



Editorial

BSNL ON RETURN JOURNEY

The financial report of BSNL for the year 2014-15, which for the first time in last seven years reported an operating profit for BSNL, has given a new ray of hope for BSNL's survival in all those who are, in one way or the other, connected with BSNL. This mighty public sector organization started going on the red after the financial year 2007-08. The cumulative huge losses incurred during the last so many years made even the most optimistic soul to become pessimistic about BSNL's future. Question marks were also being put on the future of its employees. But the news that BSNL has reported an operating profit after so many years will certainly help the gloomy picture around the question of BSNL's existence to disappear. It will certainly add strength to the efforts being made to make BSNL financially viable and stronger. But much more has to be done so that BSNL records net profit at the earliest.

Management is expected to take a call to modernize the network, add new equipments and offer latest services. But the employees also need to put in their best to reach the desired target to achieve net profit at the earliest. It cannot be denied that customers are not so comfortable with the quality of the existing services and complaints are also increasing day by day.

Many customers even are migrating to the other service providers in utter disgust. It is unfortunate that even the quality of basic services like landline, broadband along with mobile services has also been deteriorating. Fault repair service is also not at its best. May be, the initiative was lost due to a negative environment. There was nothing to motivate the employees. Now that a new but strong ray of hope is seen, it should be everyone's endeavor to jump into the fray with renewed energy to carry on the fight to ensure survival of BSNL to its logical conclusion.

The continuous losses in BSNL had its own impact on the perks and allowances of the BSNL employees. Many of their existing benefits were either withdrawn or cut down. A big question mark is also being put on their future rise in pay scales after the III PRC for CPSE employees submits its Report. It cannot be denied that even II PRC had given the liberty to the CPSEs to implement its recommendations on pay scales based on their financial health. Therefore, early net profit by BSNL will strengthen the claims of the BSNL employees for better pay scales and other allowances. Another point that will go in favour of the BSNL Employees is that the Government, while allowing payment of pension by the Government to

the MTNL pensioners, had ordered to bring parity in pay scales of both BSNL and MTNL Employees at the time of implementation of III PRC recommendations w.e.f. 1.1.2017. Since the pay scales of MTNL employees cannot be lowered from their existing

levels, the pay scales of BSNL employees will have to be raised to bring parity. Thus since the odds are in favour of the BSNL employees, they need to give their best to ensure early net profit for BSNL and get all the speculations to stop forever.

RESTORATION OF WITHOUT VOUCHER MEDICAL ALLOWANCE SCHEME FOR OUTDOOR TREATMENT TO THE RETIRED BSNL EMPLOYEES

In order to consider the requests received from all corners, BSNL Corporate Office wanted to examine the above issue and had asked the CGMs to send information about the (i) total number of retired employees availing medical facility and (ii) total Outdoor expenditure incurred during the financial years 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 vide its letter No. BSNL/Admn.I/15-22/14 dated 17.03.2015. Thereafter, since information was received only from five Circles, the Corporate Office issued a reminder vide its No. BSNL/Admn.I/15-22/14 dated 23.04.2015 to all the circles. So far out of the 48 Circles, complete information has been received only from 22 Circles, while another Circle i.e. Haryana has sent only partial information. Another 25 Circles are yet to send the requested information. These Circles are:-

A&N, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, North East I, North East II, Orissa, Punjab, Kolkata Telephones, Uttaranchal, West Bengal, BRBRAITT, BBNW, ETP, ETR, IT Project, NTP, NTR, Inspection and TF Kolkata.

We now request the help of our members and other interested individual retired employees and the concerned unions and associations to prevail over the defaulting Circles and expedite supply of the information as requested in the above quoted BSNL letters to get the case examined and a decision taken at the earliest.

INTRODUCTION OF HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME FOR THE EMPLOYEES AND PENSIONERS INCLUDING THOSE RESIDING IN NON CGHS AREAS

The Government of India is considering a proposal for introduction of Health Insurance Scheme for the employees and pensioners including those residing in non-CGHS areas. It has already prepared a proposal in consultation with NITI Ayog, Department of Expenditure, Department of Financial Services and the Insurance Companies. An EFC Note in this regard is being sent to all concerned Departments to get their response. It may be added that the 7th Central Pay Commission in its Report submitted to the Government on 19.11.2015 has also recommended to introduce a Health Insurance scheme for the employees and the pensioners.

