNLREA TAKES UP WITH SECRETARY (PENSION) THE CASE OF CLOSURE OF GRIEVANCE LODGED IN CPENGRAM WITHOUT RESOLVING THE SAME BY DOT: AIBSNLREA has sought the

intervention of Secretary (Pension) in the case in which Department of Telecommunication has closed a grievance lodged in CPENGRAM based on the representation of the Association addressed to MOS(PP) without resolving the same. The Association had taken up the case of Shri B S Swain, Retd DGM, Odisha on the question of payment of commutation of pension to a pensioner exonerated as a result of departmental proceedings from the date of his retirement. In this case, DOT closed the case by simply stating that it is yet to receive clarification from DOP&PW on the issue. The Association has protested against closure of the case without resolving the same which defeats the very purpose of setting up of Grievance Redressal mechanism. The Association has finally requested Secretary (Pension) “to advise Department of Telecommunication to close Registered Grievances only after their redressal. In this particular case, we also request that in case DoP&PW has already issued any advice to Department of Telecommunication in response to its ID Notes, a copy of the same may kindly be provided to this Association.” [\[View posting dated 04.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

AIBSNLREA SUBMITS TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED IN ITS AIC HELD AT MADURAI REQUESTING INVESTIGATION TO IDENTIFY THE PERSONS IN POSITION AND POWER WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRESENT CRISIS OF BSNL AND TAKING ACTION AGAINST THEM AS PER LAW: In the AIC of AIBSNLREA held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019, the delegates discussed and identified the main factors, as have been listed in the resolution annexed to the letter addressed to the Prime Minister of India, that led BSNL to face the present serious crisis threatening its very existence. The Conference felt that some powers within the Administrative Department and Government at that time conspired to help the private operators at the cost of the Government run Telecom PSU i.e. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited. The Conference finally ‘resolved to urge the Government to constitute a High-Power Committee with members from investigating agencies and other experts to investigate into all the above cases and fix responsibility wherever wrong doings are proved and punish the guilty’. The said resolution has since been submitted to the Prime Minister of India and Union Home Minister. [\[View posting dated 03.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED IN THE AIC OF AIBSNLREA HELD AT MADURAI REGARDING THE EXTREME HARDSHIP OF THE SENIOR CITIZENS IN GENERAL AND PENSIONERS IN PARTICULAR DUE TO DRASTIC CUT IN DEPOSIT INTERESTS SUBMITTED TO PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: In the AIC of AIBSNLREA held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019, the delegates expressed their serious concern due to drastic reduction of rates of interests on Fixed Deposits and other Savings Schemes by the Banks and Post offices which made the Pensioners/Sr Citizens to be the first victim. This erodes the monthly income of the Sr Citizens in general and the pensioners in particular who depend on the return from these deposits and cannot manage their livelihood depending on pension alone. The interests earned on Fixed Deposits help the Senior Citizens/Pensioners to meet their day to day need which includes payment of huge medical bills due to old age related and other chronic ailments. No doubt, the Senior Citizens/Pensioners are allowed 0.50% additional interest, but this hardly compensates the huge loss in terms of the interests earned. The Conference resolved to urge the Government to give some immediate relief to the affected pensioners and Sr Citizens and also mitigate their extreme hardship and consider the following measures for immediate implementation: - (i) To raise the limit of maximum deposit in Senior Citizens Saving Schemes

from existing Rs. 15 lakhs to Rs. 30 lakhs and (ii) To raise the additional interest allowed in Fixed Deposits in Banks/Post Offices from existing 0.50% to 1% for the Senior Citizens. This resolution has since been submitted to the Prime Minister of India seeking his intervention. [\[View posting dated 02.12.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

