

17.05.2009: AIBSNLREA, WEST BENGAL STATE BRANCH HOLDS ITS AGB:

Braving the unprecedented midsummer heat prevailing all over the city, a memorable gathering of over one hundred retired BSNL Executives took place on 8th May, 2009 at CTO Conference Hall at Kolkata under the banner of AIBSNLREA, West Bengal State Branch. This occasion assured a greater importance with the valued presence of Shri S. Basu, G.S. The members were very eager to have a first hand information on the latest position with regard to the burning issues of the retired BSNL Executives viz Merger of 50% IDA with Pension, Revision of Pension, Enhanced DCRG etc . Shri Basu, in his speech made elaborate discussions on each of the above mentioned issues and unfolded many aspects of the same which so far remained unknown to many of the members. Although, the G.S had some doubts about getting all the pending issues resolved immediately, he was optimistic to achieve the goals within a reasonable period of time. He made the house known that DOT's orders regarding applicability of amended CCS (Pension) Rules 1972 in the light of the recommendations of 6th CPC to the BSNL retirees are likely to be issued very soon after Secretary, DOT who is abroad returns and clears the file. Some sections of BSNL retirees will be benefitted with these orders in the area of enhanced DCRG, revision of their pension etc. Moreover, this would be a precedence for the future that as and when any modification takes place in CCS (Pension) Rules, the same will be applicable for absorbed BSNL pensioners automatically. The issue regarding merger of 50% IDA, he said, was being examined by legal cell of DOT. The issue will be further processed after the opinion of legal cell is obtained. In regard to revision of pension to pre-2007 BSNL pensioners, the matter is likely to take more time for a settlement. The issue has been made complicated by DOT by proposing revision of pension in CDA pattern instead of IDA pattern as per demand of ITSA. Surprisingly, two Executives Associations i.e. SNEA and AIBSNLEA, and some non-Executives Unions including BSNLEU had supported this move. The minutes of the meeting that was issued in December 2008 after SNEA and AIBSNLEA met Secretary, DOT and the one that was issued after a meeting that the Associations/Unions had with CMD, BSNL clearly confirms their support to the move. However, AIBSNLREA is fighting a lone battle to safe guard the interest of BSNL pensioners and ensure that revision of pension takes place only in IDA pattern of pay scale. The house remained spell bound with the unique approach and analysis of Shri Basu on each pending item and the conclusions arrived at. The house reposed full support to him in days to come.

In place of the Ad-hoc body formed on 23.10.2008, a panel of an enlarged Executive Committee of the AIBSNLREA, W.B. State Branch with Shri B. B. Chowdhury as President and Shri N. H. Siddique as State Secretary and Shri S. R. Palit as Treasurer with other members for different posts was placed before the house for approval. The house unanimously approved the same body for the ensuing years. An Income and Expenditure A/c upto April, 2009 was also approved by the house.

While customary functions related to Annual General Body Meetings were observed as per convention, such as welcome address by the outgoing President, reporting by the State Secretary and the Treasurer, a good number of enthusiastic members took active part in the proceedings and made queries on certain points. The GS replied all questions raised to the full satisfaction of the members.

All were treated with tea and snacks before the house dissolved with thanks to the Chair and the General Secretary who has been relentlessly running from pillars to posts almost everyday to solve the various unsettled issues and showed no sign to leave them half-way until the ultimate goal is achieved.