



Editorial

🕊️ LET THE YEAR 2024 BRING PEACE 🕊️

All has not been well for the mankind across the globe for the past few years and the year 2023 was no different. COVID-19 wrecked havoc in the lives of human beings in the entire world since the year 2020. Almost all of us at least once were infected by the corona virus which made us breathless and confined to our homes for months together. Every one of us lost our near and dear to the deadly virus. Those who survived are still inflicted by various ailments collectively known as Post-covid Syndrome. And when we breathed a sigh of relief, it is threatening to come back with vengeance in a more infective variant, although it is said to be not more severe or dangerous than the other variants. There is no end to the debate whether the virus was man-made and escaped some research laboratory or whether it was a result of mutation of earlier corona viruses. We may never know the truth.

In the recent years we have been witnessing the fury of the nature, in the form of unprecedented heavy rains, floods, cyclonic storms and landslides all over the world disrupting life and damaging properties and infrastructure, without discrimination between developed and developing countries. Flooding is already a leading climatic threat affecting people's livelihood affecting development worldwide. While earlier we thought that the effects of global warming will be seen

in the distant future, we are already experiencing the changes in the seasons, long and harsh summers, equally harsh winters, thinning of the glaciers, rising sea levels and rough weather conditions. While some still refuse to believe global warming and advocate that it is mythical and non-existent, the climate summits of world leaders have so far failed to arrest the trend. The only positive sign is reports about shrinking of the Ozone Hole.

Even more disturbing is the ongoing armed conflicts around the world, threatening World Peace. There has always been more than a dozen armed conflicts recorded every year, caused by territorial dispute, inter-country conflicts, transnational terrorism, civil wars and political instability. The number of conflicts has been on the rise in the recent years. Ethnic violence is no exception. But the more worrisome conflicts are the Russia-Ukraine War which has been raging for more than a year now and the Palestinian Hamas-Israel conflict, both displacing millions from their homes and resulting in loss of tens of thousands of precious human lives of military personnel as well as the civilians. The fact that thousands of women and children have also been killed, raises questions about effectiveness of the International Humanitarian Law, the core of the Geneva Convention. As a result, war crimes continue unabatedly.

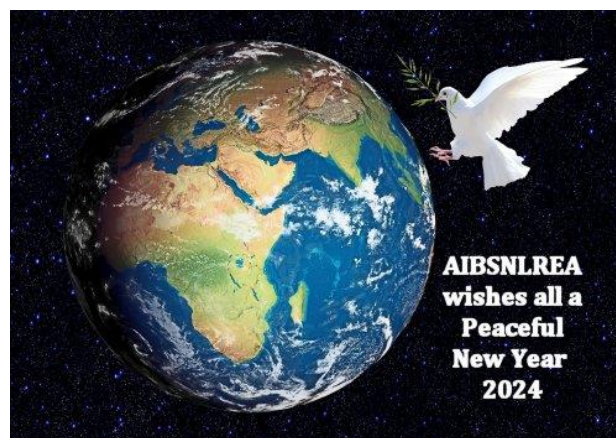
Our generation has seen a pandemic and has witnessed the ill effects of global warming and it is our genuine fear that we may have to witness a world war too during our life time, as the world is on the brink of such a calamity. With all calls for a ceasefire falling on deaf ears of the nations in conflict, with nations divided based on their own perspective, needs and socio-political reasoning, the world is in danger of a global war likely to be ignited by an insane act by one or other nation in the conflict. We cannot brush away all these happening around as irrelevant as we are not the ones directly affected. Though today the war affects the poor and vulnerable section of the human society, the long term fall out will affect every country and every person. We cannot ignore these things, even if the adverse events would happen years away, when we may not be alive. But we need to worry about the safety and peace of our children, grandchildren and the generations to come.

Last year, in his New Year message, the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres had said, "In 2023, we need peace, now more than ever." This applies more to the year 2024.

It will be the bounden duty of all the Governments and its leaders around the

globe and inter-national forums like United Nations Organisation and World Health Organisation, to work out solutions, before things go out of hand. The world's healthiest nations which are disproportionately responsible for global warming should take the responsibility for reversing the trend too instead of trying shift the blame on other countries. We can only hope that wisdom prevails among the countries in UN Security Council, in order that they view conflicts in the face of large-scale loss of lives and human sufferings, particularly civilians and most particularly women and children.