IMPORTANT FEATURES OF SEVENTH CPC RECOMMENDATIONS

The Seventh Central Pay Commission has submitted its Report to the Government on 19.11.2015. This is the first time in the history of the Commissions that the Report has been submitted before the scheduled date of implementation of the recommendations. Now the Government has to examine the recommendations and decide on their implementation or otherwise. The Employees Unions may also like to take up those issues in which they may like to ask for their improvements. The entire exercise may take some time and thereafter the orders are to be issued.

The CPC has recommended raising of minimum pay to Rs. 18000 and maximum pay to Rs 2.25 lakh for Secretaries. However, the Cabinet Secretary, Chiefs of Armed Forces and CAG will get Rs. 2.50 lakhs. The pay package of Rs 4.5 lakhs have been recommended for chairpersons of TRAI, CERC, IRDA, SEBI, CCI, PFRDA, PNGRB, WDRA, AERAI, while its members would draw Rs 4 lakhs per month. Rate of annual increment for the CG employees has been retained at three percent as at present. Insured amount in Group Insurance Scheme has been recommended to be raised substantially. Health Insurance Scheme has also been proposed for both the serving and retired employees. The Commission has recommended abolition of 52 allowances and another 36 allowances have been recommended to be subsumed in existing or newly proposed allowances.

In case of the pensioners, maximum limit of Gratuity has been raised to Rs 20 lakhs. However, whenever the Dearness Allowance reaches 50%, this limit will increase by another 25%. The only recommendation that may make the existing pensioners happy is about pension formulation on the line of One Rank One Pension implemented for Armed Forces. Otherwise, the CPC did not agree to most of the demands to improve the existing benefits for the pensioners. The recommendations of the Pay Commission on gratuity and Pension Formulation are reproduced below:

- (1) **Enhancement in the Gratuity ceiling and its indexation:** The Commission recommends enhancement in the ceiling of gratuity from existing Rs 10 lakhs to Rs 20 lakhs from 1.1.2016. The Commission further recommends, as has been done in other cases of allowances, that are partially indexed to Dearness Allowance, the ceiling on gratuity may increase by 25 percent whenever DA rises by 50 percent.
- (2) **Rationalization of Death Gratuity:** The Commission, after examining the matter, recommends the following revised rates for payment of death gratuity:

<i>Length of service</i>	<i>Rate of Death Gratuity</i>
Less than one year	2 times of monthly emoluments

One year or more but less than 5 years	6 times of monthly emoluments
5 years or more but less than 11 years	12 times of monthly emoluments
11 years or more but less than 20 years	20 times of monthly emoluments
20 years or more	Half month of emoluments for every complete six monthly period of qualifying service subject to a maximum of 33 times of emoluments.

(3) Pension formulation:

- (i) All the civilian personnel including CAPF who retired prior to 1.1.2016 (expected date of implementation of the seventh CPC recommendations) shall first be fixed in the Pay Matrix being recommended by this Commission, on the basis of the Pay Band and Grade Pay at which they retired, at the minimum of the corresponding level in the matrix. This amount shall be raised, to arrive at the notional pay of the retirees by adding the number of increments he/she had earned in that level while in service, at the rate of three percent. Fifty percent of the total amount so arrived at shall be the revised pension.
- (ii) The second calculation to be carried out is as follows. The pension, as had been fixed at the time of implementation of the VI CPC recommendation, shall be multiplied by 2.57 to arrive at the alternate value for the revised pension.
- (iii) Pensioners may be given the option of choosing whichever formulation is beneficial to them.