ACTION ON REPRESENTATIONS OF AIBSNLREA

NON-REDRESSAL OF A GENUINE GRIEVANCE OF A SECTION OF BSNL IDA PENSIONERS WHO RETIRED BETWEEN JULY, 2017 AND APRIL, 2018 REGARDING GRANT OF EXTRA-INCREMENT ON POST-BASED PROMOTION– ACTION BY DOP&PW AND BSNL ON THE REPRESENTATION OF AIBSNLREA ADDRESSED TO PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: Being unsatisfied with the dealings on the above grievance raised by the Association from time to time by DOP&PW and DOT, AIBSNLREA had represented to Prime Minister of India with copy endorsed to Minister of State for (PP) and Secretary (Pension) seeking his intervention [View posting dated 22.10.2019 in this website to read the letter]. DOP&PW, in turn, registered the grievance with separate Docket Nos in CPENGRAM based on the copy of the said letter marked to MOS(PP) and Secretary (Pension) and forwarded the same to DOT. The latter, as usual, forwarded the same to BSNL. But this time, BSNL has correctly analysed the issue and transferred the case to DOT for disposal. DOP&PW, on the other hand, in the status report of CPGRAM Docket No. DOPPW/P/2019/09151 has remarked that “The grievance should be closed only when final outcome in the matter is arrived at under intimation to the petitioner”. The issue is currently under process in DOT. Therefore, we expect a decision on the issue which was so far being avoided. [\[View posting dated 31.12.2019 in this website to read the BSNL letter and DOP&PW Status Report\].](#)

RESOLUTION OF AIBSNLREA ADOPTED IN ITS MADURAI AIC REGARDING GRANT OF ANNUAL INCREMENT TO THE RETIRED/RETIRED EMPLOYEES WHOSE DATE OF NEXT INCREMENT FALLS ON THE FOLLOWING DAY OF THEIR RETIREMENT FORWARDED BY PMO TO THE SECRETARY, DOT: AIBSNLREA had submitted the resolution adopted in its All India Conference held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019 to the Prime Minister of India requesting his intervention in the matter of grant of annual increment to the retired/ retiring employees whose date of next increment falls on the following day of their retirement. The Association, referring to the dismissal of the Review Petition of the CBDT in Supreme Court to review its earlier Order declining to interfere with the Madras High Court judgment which allowed the above benefit to a petitioner, the Association urged to extend the same benefit to all similarly placed retired/retiring employees [View posting dated 30.11.2019 in this website to read the letter]. Now Prime Minister’s Office has forwarded the said letter of the Association to the Secretary, Department of Telecommunications for action as appropriate. [\[View posting dated 26.12.2019 in this website to read the PMO letter\].](#)

CVO, BSNL FORWARDS AIBSNLREA’S LETTER REGARDING NON-DISPOSAL OF REVIEW PETITION OF SMT M S LUMBA, RETD AGM, AHMEDABAD TELEPHONES BY CMD, BSNL TO THE PGM (PERS), BSNL: AIBSNLREA had represented to Secretary (Pension) with copy endorsed to Secretary (T) and CMD, BSNL regarding non-disposal of review petition of Smt. M S Lumba, Retd AGM, Ahmedabad Telephones by the CMD, BSNL despite her repeated reminders [View posting dated 10.12.2019 in this website to view the representation of the Association]. CVO, BSNL has now forwarded the said letter of the Association to the PGM

(Pers), BSNL stating that no petition is pending in CVO Office and this being an administrative matter, the review petition shall be decided by the personnel section of BSNL Corporate Office. [\[View posting dated 25.12.2019 in this website to read the BSNL letter\].](#)

PMO FORWARDS RESOLUTION OF AIBSNLREA ADOPTED IN ITS AIC HELD AT MADURAI REGARDING PAYMENT OF PENSION CONTRIBUTION IN RESPECT OF THE ABSORBED BSNL EMPLOYEES ON ACTUAL PAY BASIS INSTEAD OF MAXIMUM OF THE PAY SCALE AS ALLOWED FOR THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ON FOREIGN SERVICE TO THE SECRETARY, DOT: Prime Minister's Office has since forwarded the resolution adopted in the AIC of AIBSNLREA held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019 regarding payment of pension contribution in respect of the absorbed BSNL employees on 'actual pay' basis instead of "maximum of the pay scale" as allowed for the Government employees on foreign service w.e.f. 1.1.2006, to the Secretary, Department of Telecommunications for action as appropriate. In this resolution, the Association has sought the intervention of the Prime Minister in the matter so that Department of Expenditure and Department of Personnel & Training allow calculation of pension contribution in respect of the absorbed BSNL employees basing on their "actual pay" w.e.f. 1.1.2006 till a decision is taken on its another resolution to stop collection of pension contribution under FR-116 since the absorbed BSNL employees are not Government employees on foreign service. [\[View posting dated 24.12.2019 in this website to read the PMO letter\].](#)