On our part, as not only elders but also as former employees having vast experience of the diversity in workplace, have greater responsibility to pass over that experience to our children and grandchildren. It is our responsibility to instil the spirit of love and tolerance among them, to ensure that, they learn to live in peace with nature, live in peace with the neighbours, live in peace with fellow human beings respecting each other's beliefs, live in peace within our society duly protecting our women and children and live in peace within one's self. Let us make a new beginning in this direction in the New Year 2024. ☹





Important Developments of the Month

- ✚ As per the minutes of meeting held under the Chairpersonship of Addl. Secretary (Pers. Policy) held on 15th December 2023 to discuss agenda items of 62nd meeting of Standing Committee of National Council (JCM), the judgment of the Supreme Court dated 11.04.2023 in CA No.2471 of 2023 @ SLP (C) No.6185/2020 is under consideration in DoP&T in consultation with nodal ministries. [View the Minutes](#)
- ✚ As per the minutes of meeting held under the Chairpersonship of Addl. Secretary (Pers. Policy) held on 15th December 2023 to discuss agenda items of 62nd meeting of Standing Committee of National Council (JCM), DoP&PW had proposed that the matter relating to reduction in the restoration period for commuted pension may be referred to the next CPC. Department of Expenditure has returned the proposal stating it is premature since CPC has not yet been constituted. [View the Minutes](#)
- ✚ The virtual meeting of AIBSNLREA CHQ office bearers was held on 01.12.2023 under the Presidentship of Shri V.Chinnappiah, CHQ President. All but one of the office bearers attended the meeting. As per the decision taken in the previous meetings, report on progress made in opening of WhatsApp groups in Branches where it did not exist, adding Organising Secretaries of the respective Zones in WhatsApp group of the branches in the zones and opening a WhatsApp Community with all the branch groups at State level were presented by all the office bearers. In the process, all the Branch Secretaries were contacted by the office bearers assigned for the work and this was said to be a pleasant experience for the office bearers with fruitful interactions. After the efforts of the office bearers and compilation of the list, it was found that 80% of the branches now had WhatsApp groups with respective Organising Secretaries added to the groups. Organising Secretaries reported that they were happy that they are able to understand the issues being discussed in the groups. Tamilnadu State has formed its Community with all the branch groups, Maharashtra State is on the job and UP State will follow. GS informed the meeting that some technical issues were faced in Tamilnadu creating discontent. It was decided that members be properly explained regarding the purpose of formation of community at State level. It was felt that membership will be convinced and all other States be requested to create Community at the earliest. All the office bearers felt that the entire effort to ensure flow of information to the members was worthy and they were happy in achieving the task to a great extent. Organising Secretaries will now ensure that the information from CHQ is fully shared in these groups, meetings are held periodically, grievances of members are reported to the State/CHQ for further action and thus will remain an active link between the branches and the CHQ. Issues related to non-payment of medical claims, excess claim on rent free telephones, common order on notional increment and court case on 78.2% fitment were also discussed. GS listed various activities of CHQ and the response from different authorities, highlighting the fact that

AIBSNLREA was concentrating on real issues. The meeting ended with the participants thanking the President for excellent conduct of the meeting.



Issues taken up

22.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) BSNL AGAIN REGARDING NON-AVAILABILITY OF FACILITY TO LODGE GRIEVANCES BY BSNL PENSIONERS UNDER BSNL PENSIONERS' PORTAL:

AIBSNLREA has again taken up with the Director (HR) BSNL, requesting him to get the issue examined and resolved so that BSNL pensioners can lodge their grievances directly with BSNL instead of seeking the help of CPENGRAMS. [View the letter](#)

20.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE SECRETARY (PENSION) DOP&PW REGARDING SCANT REGARD TO THE SYSTEM OF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL BY THOSE HANDLING GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL SYSTEMS - DEFEATING THE SPIRIT OF THE GOVERNMENT LAUNCHING CPENGRAMS:

AIBSNLREA has again written to the Secretary (Pension), DoP&PW on the issue, this time pointing out that "While our experience during the past two years after the said observations has been no different and while we continue to struggle to get the grievances of our pensioner members settled, we have been greatly shocked, pained and dismayed by the manner in which a recent grievance has been closed and the appeal disposed of, repeating the earlier remarks during closure of the docket." AIBSNLREA has sought his personal attention to the matter and has requested him to ensure that i) suitable instructions are issued to all concerned to treat the grievances and appeals with empathy, not to close the docket without resolving the grievance and ii) to advise BSNL authorities to consider the contents of our letter dated 21.11.2023 with due importance and resolve the grievance. [View the letter](#)