STATUS OF THE ISSUES CONCERNING THE BSNL PENSIONERS AS DISCUSSED IN THE 27th MEETING OF SCOVA

The status of three specific issues pertaining to the absorbed BSNL Pensioners which are being discussed in the meetings of SCOVA for quite some time and then last discussed in its 27th Meeting held on 13.10.2013 is now obtained from the Minutes of said Meeting of SCOVA issued by the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare vide its F.No. 42/07/2015-P&PW(G) dated 05.11.2015. The status given, therefore, is as on 13.10.2015 and not the latest one. The given status was as follows:-

ITEM NO	ISSUE DISCUSSED	DECISION RECORDED
5. (v)	Anomaly in fixation of pension to DOT Employees absorbed in BSNL, who retired between 1.10.2000 and 31.7.2001.	It was informed that a proposal was sent by DOT to DoPPW on 24.04.2015 and a formulation was suggested by DoPPW on 26.06.2015. The case was further

		referred to Department of Expenditure. Department of Expenditure sought some clarification/information on 17.09.2015 which are being obtained by DoT from concerned Departments/Agencies. DoT was asked to finalise their proposal by 31.10.2015.
5.(vi)	Merger of 78.2% IDA with basic pension benefit to the absorbed BSNL pensioners	Department of Telecom informed that a draft Cabinet Note was circulated on 16.06.2015 and comments of DoPPW were conveyed to DOT on 16.07.2015. Comments from other Ministries/ Departments have also been received. However some queries have been raised by Department of Expenditure and the information/inputs on same are being collected for furnishing the same to Department of Expenditure. DoT were asked to send the reply to Department of Expenditure by 31.10.2015.
5(xi)	Extension of CGHS facilities to retired BSNL Employees - Issue of follow up order by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare & fixation of rates of contribution & Ward entitlement by DoT	The Department of Telecom informed that the matter was being examined and a proposal in this regard is being submitted for approval of competent authority to take up the case further with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Department of Telecom was asked to finalise their proposal quickly and send it to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare by 31.10.2015.

ISSUES TAKEN UP

AIBSNLREA AGAIN TAKES UP THE CASE OF NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ASSURANCE TO EXTEND THE BENEFIT OF OPTION TO RETAIN CDA PAY SCALE TILL THEIR PROMOTION OR RETIREMENT WHICHEVER IS EARLIER IN CASE OF GROUP C & D EMPLOYEES OF DOT SINCE ABSORBED IN BSNL: AIBSNLREA has again taken up the above issue of Non-implementation of assurance to extend the benefit of option to retain CDA pay scale till their promotion or retirement whichever is earlier offered in the General Terms and Conditions of Service for absorption to the Group "C" & "D" Employees by the Department of Telecommunications. AIBSNLREA has urged the Minister of State for (PP) that *"Since the Department of Telecommunications is not implementing its own offer made in its General Terms and Conditions for Service for absorption in BSNL for "an option to retain*

Government Pay Scale i.e. CDA pay scale till their promotion or retirement whichever is earlier” to the absorbed Group C & D Employees, we seek for your kind personal intervention in the matter for immediate implementation of the said offer which cannot be withdrawn at any stage after absorption. The early resolution is urgently required to settle their claim for higher pay and pensionary benefits which are overdue.” [\[To read the letter, the posting dated 24.11.2015 in this website may be viewed.\]](#)

AIBSNLREA WRITES TO DIRECTOR(HR), BSNL ABOUT NON-SETTLEMENT OF WRONG FIXATION OF PAY AND PENSION CASE OF SHRI ARABINDA CHOUDHURY, RETD EE(CIVIL), WEST BENGAL TELECOM CIRCLE: AIBSNLREA has since addressed a letter to Director (HR), BSNL drawing her attention to the above case in which the Establishment Branch of Corporate Office had advised PGM(BW), BSNL to send some clarifications to West Bengal Telecom Circle. But the same has not been complied with and the case remains unsettled. The Association has requested Director (HR) to intervene in the matter so that the sufferings of the above retired officer come to an end. [\[To read the letter, the posting dated 19.11.2015 in this website may be viewed.\]](#)

AIBSNLREA WRITES TO SECRETARY (PENSION), DOP&PW ON THE ISSUE OF NON-SETTLEMENT OF APPEAL OF SHRI S N GAJBE, RETD SDE, CHANDRAPUR SSA OF MAHARASHTRA CIRCLE AGAINST THE PUNISHMENT ORDER ISSUED BY DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATION AND NON-RELEASE OF HIS PENSIONARY BENEFITS: AIBSNLREA, vide its No. AIBSNLREA/CHQ/2015/34 dated 09.11.2015, has sought the intervention of Secretary (Pension), Department of Pension & Pensioners’ Welfare in the above case. The Association writes that “we earnestly request you to kindly intervene in this case and advise Department of Telecommunication to expeditiously settle his Appeal against punishment Order and also immediately release all his pensionary benefits including payment of regular pension. We also take this opportunity to enclose herewith a copy of his last reminder sent to Department of Telecommunication for your kind perusal”. [\[To read the letter, the posting dated 09.11.2015 in this website may be viewed.\]](#)