DOT REPLIES TO AIC RESOLUTION OF AIBSNLREA REGARDING NON-PAYMENT OF PENSIONARY BENEFITS INCLUDING LEAVE ENCASHMENT ALONG WITH FIXATION OF PENSION ON THE DATE OF THEIR RETIREMENT TO THE BSNL IDA PENSIONERS WHO RETIRED BETWEEN 01.01.2007 and 09.06.2013: AIBSNLREA had submitted the resolution adopted in the AIC of AIBSNLREA held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019 regarding 'Non-payment of pensionary benefits including Leave encashment along with fixation of pension on the date of their retirement to the BSNL IDA pensioners who retired between 01.01.2007 and 09.06.2013' to the Prime Minister of India seeking for his intervention [View posting dated 25.11.2019 in this website to read the letter]. Now DOT has sent a reply in which it has stated that 'pay of the BSNL IDA pensioners, who retired between 01.01.2007 and 09.06.2013 was revised only notionally w.e.f. 01.01.2007 for the purpose of fitment while consequential revision of pension on notional pay with actual benefit was done w.e.f. 10.06.2013 – at par with the serving employees of BSNL. Thus, the provisions contained in the OM dated 18.07.2016 are in order as the referred pensionary benefits are calculated based on the actual pay of the employee at the time of retirement and not on notional pay'. [\[View posting dated 23.12.2019 in this website to read the DOT letter\].](#)

AIC RESOLUTION OF AIBSNLREA REGARDING WRONG APPLICATION OF FR-116 TO COLLECT PENSION CONTRIBUTION IN RESPECT OF ABSORBED BSNL EMPLOYEES FORWARDED BY PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE TO SECRETARY, DOT FOR ACTION AS APPROPRIATE: The resolution adopted in the AIC of AIBSNLREA held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019 regarding wrong application of FR-116 to collect pension contribution in respect of the absorbed BSNL employees from BSNL, which was submitted to the Prime Minister of India for his intervention [View posting dated 28.11.2019 in this website to read the letter], has since been forwarded by Prime Minister's Office to the Secretary, Department of

Telecommunications for action as appropriate. [\[View posting dated 22.12.2019 in this website to read the PMO letter\].](#)

PMO FORWARDS AIC RESOLUTION OF AIBSNLREA REGARDING PROVISION OF MOBILE CONNECTIONS IN LIEU OF CONCESSIONAL LAND LINE CONNECTIONS TO THE RETIRED BSNL EMPLOYEES RESIDING IN TNF AREAS: AIBSNLREA had submitted the resolution adopted in its AIC held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019 for 'allowing provision of Mobile connections to the retired BSNL employees residing in TNF areas in lieu of concessional land line connections' to the Prime Minister of India seeking his intervention [View posting dated 27.11.2019 in this website to read the letter]. The Prime Minister's Office has since forwarded the same to the Secretary, Department of Telecommunications for action as appropriate. [\[View posting dated 20.12.2019 in this website to read the PMO letter\].](#)

CCA, MAHARASHTRA & GOA RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA'S REPRESENTATION TO SECRETARY (TELECOM) REGARDING REFUSAL BY CCA (NAGPUR) TO ISSUE EQUIVALENT BASIC PAY AS PER CENTRAL PAY SCALES TO THE BSNL IDA PENSIONERS WHO DESIRED TO SWITCH OVER TO CGHS: AIBSNLREA had earlier taken up above issue with Secretary (Telecom) and requested his intervention in the matter [View posting dated 05.11.2019 in this website to read the letter]. Now CCA, Maharashtra & Goa, vide letter No. CCA/MH&Goa/PG/ dated 02.12.2019 has informed this Association that 'One template already issued to all concerned offices under the control of o/o CCA MH & Goa, Mumbai, to issue the same in r/o pensioner who applied for mapping of IDA scale that with CDA scale, to opt for CGHS facility'. [\[View posting dated 12.12.2019 in this website to read the CCA MH & Goa letter\].](#)

