



Editorial

THIS TOO SHALL PASS

We are all passing through a terribly tough period. When everyone of us believed that the worst is over after last years' painful experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and lowered our guard, the virus has come back with vengeance in a double mutant form, spreading like wildfire and devouring human lives like a hungry demon. Unlike last year, this time it has not spared anyone, sweeping across all age groups. The stealthy speed with which the virus spread, infected and disabled the victims, has left our Health infrastructure overwhelmed. This resulted in people scrambling for hospital beds, oxygen, medicines and ambulances. The death rate reached alarmingly high that relatives of the deceased struggled even to honourably cremate their loved ones. Cases of infection and death which were only a distant 'News' to us last year, have come to haunt us this year, with family members, close relatives, friends and acquaintances becoming victims all around us. The fear that the virus may catch up with us any time, in spite of all the precautions, is affecting everyone physically and mentally. There is a sense of darkness around and everywhere.

The plight of the senior citizens, constituting 10% of the population of the country, is significantly worsen. They carry all the co-morbidities like diabetes and hypertension in the process of ageing. These co-morbidities add to the risk of hospitalisation and make them vulnerable

to serious complications. Watching colleagues and friends of their age succumbing to the deadly virus every other day results in emotional stress leading to physical weakness. Fear of the virus, fear of getting isolated and hospitalised, fear of the exorbitant hospital charges and fear of the unknown knockout all their will power.

We, the BSNL pensioners have been literally written off by the BSNL Management, in such a scary situation. Our medical claims remain unpaid for more than two years now. Though the Management woke up to the situation after the CMD himself was hospitalised due to COVID-19 and ordered payment of medical advance to the employees admitted for COVID-19 treatment, it has no concern for its past employees. There is no guarantee that indoor medical claims for COVID-19 treatment will be paid immediately on priority. Those who have opted for CGHS are a little better placed. Non-reimbursement of one-time subscription paid for switching over to CGHS remains a discouragement and obstacle for those who want to switch over now. Thus BSNL pensioners are on a sticky wicket and should take extra safety measures so as to keep out of reach to the virus.

However we should remember that at least we are far better placed than the crores of people who depend on daily

wages for their livelihood and those who have lost their jobs due to impact on economy. Many have lost their livelihood and are struggling for their survival. Vast majority of others who have an earning are still required to venture out to keep life going. We at least have the luxury of being able to transact everything safely remaining within the four walls of our home. And now there are signs of the infection rate coming down during the past few days. But no one knows whether there will be a third wave and how long we will have to live this quarantined life with persisting emotional stress. Vaccinating the vast majority of the 130

crores population, that too at a fast pace, is said to be the only way of ending the pandemic. Till then we have no option but to learn to live with the virus, protecting ourselves with mask, hand hygiene and social distancing, even if we are fully vaccinated. Let there be no complacency, let there be no distraction from scientific facts and let there be no overconfidence in the infection figure starting to come down. Let us take all possible safety measures to avoid exposure to the virus in any manner, hoping to see normalcy at the earliest. After all, everything that has a beginning has to end. And this too shall pass.



Important Developments of the Month

- BSNL vide its No.25-1/2021-BSNL(WL)/Admn dated 28.05.2021 has constituted a committee to recommend a suitable Health Insurance Policy for its employees. Sr.GM (Estt), Sr.GM (Admin), Sr.GM (Fin-CFA) and GM (SR) are the members of the committee.
- BSNL vide its letter No.BSNL/SECTT/13-1/2021 dated 27.05.2021 has issued a clarification that the formation date of BSNL is 15.09.2000, the date mentioned in the certificate of incorporation issued by the Registration of Companies, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, citing Section 9 of the Companies Act 2013. The background for this late realisation after 20 years and the purpose for this action are not known.
- CBDT vide its Circular No.9 of 2021 dated 20.05.2021 has extended the due date of furnishing of Return of Income for the Assessment Year 2021-22, which is 31st July 2021 under sub-section (1) of section 139 of the Act, to 30th September 2021. The Certificate of Tax Deducted at Source in Form No 16, required to be furnished to the employee by 15th June 2021 under Rule 31 of the Rules, is to be furnished on or before 15th July 2021.
- BSNL vide is No. BSNLCO-ADMN/11(15)/2/2021-ADMN dated 03.05.2021, has issued guidelines for treatment under BSNLMRS. Requirement of visit of designated officers to the Hospitals and giving certificates has been dispensed with for all diseases. Treatment in non-empanelled hospitals with the approval of CGM has been allowed. Tele-consultation charges will be reimbursed. Similarly, charges of RT PCR test and Rapid antigen test against valid receipts but without prescription has also been allowed. These guidelines are valid for the period 01.04.2021 to 30.09.2021.