ABNORMAL DELAY IN SETTLEMENT OF MEDICAL REIMBURSEMENT CASES OF THE BSNL PENSIONERS – AIBSNLREA WRITES TO DIRECTOR (HR) ABOUT OUTDOOR CLAIMS: While thanking for issue of instructions to the CGMs reiterating BSNL’s earlier Orders to settle the claims of indoor treatment cases of BSNL pensioners within one month of their receipt, AIBSNLREA draws the attention of Director(HR), BSNL about the inordinate delay taking place in settlement of claims for outdoor treatment. The Association, in its letter, has requested “.... we shall again urge you to kindly cause for issue of an order advising the CGMs to settle the Medical reimbursement claims for outdoor treatment of the retired BSNL employees also in a fixed time period”. [\[To read the letter, the posting dated 03.11.2015 in this website may be viewed.\]](#)

RESTORATION OF BENEFIT OF MEDICAL ALLOWANCE FOR OUTDOOR TREATMENT WITHOUT VOUCHERS FOR THE RETIRED BSNL EMPLOYEES: AIBSNLREA writes to Director(HR), BSNL to expedite a positive decision in respect of the case of restoration of benefit of medical allowance without vouchers for the retired BSNL employees which was under consideration of BSNL

Corporate and for which BSNL had asked all the Circles to send some information as specified in its letter No. BSNL/Admn.I/15-22/14 dated 17.03.2015. [\[To read the letter, the posting dated 02.11.2015 in this website may be viewed.\]](#)

BRANCHES IN ACTION

New Branch of AIBSNLREA formed at Wardha: A new Branch of AIBSNLREA has been formed at Wardha in Maharashtra State. The meeting was held at 11.00 hours of 3rd November 2015 in Swadhyay Mandir Wardha. Ten members have already enrolled as Life members of the Association. The meeting discussed various issues concerning the pensioners. S/Shri S.K.Patankar and G.S.Kawley were later elected as the Branch President and Branch Secretary respectively. Shri A.A.Chawade is the Finance Secretary of the Branch.

Akola Branch (Maharashtra State) of AIBSNLREA held its bi-monthly General Body meeting on 18-11-2015 at the residence of Shri P.P. Chimankar Retd. A.O. Akola. Twenty one (21) members were present in the meeting and three new Life Members were also enrolled in the Branch. After enrollment of these members, the membership of Akola branch has increased to 52 members. Shri A.G. Nema Branch Secretary welcomed all the members including the new members. Two minutes silence was first observed to convey condolence to the departed souls of Vice President Late Shri P.T. Kolhe retired D.E. and his wife Late Smt. Kamal Prabhakar Kolhe who expired on 26th September and 24th October 2015 respectively. Branch Secretary apprised about the latest information regarding the case of merger of 50% I.D.A. effectively amounting to 78.2%. The members condemned the long delay in this matter. Branch Secretary highlighted the importance of the Association and urged the house to help in enrollment of new retired executives. The meeting was adjourned with vote of thanks.

Kanpur Branch (UP State) of AIBSNLREA had a General Body meeting in the TRC Hall, Kanpur Telephone Exchange Main Building on 05.11.2015. Shri R S Arora, State Secretary attended and addressed the meeting. Afterwards, a new set of office bearers was unanimously elected with S/Shri Dharam Das as President, S B Saini as the Branch Secretary and Lal Singh as Branch Finance Secretary.

STATEMENT OF AMOUNT RECEIVED IN NOVEMBER 2015

Chennai Branch (Tamilnadu State) has deposited Rupees four hundred (Rs. 400.00) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Karur Vysya Bank on 24.11.2015 as quota for two (2) new Life Members.

Akola Branch (Maharashtra State) has deposited Rupees six hundred (Rs. 600.00) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 21.11.2015 as quota for three (3) new Life Members.

Pune Branch (Maharashtra State) had deposited Rupees Two thousand four hundred (Rs 2400.00) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 26.10.2015 as quota for twelve (12) new life members.

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