18.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE CGCA DOT REGARDING ISSUE OF PENSIONER ID CARD TO BSNL PENSIONERS IN REVISED FORMAT, SUGGESTING TO SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS:

AIBSNLREA has again taken up with the CGCA DOT, reiterating our suggestion regarding issue of Pensioner ID card to BSNL absorbed pensioners as per DoP&PW approved format. AIBSNLREA has suggested following the mechanism successfully implemented by CGHS wherein beneficiaries are able to download the CGHS card, get it printed and laminated on their own, which will save cost, labour and delay in issue of Pensioner ID card. [View the letter](#)

13.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) BSNL REGARDING DISCONTINUATION OF RENT-FREE RESIDENTIAL TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS PROVIDED TO BSNL RETIRED EMPLOYEES CONSEQUENT TO CLOSURE OF TELEPHONE EXCHANGES/DISCARDING COPPER WIRE – REQUEST TO PROVIDE OPTIONS TO THE BSNL PENSIONERS:

AIBSNLREA has taken up with Director (HR) BSNL the matter of Discontinuation of rent-free residential telephone connections provided to BSNL retired employees

consequent to closure of telephone exchanges/discarding copper wire – Request to provide options to the BSNL pensioners and has suggested that "those who are willing to take up FTTH connection now on closure of their rent free connection be offered a minimal Plan (similar to Plan-99 being allowed for GSM connection) with the already available 40% discount, instead of forcing them to take Plan 599, and extending the facility to have their old phone number for the voice portion. Those who are unable to make a decision now, may be given a Closure Certificate specifically stating the status as Concessional Rent free landline connection, which can be used later when they decide to take FTTH connection with the available discount, taking into account the fact that the 40% discount in FTTH connection is given in lieu of the rent free landline connection." [View the letter](#)

12.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE SECRETARY (PERSONNEL) DOP&T REQUESTING ISSUE OF A COMMON ORDER TO BENEFIT ALL SIMILARLY PLACED PENSIONERS IN RESPECT OF GRANT OF ONE NOTIONAL INCREMENT FOR PENSIONARY BENEFITS TO THOSE EMPLOYEES WHOSE INCREMENT FALLS DUE ON THE DAY FOLLOWING SUPERANNUATION:

AIBSNLREA has again taken up the issue with Secretary (P), DoP&T with reference to DoP&T reply dated 15.11.2023 in response to our letter dated 9th August 2023, pointing out that "the reply falls short of our expectations and request" and reiterating that "unless a common order is issued, the affected pensioners will go on filing cases for similar relief, which is an unnecessary burden both on the pensioners concerned as well as the Ministry/Department/Organisation concerned. We believe that it is not the intention of the Government to force the poor pensioners to the courts at this old age. Also, the financial implication will be meagre considering the negligible number of beneficiaries." AIBSNLREA has requested him to consider the issue with compassion and cause issue of a common order extending the benefit allowed by the Supreme Court in several cases, to all the similarly placed pensioners and thus put an end to the anxiety and agony of the affected pensioners. [View the letter](#)

11.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) BSNL REGARDING NON-PAYMENT OF MEDICAL CLAIMS SINCE THE YEAR 2019-20 IN RESPECT OF SHRI GAFFAR MOHAMMED, RETD DE, UDAIPUR, RAJASTHAN:

AIBSNLREA has taken up with Director (HR) BSNL the matter of non-payment of medical claims since the year 2019-20 in respect of Shri Gaffar Mohammed, Retd DE, Udaipur, Rajasthan and has requested his intervention for early payment of all pending medical claims. [View the letter](#)

08.12.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO SECRETARY (PENSION) DOP&PW ON WEAKENING OF TRUST PLACED ON CPENGRAMS – CASE OF DENIAL OF INTEREST ON LATE PAYMENT OF GRATUITY IN RESPECT OF SHRI S B MOHARE, RETD ACCOUNTS OFFICER, KARNATAKA CIRCLE, BSNL:

Dismayed over the same incorrect response by DoT to our letter addressed to the Secretary (Pension) DOP&PW requesting his intervention in the matter, AIBSNLREA has again written to him, pointing out that there has been no effort from DoP&PW to intervene in the matter of gross violation of rules on the subject by CCA Karnataka. He

has been again requested to advise DoT for immediate payment of interest on late payment of gratuity to Shri S B Mohare, Retd AO, Karnataka Circle of BSNL. [View the letter](#)



GOVERNMENT/BSNL ORDERS & LETTERS

28.12.2023: BSNL ISSUES CLARIFICATION ON VISIT REPORT FOR HOSPITALISATION IN EMERGENCY CONDITION:

BSNL vide its letter No.BSNLCO-ADMN/12(11)/1/2021-ADMN dated 27.12.2023 has clarified that in case of indoor treatment undertaken by serving and retired employees and their dependents in emergency condition and/or verification of hospitalisation was not carried out for any reason, CGMs are authorised to exempt the visit report condition based on justification/merit. [View the BSNL letter](#)

06.12.2023: CGCA REITERATES DOP&PW OM DATED 04.08.2016 ON PAYMENT OF DEARNESS RELIEF ARREAR ON BASIC AND ADDITIONAL PENSION FOR PENSIONERS 80 YEARS AND ABOVE:

CGCA has issued a letter vide No.13-81/2020-21/BA&IT/10209-10238 dated 06.12.2023 reiterating DoP&PW OM dated 04.08.2016, specifying that Dearness Relief will also be admissible on the additional basic pension/additional family pension available to older pensioners/family pensioners based on their age. [View the CGCA letter](#)

06.12.2023: MOH&FW ISSUES O.M. ON GUIDELINES & CEILING RATES FOR LUNG TRANSPLANT, HEART TRANSPLANT SURGERY IN RESPECT OF CGHS/CS(MA) BENEFICIARIES:

MoH&FW has issued a O.M. vide File No.Z-42011/11/2021-MG/EHS dated 1st December 2023, specifying ceiling rates for Lungs Transplant, Heart Transplant and Heart&Lungs combined transplant and has constituted Standing Committees for consideration of requests for Lung/Heart transplants. [View the MoH&FW OM](#)

RESPONSE/ACTION TAKEN ON AIBSNLREA'S REPRESENTATIONS



27.12.2023: BSNL RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 11.12.2023 ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) BSNL REGARDING NON-PAYMENT OF MEDICAL CLAIMS SINCE THE YEAR 2019-20 IN RESPECT OF SHRI GAFFAR MOHAMMED, RETD DE, UDAIPUR, RAJASTHAN:

In response to AIBSNLREA letter dated 11.12.2023 addressed to the Director (HR) BSNL regarding Non-payment of medical claims since the year 2019-20 in respect of Shri Gaffar Mohammed, Retd DE, Udaipur, Rajasthan, GM TD, Udaipur has replied that all the medical bills of Shri Gaffar Mohammed, as received, were entered in SAP and payment was made upto SI.No.8; Fund has been requested for claims under SI.No.9 to 15 and will be paid by Corporate Office as per availability of fund. A list as per entry in SAP has also been attached. [View the letter](#)

26.12.2023: BSNL RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 12.10.2023 ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) BSNL REGARDING PENALISATION OF A PENSIONER DUE TO BSNL FAILING TO DEPOSIT THE TDS RECOVERED – CASE OF SHRI MADHUSUDHAN MUKHERJEE, RETD JTO, NSBTTC, KALYANI, KOLKATA:

In response to AIBSNLREA letter dated 12.10.2023 addressed to the Director (HR) BSNL regarding Penalisation of a pensioner due to BSNL failing to deposit the TDS recovered – case of Shri Madhusudhan Mukherjee, Retd JTO, NSBTTC, Kalyani, Kolkata, ALTTC Ghaziabad has furnished a letter from Principal, ZTTC, Kalyani addressed to the AGM (HR) ALTTC, Ghaziabad, conveying that "the case of Shri Madhusudhan Mukherjee relates to the period of FY 2008-09 (AY 2009-10) when NSCBTTC Kalyani was under the administrative control of Calcutta Telephones" and that "hence the case may be transferred to the present dealing officer for retired employee of CTD", along with a set of enclosures. [View the letter](#)

15.12.2023: BSNL RESPONSE TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 21.11.2023 REGARDING PORTAL FOR BSNL RETIRED EMPLOYEES, WHICH WAS LAUNCHED IN MARCH 2023 AS A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS FACED BY THE RETIREES BUT REMAINS DYSFUNCTIONAL:

In our recent Editorial of December 2023 E-Journal we had mentioned that our representations are closed with the remark 'this is a suggestion', although the drop down menu itself shows the option – suggestion. AIBSNLREA vide its letter dated 21.11.2023 had submitted the grievance that the PORTAL FOR BSNL RETIRED EMPLOYEES is lying dysfunctional, defeating the important purpose of ease of life of the BSNL retirees, for reasons not known. Our grievance has been closed by BSNL with the reply "Suggestions are not taken up in the portal." We have registered an appeal. [View the BSNL response](#)

14.12.2023: BSNL RESPONSE TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 18.10.2023 REGARDING NON-RECEIPT OF PAYMENT TOWARDS MEDICAL CLAIM WITHOUT VOUCHER DUE TO INCORRECT ENTRY OF BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER – CASE OF SHRI K. THANGAVELU, RETD SDE, COIMBATORE:

Responding to AIBSNLREA letter dated 18.10.2023 regarding non-receipt of payment towards medical claim without voucher due to incorrect entry of Bank Account Number in respect of of Shri K. Thangavelu, Retd SDE, Coimbatore, BSNL has replied that "Customer Bank Account number has been changed as per the Mantis raised by Coimbatore BA on 28.2.2023. The payment issue is still pending under process." [View the BSNL response](#)

07.12.2023: BSNL RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 01.11.2023 ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) REGARDING NON-PAYMENT OF MEDICAL CLAIMS WITH VOUCHER SINCE THE YEAR 2020-21 IN RESPECT OF SHRI A K GOYAL, RETD DGM, BSNL CO, NEW DELHI:

In response to AIBSNLREA letter dated 01.11.2023 regarding non-payment of medical claims with voucher since the year 2020-21 in respect of Shri A K Goyal, Retd DGM, BSNL CO, New Delhi, BSNL has replied that "As per SAP record an amount of Rs.68158/- has been cleared/paid to the applicant. In this regard SAP attachment is enclosed for your

ready reference. However, in case payment is not made to the applicant, then the applicant is requested to take up the case with r&P Cell of BSNL CO New Delhi." But there is no attachment as stated. We have requested furnishing of the attachment. [View the BSNL response](#)



BRANCHES IN ACTION

04.12.2023: GENERAL BODY MEETING OF AIBSNLREA THANJAVUR BA BRANCH (TAMILNADU STATE) HELD:

The General Body Meeting of our AIBSNLREA (Thanjavur BA _ Kumbakonam) Branch was conducted in a grand mannar at Mayiladuthurai on 02.12.2023. Despite rough weather 26 members enthusiastically attended the meeting. Shri E.Rajasekaran, President, presided over the meeting. Shri S.Vivekanandan welcomed all. The services of our member (Late) M.Kuppuswamy were recalled by Shri K.Thangapazham and tributes were paid by observing two minutes silence. Shri R.Srinivasan, Secretary in his opening remarks asserted that our meetings inspire and relax all the pensioners. He narrated the activities of our Association. [View Tamilnadu page of State News section for full report]



STATEMENT OF AMOUNT RECEIVED DURING DECEMBER 2023

- 01. Kolhapur Branch (Maharashtra State)** deposited Rupees Two Thousand (Rs. 2000/-) only on 01.12.2023 towards CHQ Quota for 5 new Life Members.
- 02. Madurai Branch (Tamilnadu State)** deposited Rupees Three hundred (Rs. 1050/-) only on 05.12.2023 towards CHQ & State Quota for 1 new Life Member enrolled before 1.4.2023 and 1 new life member enrolled after 1.4.2023
- 03. Muzaffarpur Branch (Bihar State)** deposited Rupees Four hundred (Rs. 400/-) only on 11.12.2023 towards CHQ Quota for 2 new Life Members
- 04. Pune Branch (Maharashtra State)** deposited Rupees Five Thousand (Rs. 5000/-) only on 14.12.2023 towards CHQ Quota for 4 new Life Members enrolled before 1.4.2023 and 14 new life members enrolled after 1.4.2023
- 05. Ambala Branch (Haryana State)** deposited Rupees Six hundred (Rs. 600/-) only on 26.12.2023 towards CHQ Quota for 2 new Life Members

Website: <https://www.aibsnlrea.org>

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