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA RESPONDS TO THE REPRESENTATION OF AIBSNLREA SENT TO PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA IN SEPTEMBER LAST REQUESTING RAISING OF LIMIT OF MAXIMUM DEPOSIT IN SENIOR CITIZENS SAVINGS SCHEME AND RATES OF INTERESTS IN FIXED DEPOSITS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS: AIBSNLREA had earlier submitted a representation on 09.09.2019 to the Prime Minister of India urging to raise the present ceiling limit in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme from existing Rs. 15 lakhs to Rs. 30 lakhs and also to increase the additional interest of 0.50% to 1% in all Bank/Post Office Fixed Deposits [View posting dated 10.09.2019 in this website to read the representation]. Reserve Bank of India has now responded to said the representation of the Association stating that raising of ceiling limit of maximum deposit in Senior Citizens Savings Scheme does not fall within the purview of the RBI. In regard to raising of interest rates in Fixed Deposits, it is stated that RBI has given freedom to the commercial banks to fix their own interest rates on domestic term deposits. The banks also shall at their own discretion formulate term deposit scheme specifically for resident Indian senior citizens, offering higher and fixed rates of interest as compared to normal deposits of any size. [\[View posting dated 09.12.2019 in this website to read the RBI letter\].](#)

PMO FORWARDS AIC RESOLUTION OF AIBSNLREA ON IMMEDIATE NEED TO TAKE BSNL OUT THE PRESENT CRISIS SINCE APPROVED REVIVAL PLAN FOR BSNL/MTNL IS TO TAKE LONGER TIME TO GIVE THE DESIRED RESULT: AIBSNLREA had submitted the resolution to the Prime Minister of India seeking his intervention on the immediate need of BSNL since the approved Revival Plan for BSNL/MTNL is to take longer time to take BSNL out of the present crisis [View posting dated 20.11.2019 in this website to read the letter and resolution] in which the AIC

pleaded that BSNL be given an immediate financial assistance to come out of the present mess, otherwise BSNL's total collapse cannot be ruled out. The AIC also wanted that DoT issue the all-important letter of comfort required by banks to provide loan to BSNL to meet the temporary short of cash flow. The resolution, pointing out to the failure of the Administrative Department and BSNL to create BSNL's own managerial cadre in last two decades, also urged for immediate creation of BSNL's own managerial cadre to end BSNL's dependency on deputationists from DOT. The PMO has now forwarded the resolution to Secretary, DOT to take action as appropriate. [\[View posting dated 07.12.2019 in this website to read the PMO letter\].](#)

REFUSAL BY CCA (NAGPUR) TO ISSUE EQUIVALENT BASIC PAY AS PER CENTRAL PAY SCALES TO THE BSNL IDA PENSIONERS WHO DESIRE TO SWITCH OVER TO CGHS– DOP&PW FORWARDS AIBSNLREA'S REPRESENTATION TO DOT: AIBSNLREA had represented to Secretary (Telecom) with copy endorsed to Secretary (Pension) about refusal by CCA(Nagpur) to issue equivalent basic pay as per Central Pay Scales to the BSNL IDA pensioners who desire to switch over from BSNLMRS to CGHS. The Association had requested that CCA, Nagpur be advised to follow the office instructions issued from time to time by DOT and immediately issue the equivalent basic pay as per Central Pay scales to the BSNL IDA pensioners desirous to switch over to CGHS and whose applications are pending with his Office [View posting dated 05.11.2019 in this website to read the letter]. DOP&PW has now forwarded the said representation of the Association to Department of Telecommunications to examine the issue as per extant rules/orders and inform the Association. [\[View posting dated 01.12.2019 in this website to read the DOP&PW letter\].](#)

