

BSNL PENSIONERS ~~BLIND~~ – SOME CELEBRATE, CALL THIS THEIR VICTORY

Ever since the news appeared in the PIB website that the Union Cabinet advanced its scheduled meeting by a day, and held it on 5th July 2016 to consider some pending cabinet notes and cleared the DOT's proposal for "... extending the benefit of merger of 50% DA w.e.f. 01.01.2007 effectively amounting to 78.2% for the purpose of fitment in respect of Pre-2007 BSNL pensioners/family pensioners retired prior to 01.01.2007 and Post-2007 BSNL pensioners/family pensioners retired during the period from 01.01.2007 to 09.06.2013", there is wild celebrations in some pensioners' associations calling this as their victory.

Yes, it is certainly their victory, since it is they who tried their level best to convince the DOT that the Presidential Directive dated 10.06.2013 issued by DOT for extending the fitment benefit for fixation of pay by merger of 78.2% IDA to the absorbed BSNL pensioners is nothing but "notional". They really have reasons to celebrate because DOT obliged them by fixing the pay on "notional basis" to a large section of the pensioners - even though none of the DPE's Order dated 02.04.2009, DOT's Presidential Directive dated 10.06.2013 and BSNL's Pay fixation Orders dated 8.7.2013 called this as "notional." Moreover, how could the same Order be "actual" to those who were in service on 01.01.2007 but retired on or after 10.06.2013 and "notional" for them who were also very much in service on 01.01.2007 but retired before 10.06.2013? There can be no second opinion that calling the Presidential Directive dated 10.06.2013 as "notional" and its faulty application is solely responsible for denial of pay fixation benefit on 'actual basis' w.e.f. 01.01.2007 to those pensioners who were in service on 01.01.2007 but retired before 10.06.2013 - thereby forcing them to lose the right to get pay/pension arrears, enhanced DCRG, commuted value of pension and leave encashment.

At that time one of these associations from south cited untenable past Government Orders to prove their theory that the Presidential Directive is indeed "notional". Again a great thinker from east who is an important office bearer of a pensioners' association run by the General Secretary of a serving executives' association and was also in the forefront to prove that the Presidential Directive was nothing but "notional", even went on to moot an unique idea of fixation of pay for those who retired between 01.01.2007 and 09.06.2013 on their last month or last day of their service with 78.2% IDA merger. This is that association which was also part of the Forum which signed an agreement with BSNL for 'deferment of arrears' but finally accepted without any resistance DOT's verdict through its Presidential Directive dated 10.6.2013 that "No arrears will be paid".

We had then countered their views through our various "write ups" with facts, figures and rules which appeared in our website and are still available. But the DOT, on its

part, took the advantage of the situation and even asked BSNL to clarify whether “the pay will be revised notionally” [\[view the DOT letter\]](#). DOT found a great opportunity in it to deny many benefits including revised pay-fixation w.e.f. 01.01.2007, payment of DCRG, Leave Encashment, Commuted Value of Pension and even payment of arrears of pay which were due to the pensioners who were in service on 01.01.2007 but retired before 10.06.2013.

On our part, we tried our best to ensure that the revised fitment benefit on actual basis is allowed to all those who were in service on 01.01.2007, but unfortunately we failed. We knew what is coming and decided to accept whatever comes and then knock the door of the court to get justice. In our recently concluded All India Conference held at Bhubaneswar, even before the Cabinet approval was known, the proposal to go to the court was approved in one voice. We have been preparing ourselves for long for this and once the Order for pension revision gets implemented, we shall move to the court not only to extend the above stated benefits to those who retired between 01.01.2007 and 09.06.2013, but also to allow pension arrears to the pre-2007 BSNL pensioners and also pay arrears for those who retired/retiring after 09.06.2013.

Celebrations are akin to Indian traditions. We celebrate on many occasions like birth of a child, passing out in exams, getting jobs, marriage, new home, promotion, retirement and what not. There are many religious festivals and functions also to celebrate. There is nothing wrong, if there are reasons to celebrate. But will anyone celebrate on getting only a paltry part of the dues, withheld unjustifiably for years and forfeiting major portion of one’s dues? Shall we not even think about what we have lost, before such celebration? Shall we not realize that this is not a gift or bonus to us but only a part of our lawful dues? The latest cabinet decision might have brought some relief, but is certainly not enough to go for wild celebration.

Being a responsible pensioners’ association, we cannot celebrate when all the BSNL Pensioners bleed. We cannot think of adding salt to the wound of those pensioners who retired between 1.1.2007 and 9.6.2013 by celebrating when their right to get pay fixation w.e.f. 01.01.2007 on actual basis has been denied, payment of enhanced DCRG, Leave Encashment, Commuted Value of Pension and pay arrears snatched away. We cannot celebrate when the pre-2007 pensioners are denied their pension arrears from 01.01.2007 to 09.06.2013 and the post 10.06.2013 pensioners are deprived of their pay arrears between 01.01.2007 and 09.06.2013. Let others enjoy, celebrate, call this their victory despite the fact that the pensioners are bleeding due to their back-stabbing, but our Association will leave no stone unturned to ensure that the wound of the pensioners is healed and the bleeding stops once for all. **We shall certainly celebrate, but only when all get justice.**

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