



## ALL INDIA BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED RETIRED EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION

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No.AIBSNLREA/CHQ/2022/20

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022

To  
Shri Narendra Modi  
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,  
New Delhi.

### **Sub: Request for restoration of the Senior Citizen concession in trains**

Sir,

Your words of acknowledgment and appreciation of the elders on their role in Nation Building are still reverberating in our minds. Just a year after taking over as Prime Minister of India, you had addressed the Elders of India rightly stating that **"Many of you belong to that privileged generation which has had the honour of contributing to both India's independence, as well as its consequent nation building. We are what we are today because of you. And for this we are all deeply proud and eternally indebted to you. Thus, it is the nation's responsibility to look after you. This is but a mere continuation of India's ethos of 'respect for elders' – our Bharatiyata."**

2. You have made your intent clear by repeating this commitment on several occasions later by listing out the measures taken by your Government in this direction, like tax benefits for senior citizens, reviving of Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana, introduction of Prime Minister Vaya Vandhana Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana and setting up of Senior Citizen Welfare Fund.

3. It is therefore very disappointing that the long existing concession for senior citizens in trains has been withdrawn. The Southern Railway on 17th September 2020 informed the Madras High Court that **the concession that was being provided to senior citizens stands cancelled to discourage unnecessary travel during the COVID-19 pandemic.** More than two years after stopping it citing Covid-related restrictions, the government has now said **"restarting concessions to senior citizens on train tickets is not desirable"** since the cost of concession weighs heavily on Railways.

4. It is really unfortunate that the Indian Railways shirks its social responsibility towards senior citizens in the name of 'cost', while even private airlines including the recently privatized Air India continue to provide concession to senior citizens despite rising cost of

their operation. Also, Government's social obligations are to be met by Indian Railways without indulging in profit-loss calculation, like BSNL which is continuing to fulfill the Government's social obligations by providing telecom services to common man at affordable prices in spite of incurring huge losses for years.

5. You will agree that after dedicating the entire prime years of their life to serving the Nation, these senior citizens find time only now to realise their dream of travel crisscrossing the country, mostly on pilgrimage with their family. It is a plain truth that these people could afford to travel in AC classes only because of the concession, which they could never otherwise even imagine. It is also on record that around 40 lakhs senior citizens have opted out of the concession during the past two years, which shows that those who can afford to forego the concession are readily doing it without any second thought.

6. We strongly feel that a few crores of expenditure should not stand in the way of the Indian Railways discharging its social responsibility towards the elders. After all these senior citizens constitute a major chunk of honest Income Taxpayers, during past service and after retirement. Unlike in other countries, this tax is not being used to provide any social security to them.

7. In view of the above, we earnestly request you to kindly intervene and advise the Indian Railways to review its decision of withdrawing the concession and to order restoration of the senior citizen concession in trains henceforth.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



(R.R. Balasubramanian) 27/7/22

Asst. General Secretary

For General Secretary

Copy to: 1. Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw,  
Minister of Railways, GOI.  
2. Shri V K Tripathi,  
Chairman, Railway Board