BRANCHES IN ACTION

CHENNAI BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HELD ITS GB MEETING: AIBSNLREA, Chennai Branch held a General Body Meeting on 19.12.2019 at Hotel Saravana Bhavan, Chennai. 61 members attended the meeting which started at 10-30 hours under the chairmanship of Shri V. Dakshinamoorthy, President. After prayer by Smt. R. Padmini and Smt. J. Rajalakshmi., the house observed one minute's silence as a mark of respect to the departed souls of Late R. Raghavan, S. Madhusudanan and K.K.Parthasarathy. A few members including CHQ President and Branch President remembered the services rendered by them to the department as well as to our organization. Shri V.Dakshinamoorthy, President welcomed all the members and expressed his happiness over the excellent manner in which the AIC was conducted at Madurai and appreciated the efforts taken by the G S in presenting a very detailed G S report and also placed on record the excellent work done by Shri R.R.Balasubramanian, along with the team of members from Madurai Branch and one serving CAO for the successful conduct of the AIC. He also expressed his happiness in the growth of the membership of Chennai Branch and requested the comrades to enroll more members in the wake VRS in BSNL. After self-introduction of the members, Branch Secretary Shri L. Sundararaman readout a brief report about the activities of the Branch after the last AGB held on 20.07.2019. He reported that two more members have joined the Branch taking the total membership strength to 228. He also explained how a few issues like extra increment for post-based promotion was taken up by attending the National Adalat. He also read the Appeal issued by CHQ requesting VRS Optees and Retired executives to join AIBSNLREA.

The House congratulated all the CHQ office bearers elected unanimously in the last AIC at Madurai and CHQ President Shri V.Chinnappiah, AGS Shri S.Ratnasubramanian and AGS Shri R.R.Balasubramanian were honoured with shawl by Shri V.Dakshinamoorthy, Shri V.Raghunathan and Shri A.Hariharan respectively. Shri V. Chinnappiah, CHQ President, in his address, appreciated the efforts taken by the branch, in increasing the membership and welcomed all the new members who joined on that day in the meeting. He gave a very emotional speech about the various steps taken by G S in solving the issues of pensioners and also talked in depth about many of the resolutions passed in the recently concluded AIC and how all the delegates from different parts of the country were convinced about the law and logic behind pension revision being linked to pay revision. He too requested all the members to speak to their executive friends who have opted for VRS or are retiring in due course to join the Association. Shri S.Ratnasubramanian, AGS, CHQ, in his address, explained about the VRS schemes offered in the earlier years 2009 and 2011 and how the staff were now pushed to VRS by creating the fear of not getting their salary itself on time. But he assured the gathering that the DOT/BSNL will definitely agree for pay revision, considering the reduced staff strength after VRS, increased work load and the necessity to motivate employees in the present juncture. Subsequent to the pay revision, the Pension revision also will take place. Shri R.R.Balasubramanian AGS, in his address, reiterated that pay revision is certainly possible, if Pension contribution is paid on actual pay and the excess paid Rs.5000 crores is returned to BSNL and dues payable by DoT and other Government Departments to BSNL running to Rs. 7000 crores. He explained how pension revision is linked to pay revision of BSNL employees. He faulted unions and associations of serving employees for their failure to secure pay revision and said AIBSNLREA is taking up the issue of pay revision providing all the justifications in this regard. Shri K.R.Ravinarayanan, who attended the AIC and recorded the minutes of the last AIC at Madurai also addressed the gathering. Since Shri R.R.Balasubramanian, Assistant Branch Secretary was elected as AGS, Shri A.Gunasekaran was unanimously co-opted as Assistant Branch Secretary.

In the interactive session, when a few members expressed their doubts about the continued payment of pension in the years to come, it was categorically replied by CHQ President and AGS that nobody can stop payment of pension along with periodical IDA revision. A few members wanted to know whether joining CGHS will be better than the BSNL MRS and it was opined that it would be better to join CGHS, considering the present financial condition of BSNL. The GB meeting concluded with vote of thanks by Shri D.T.Sambandan, Asst Treasurer and was followed by Lunch.

GUJARAT STATE BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HOLD A GB MEETING: AIBSNLREA, Gujarat State Branch held its General Body cum Get together Meeting in Ahmedabad Medical Association Hall, Ahmedabad on 17.12.2019 at 2.30 PM. Breaking all previous records, more than 300 members attended the meeting and 16 new members joined the Association raising the membership strength of State Branch to 1270. Shri P. B. Parmar, State President, who presided over the meeting, welcomed the members and appraised them with the current main issue of pension revision. The meeting started with lighting of lamp followed by observance of two minutes silence in memory of the departed members and family members. President, Chief Guest and two new CHQ members were honoured with bouquet. Guests of honour Director Shri Sandeep Joshi, Dr. Sharad Jain (Sr. Consultant- Interventional Cardiologist), Dr Sudhir Adalati (Cardiac Surgeon) from Apollo Hospital, Ahmedabad