Shri C.H.Gandhi, OS (South) CHQ passed away



Shri C.H.Gandhi, Organising Secretary (South) passed away on 04.05.2021 after a brief period of illness. He was elected OS (South) in the Bhubaneshwar AIC and re-elected in the Madurai AIC. He was instrumental in formation and growth of East Godavari Branch with more than 300 members. He was a simple man with great organising skills and was an active office bearer of the CHQ. He was about to celebrate his 73rd Birth anniversary in the next few days. AIBSNLREA CHQ is deeply saddened over his untimely demise.

Issues taken up



08.05.2021: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO CGMT, KARNATAKA REGARDING NON-SETTLEMENT OF FINAL SUPERANNUATION PENSION AND OTHER PENSIONARY BENEFITS CASES OF SHRI G P BIRADAR, RETD DE, BANGALORE TELECOM DISTRICT:

AIBSNLREA has since addressed a letter to CGMT, Karnataka Telecom Circle on the above issue. The Association has referred to the Remarks by the Circle Office in the Status Report of the CPENGRAMS Grievance Registration No. DOPPW/E/2020/15400 on the above-mentioned issue, based on an earlier representation of the Association vide No. AIBSNLREA/CHQ/2020/67 dated 03.08.2020, which was closed by Karnataka Telecom Circle on 23.12.2020. The Circle Office had stated that "The officer retired on 31-12-2010. He has requested for final superannuation pension, release of leave encashment, DCRG & commuted value of pension. At the time of retirement, a CBI case was pending against him. He has been exonerated by the designated court at Dharwad. To meet the above demands, VC is required. Action for seeking VC is under process. On receipt of VC all eligible payments will be made". Since the issue is still not resolved, despite the assurance given, the Association has requested the CGMT to intervene in the matter

so that necessary Orders are issued for settlement of this long pending case for grant of final superannuation pension and other pensionary benefits to Shri G P Biradar, Retd DE, Bangalore Telecom District at the earliest. [View the letter](#)

07.05.2021: NON-TRANSFER OF GPF BALANCE FOR THE PERIOD 16.03.1998 TO 06.06.2000 IN RESPECT OF SHRI CHANNAPPA M UROLGIN, RETD JTO, KOLHAPUR (HRMS NO. 198400965) WHILE THE PENSIONER WAS WORKING IN WTP CIRCLE- AIBSNLREA WRITES TO SR. GM (FINANCE & IFA), MAHARASHTRA TELECOM CIRCLE:

AIBSNLREA has since addressed a letter to Sr. GM (Finance & IFA), Maharashtra Telecom Circle, BSNL drawing his attention to the letter No. CCA/MH&Goa/GPF FP/CUM/2020-21/2 dated 09.04.2021 from Joint Controller of Communication Accounts, Maharashtra & Goa regarding non-transfer of GPF balance to Kolhapur SSA in respect of Shri Channappa M Urolgin, Retd JTO. The Joint CCA, MH & Goa, in his letter has sought for some actions from the end General Manager (Finance) to resolve this long pending case. In this case, Shri Channappa M Urolgin, Retd JTO, Kolhapur Telecom District (HRMS No. 198400965), who retired on 30.04.2019 from Kolhapur SSA, is yet to receive the balance amount of his GPF contributions for the period 16.03.1998 to 06.06.2000 when he worked in WTP Circle. As per Kolhapur SSA, the GPF amount for the said period was not incorporated in Kolhapur Accounts. This suggests that the WTP Circle did not transfer this amount to Kolhapur SSA after Shri C M Urolgin was released to join Maharashtra Telecom Circle on his transfer. In addition to this, the CCA Maharashtra & Goa has also pointed out a few other discrepancies in GPF balance which need to be sorted out. The Association has thus requested Sr. GM (Finance & IFA), Maharashtra Telecom Circle to take appropriate action on the issues as pointed out by Jt. CCA, MH & Goa, so that this long pending grievance may be resolved at the earliest. [View the letter](#)