addressed the house. Administrative Officer, CGHS Gujarat Unit attended the meeting and appraised the house about CGHS facilities, its procedure and clarified the points raised by the members. Shri S. L. Sharma, State Secretary briefed the members about the activities of State Branch after last meeting. He also reported about the AIC of Bharat Pensioners Samaj and appraised the house about the issues raised there. He also reported that Gujarat State Branch was represented in the AIC of AIBSNLREA held at Madurai with a record number of 37 delegates. Along with other State Office Bearers, he also attended various meetings conducted by District Branches. The General Body passed a resolution to conduct CWC at Gujarat in consultation with the CHQ. Ex. Org. Secretary (W), CHQ Shri B V Bhavsar addressed the members and appraised the house about proceedings, deliberations held in AIC Madurai. Shri M. T. Parmar presented the vote of thanks. Dinner was served after the meeting.

GB MEETING OF AMBALA BRANCH HELD: A General Body Meeting of Ambala Branch of AIBSNLREA was held on 16th December, 2019 at Central Phonenix Club, Ambala Cantt under the chairmanship of Sh. P.C. Chauhan, Branch President and was attended by 25 members. He welcomed all the members. The members expressed deep shock over the sad and untimely demise of wife of our member Shri M L Dureja. The members were then briefed by Branch Secretary Shri J.C. Gupta on the various issues who also gave details on the issues deliberated in the All India Conference held at Madurai on 12th and 13th November, 2019. Shri K L. Gakhar who represented our branch in AIC informed the members on the agenda discussed in the meeting in details particularly on the pension revision and Court case on pay/pension arrears with fitment benefit by merger of 78.2% IDA. Two new members also joined as life members who were welcomed in the meeting. The meeting was followed by lunch and vote of thanks.

QUARTERLY GB MEETING OF MUMBAI BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HELD: The quarterly General Body Meeting of AIBSNLREA, Mumbai Branch was held on 25.11.2019 at 14.30hrs in the Conference Hall, Fountain Telecom Building, Fort Mumbai with Shri K. Devassy on the chair who welcomed all the members and addressed the house. He also gave some tips of naturopathy. Shri S.P. Varma, Branch Secretary read out Minutes of last GB Meeting which was confirmed by the House. He then informed the house about the development of our court case, 3rd PRC, Revival plan of BSNL & MTNL, Revision of seniority list of TES group B Officers in compliance of supreme court judgements dated 21.1.2015 and 14.12.2017, Introduction of comprehensive pension management scheme by DOT, merits and demerits of BSNLMRS and CGHS facility. As large number of executives are taking VRS offered by DOT, all members were requested to approach them personally along with other normal retirees to enrol them as life member for our Mumbai Branch. Shri Vasudeva, Maharashtra State President addressed the House and gave details of all points discussed in AIC Madurai held on 12th & 13th Nov 2019. The case of rejection of medical claim of Shri S.N.Verma was discussed and it was decided to take up the matter with appropriate authorities. The House was then informed by Shri S. N. Verma that the planned annual picnic proposed to be held in last week of December 2019 has since been postponed to last week of February, 2020 and interested members were requesting to contact him by last week of January, 2020. The meeting came to end after presentation of vote of thanks by Shri S.R.Yadav.

WEST BENGAL STATE BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HELD A GENERAL BODY MEETING: AIBSNLREA, West Bengal State Branch held a GB meeting on 27th November 2019 at the CTO Hall, Kolkata

with a recorded attendance of over 340 members. The meeting was conducted by a presidium consisted of S/Shri S.C. Roy, President, S.R. Palit, Vice president and Ranjan Mukherjee, Vice President. After a brief cultural program, the House observed one minute's silence to pay homage to the departed members. Shri K.C Dey, State Secretary placed his report before the house mentioning the activities of the State Branch with an update on all the relevant issues. In his Report, he presented a brief account of the All India Conference of the Association held on 12th and 13th of November, 2019 at Madurai. His Report also covered the various resolutions adopted in the AIC covering ranges of issues from grievances of the pensioners in general and the BSNL Executive pensioners in particular to the issues which are very relevant for BSNL's existence and which remained untouched by any other association. Shri Debasish Chakraborty, Financial Secretary placed an up to date un-audited accounts for information of the House.

Some members participated in the discussions and expressed their concern over non-payment of medical claims for last more than 1 year, delay in revision of pension etc. S/Shri Sukumar Ghosh, Organizing Secretary (East) and Tapan Bhowmik, Branch Secretary, Baharampur Branch discussed the organisational activities of the State and also apprised the House about the deliberations and resolutions accepted in the all India conference. Shri N H Siddique wanted immediate implementation of Supreme Court's judgement in regard to consequential benefits of TES group 'B' officers and requested the association to act on the issue. Shri R. N. Roy mentioned the discriminations meted out to the officers belonging to the Civil Wing in regard to their ACP promotion. State Secretary covered the issues in his reply and requested the members to avail the facility of Grievance Redressal Cell for quick disposal of individual issues. Shri S R Palit, Vice President in his brief address discussed the issues like Court case on pay and pension arrears from 1.1.2007 to 9.6.2013, pension revision and the stand of the CHQ on revision of pension which was unanimously endorsed by the all India conference at Madurai. He also narrated the history of pension revision and the extant rules and law in this regard. 10 new members enrolled themselves as the life members of the Association in the meeting. Shri S.C Roy, President thanked all the members and urged to uphold the unity of the pensioners. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

KOLHAPUR BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HELD ITS QUARTERLY GB MEETING: Quarterly General Body Meeting of Kolhapur Branch of AIBSNLREA was held on 01-12-2019 at 11 AM at Telephone Bhavan with Shri L.M Godi, President on the chair. 56 members attended the meeting and 2 new members joined the Association. President welcomed all the Members and both Shri Shiddhartha Kambale from Kolhapur and Shri. S P Bawane from Karad who joined the Association with Bouquet. Then two senior members viz. Shri. H G Joshi from Kolhapur and SG Kanade from Sangli were felicitated with Shawl, Shriphal and Bouquets on behalf the Association on their completion of their Golden 75 years. All members wished them long life, peace and good health. These senior members thanked the Association for their affectionate felicitation and told that they were overwhelmed by their gesture and wished the Association to continue successfully to serve the causes of the pensioners. Then Secretary Shri D K Joshi placed his report on the various issues that were dealt in the GS Report presented in the 2nd AIC at Madurai on 12th and 13th November 2019. He also supplied the zerox copy of the GS Report to all members for their study and references. In his report, the Branch Secretary dealt in detail some of the issues viz. Pay/pension Revision, revision as per VII CPC, delinking of Pension from the pay revision of working employees of BSNL, Court cases, Revival of BSNL and consequential impact on working and retired employees, BSNL MRS and

other options for Medical Facility, and revision of Seniority Lists of SDEs as per Rule 206 of P&T Vol-IV on SC direction and its effect etc. Then other delegates who attended the AIC viz., Shri C S Walake and Mrs. Nadgouda also expressed their views on the AIC at Madurai. Queries raised by the members were replied to their satisfaction by the Branch Secretary. Thereafter, Shri Kanade gave a brief presentation on "Life after 60". He also sponsored the lunch that was served to the members after the meeting. Shri Joshi, on his part, announced the Sweet Cream to all from his side. The meeting concluded after presentation of vote of thanks by Shri P.S. Kulkarni.

STATEMENT OF AMOUNT RECEIVED DURING DECEMBER 2019

Shimla Branch (Himachal Pradesh State) has deposited Rupees one thousand two hundred (Rs.1200/-) only in S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 30.12.2019 as CHQ quota for 6 new Life Members.

Chennai Branch (Taminadu State) has deposited Rupees eight hundred (Rs.800/-) only in S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 29.12.2019 as CHQ quota for 4 new Life Members.

Tiruchirapalli Branch (Taminadu State) has deposited Rupees two hundred (Rs.200/-) only in S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 18.12.2019 as CHQ quota for 1 new Life Member.

Ambala Branch (Haryana State) has deposited Rupees four hundred (Rs.400/-) only in S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 18.12.2019 as CHQ quota for 2 new Life Members.

West Bengal State Branch has deposited Rupees one thousand six hundred (Rs.1600/-) only in S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 16.12.2019 as CHQ quota for 8 new Life Members.

Edited and published by Shri S Basu, General Secretary, AIBSNLREA