05.05.2021: REIMBURSEMENT OF PENDING MEDICAL CLAIMS OF THE RETIRED BSNL EMPLOYEES IN THE BACKGROUND OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC- AIBSNLREA WRITES TO DIRECTOR (HR), BSNL:

In a letter addressed to Director (HR), BSNL on the above issue, AIBSNLREA has referred to his D.O. No. BSNLCO-ADMN/11(15)/2/2021-ADMN dated 29.04.2021 addressed to Circle Heads and expressed great satisfaction on his opening remarks which stated that "During last one week, the Covid-19 pandemic has hit India in a very big way. The cases are increasing every day. BSNL employees are also facing the wrath of this disease. In to-day's trying time, it is our duty and responsibility to ensure that treatment to BSNL employee or his dependent family members affected by this disease is not hampered due to financial constraints. It shall be our endeavour to extend financial support in deserving and genuine COVID cases by way of giving timely medical advance". The Association has conveyed that 'It is really a matter of great relief that BSNL Corporate Office, which was not reimbursing the medical claims particularly of the retired employees on the plea of Fund constraint, has now assured to give financial support in the form of medical advance to the serving employees affected by Covid-19 keeping aside the earlier excuse of fund constraint'. The Association has further pointed out that unfortunately, this does not make any difference in the situation for the retired employees under BSNLMRS, since they are not eligible to receive any advance- even though Covid-19 does not spare them in any way. AIBSNLREA has finally pleaded "Now that 'Fund constraint' is not being talked about to grant advance to the serving employees, may we request BSNL Management to start clearing all pending medical claims of the retired employees including the reimbursement of one-time payment made to CGHS as Life-time subscription for switching over from BSNLMRS". [View the letter](#)

03.05.2021: AIBSNLREA NOW SEEKS INTERVENTION OF PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA IN THE MATTER OF REFUSAL BY THE ACCOUNTS WING OF BSNL TAMILNADU CIRCLE TO REFUND THE BALANCE AMOUNT OF GPF CONTRIBUTION TO SHRI V VELAPPAN, RETD DGM, TAMILNADU CIRCLE DESPITE PROVIDING PROOF OF DEDUCTIONS OF GPF CONTRIBUTIONS DURING THE PERIOD UNDER CONTENTION AND REQUEST INVESTIGATION BY AN INDEPENDENT AGENCY AGAINST THE ERRING OFFICIALS/OFFICERS:

Due to repeated refusal by the Accounts Wing of BSNL, Tamilnadu Circle to refund the balance amount of GPF contribution for the period 03.12.1980 to 30.09.1990 along with interests accrued there on to Shri V Velappan, Retd DGM despite providing official records as proof of having deducted the contributions, AIBSNLREA has now sought the intervention of Prime Minister of India and requested him to render justice to the pensioner and conduct of an inquiry against the concerned erring officials/officers who seem to be hiding seemingly a big scam. In this case, the Accounts Wing (Corporate Accounts) of BSNL Tamilnadu Circle is taking no action to refund the balance amount of GPF contribution on the plea that all relevant records were destroyed in a fire in Coimbatore SSA and they are not able to intimate any proof in this regard to DOT. But the same Corporate Accounts Branch of Tamilnadu Circle is not even ready to accept the official records, already provided to them, as “proof” which were issued by DMT, Coimbatore and MTNL, Mumbai confirming that GPF deductions were duly made by them and even the MTNL Mumbai transferring the same to Tamilnadu Circle. [View the letter](#)



GOVERNMENT/BSNL ORDERS & LETTERS

28.05.2021: BSNL ISSUES CLARIFICATION REGARDING USE OF INCORPORATION/FORMATION DATE OF BSNL:

Legal section of BSNL CO has issued a clarification that the formation date of BSNL is 15.09.2000, the date mentioned in the certificate of incorporation issued by the Registration of Companies, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, citing Section 9 of the Companies Act 2013. The background for this late realisation after 20 years and the purpose for this action are not known. [View the BSNL letter](#)

25.05.2021: CGHS ISSUES O.M. ALLOWING REIMBURSEMENT OF COST OF OPD MEDICINES FOR THE TREATMENT OF CHRONIC ILLNESSES DURING THE INTERVENING PERIOD FROM 1.3.2021 TO 14.04.2021:

CGHS vide its earlier O.M. dated 15.04.2021 had provided an option to the CGHS beneficiaries getting medicines for chronic illnesses, to purchase medicines based on the prescription held till 28.02.2021 and from 15.04.2021 to 31.07.2021, irrespective of non-availability certificate from CGHS or otherwise. Now another O.M. vide No.Z 15025/12/2020/DIR/CGHS dated 25.05.2021, it has allowed reimbursement of cost of OPD medicines for the treatment of chronic illnesses during the intervening period from 01.03.2021 to 14.04.2021. [View the DG CGHS OM](#)

24.05.2021: EXTENSION OF DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF LIFE CERTIFICATE FOR SAMPANN PENSIONERS:

CGCA office has issued orders vide No.13-23/2020-21/BA&IT/176 to 203 dated 24.05.2021, allowing SAMPANN pensioners whose Life Certificate is expiring in April & May 2021, to submit their Life Certificate till 30th June 2021. During this extended period pension would continue to be paid by the Pension Disbursing Authority uninterrupted. [View the CGCA order](#)

24.05.2021: CGHS ISSUES OM SIMPLIFYING THE PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND TREATMENT RELATED TO COVID-19:

Director General, CGHS has issued an O.M. detailing the simplification of procedures while suffering from symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 illness, option for Tele-medicine during home quarantine after testing positive, further investigations for inflammatory markers like CRP, D-Dimer, IL-6, HRCT etc., requirement of essential medicines, without need to visit the CGHS Wellness Centres. [View the DG CGHS OM](#)

21.05.2021: CBDT EXTENDS THE DUE DATE FOR FILING INCOME TAX RETURNS UPTO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021 FOR THE AY 2021-22:

CBDT has issued a Circular extending the due date of furnishing of Return of Income for the Assessment Year 2021-22, which is 31st July 2021 under sub-section (1) of section 139 of the Act, to 30th September 2021. The Certificate of Tax Deducted at Source in Form No 16, required to be furnished to the employee by 15th June 2021 under Rule 31 of the Rules, is to be furnished on or before 15th July 2021. [View the CBDT circular](#)

18.05.2021: DIRECTOR (HR) BSNL WRITES TO ALL HEADS OF CIRCLES REQUESTING THEM TO GIVE PERSONAL ATTENTION TO ENSURE THAT THE VIGILANCE CASES OF BSNL VRS-2019 RETIREES ARE FINALISED IN A TIME BOUND MANNER:

Pointing out that a focused approach is necessary for early settlement of pending vigilance/disciplinary matters and that DoT is pressing hard for issue of Ex-gratia fund utilisation certificate from BSNL, Director (HR) BSNL has written a DO letter to all Heads of Circles requesting them to give personal attention to ensure that the vigilance cases of BSNL VRS-2019 retirees are finalised in a time bound manner. [View the letter from Director \(HR\)](#)

04.05.2021: BSNL ISSUES GUIDELINES UNDER BSNLMRS IN VIEW OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

In view of Covid-19 pandemic, BSNL, vide is No. BSNLCO-ADMN/11(15)/2/2021-ADMN dated 03.05.2021, has issued guidelines for treatment under BSNLMRS. Requirement of visit of designated officers to the Hospitals and giving certificates has been dispensed with for all diseases. Treatment in non-empanelled hospitals with the approval of CGM has been allowed. Tele-consultation charges will be reimbursed. Similarly, charges of RT PCR test and Rapid antigen test against valid receipts but without prescription has also been allowed. These guidelines are valid for the period 01.04.2021 to 30.09.2021. [View the BSNL order](#)



RESPONSE/ACTION TAKEN ON AIBSNLREA'S REPRESENTATIONS

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