



Editorial

BSNL 4G CONTINUES TO BE ELUSIVE

In its Note submitted for approval to the Union Cabinet on Revival of BSNL and MTNL, the DoT rightly observed that "The absence of 4G services by BSNL/MTNL has eroded their competitive strength in the currently evolving data centric telecom market. BSNL is providing limited 4G services in a few areas. Therefore, for MTNL/BSNL to retain and expand mobile subscriber base, and to remain competitive in the telecom market, it is imperative to provide 4G service at the earliest." This was in 2019, four years after Bharti Airtel rolled out its 4G LTE services in India followed by Vodafone the same year and Reliance Jio joining them in 2016 in a massive way. The Revival Plan for BSNL and MTNL envisaged IMMEDIATE implementation of the decision on 4G services by BSNL and MTNL, with "Administrative allotment of spectrum to BSNL/MTNL for providing 4G services and funding the spectrum cost through capital infusion by the Government. The GST component on the spectrum cost was also to be paid through budgetary allocation of Government of India."

Because of this decision of administrative allotment of spectrum to BSNL and MTNL for providing 4G services, BSNL and MTNL were not

allowed to participate in the 4G spectrum auction held in March 2021, with Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea winning the auction. Reliance Jio acquired the right to use the spectrum in all 22 circles across India. The reason attributed for not allowing BSNL and MTNL to participate in the auction was that "The Government itself is the auctioneer and it is the Government which is ultimately paying the amount to BSNL/MTNL for purchase of spectrum by ways of purchasing its equity, the Government will not participate in the auction through its instrumentalities and will get allotment administratively to avoid any allegation that the Government has directly or indirectly influenced the auction process in general and auction price in particular. However, with a view to ensure transparency, non-arbitrariness and non-discrimination, the BSNL/MTNL will also pay the same amount which is received as the highest auction price in the auction." A REAL DISPLAY OF NEUTRALITY BY THE GOVERNMENT INDEED.

Rs.14115 was allotted in Budget 2021-22 for capital infusion in BSNL for 4G spectrum, which was dropped in the Revised Budget on the plea that BSNL had not developed and deployed technologies

to set up the 4G network. In fact, BSNL had to scrap the notice for tender originally rolled out on March 23, 2020, following allegations of restrictive conditions by homegrown companies. BSNL, however, had raised concerns over the DoT's recommendation to use only local equipment for the 4G core network on the ground that the indigenous core technology and equipment are unproven and will increase the overall deployment cost. Unlike private operators using foreign network vendors such as Ericsson, Huawei to set up their networks, BSNL was forced to go for indigenous players as a part of the Make in India initiative. **THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT THINK OF NON-DISCRIMINATION IN THIS ASPECT.**

Tata Consultancy Services and Tejas Network combined have finally bagged the contract to set up the 4G network for BSNL. Questions were raised about their competency, since Tatas have never set up a network. It is only the likes of Ericsson, Huawei who have done so far. According to recent reports, "BSNL is working with the Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT) to generate proof of concept (PoC) for homegrown 4G." After multiple delays, the trials were expected to finish by January 31, 2022. Minister of State for Communications, had stated in the Parliament that "the PoC should be

completed within January 31, 2022, and the 4G rollout should happen by September 2022. The state-run telco is expected to place an order for the 4G equipment by April 2022." But it looks like there will be more delays in the completion of the 4G trials as, until January 31, the companies involved haven't been able to achieve success.

Meanwhile the Government has announced auction for 5G spectrum this year, with launching of services in 2023. Rs.44720 has also been allocated for BSNL in the Budget 2022-23, as capital infusion for spectrum. The 4G spectrum cost of Rs.14115 for BSNL had been calculated based on the prices discovered through auction in respective LSAs during 2016 auction and therefore the cost could have gone up based on 2021 auction, resulting in higher allocation. It is also possible that this allocation includes cost of 5G spectrum, which had also been proposed to be allotted administratively without participating in the auction, but by matching the highest prices in the upcoming auction.

With 4G still remaining elusive to BSNL, let us hope that BSNL will not be required to lag behind the private operators as and when 5G services are rolled out in India. After all, 'HOPE IS EVERYTHING'.

IDA RATES DUE FROM 01.01.2022

DPE has issued orders revising IDA rate w.e.f. 01.01.2022 to 184.1% [increase by 4.8%] for CPSEs where the last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.2007 and to 379.6% [increase by 8.1%] for CPSEs where the last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.1997.



Important Developments of the Month

- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued an order clarifying that CGHS card is valid at any Wellness Centers in India for availing CGHS facilities, irrespective of the WC/ City, where it is registered. It has been further clarified that Empanelled HCOs shall provide treatment on credit basis to CGHS pensioner beneficiaries on referral or in medical emergency, irrespective of the City / Wellness Centre where the CGHS Card is registered and the credit bill shall be sent to the CGHS of the City where the treatment is taken.
- DoP&PW has issued an O.M. extending the existing timeline of 31.12.2021 for submission of Life Certificate for all age group of pensioners till 28.02.2022. During the extended period the pension will continue to be paid by the Pension Disbursing Authorities uninterrupted.
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued an O.M conveying its decision to provide an option to store CGHS card in DigiLocker, which is available as a mobile application. Through DigiLocket Platform, a CGHS beneficiary would be able to download his/her CGHS card on the mobile device.
- CGHS has issued a O.M.extending the timings of eSanjeevani Teleconsultation from the existing 9.00 AM - 12 Noon, to 9.30 AM - 6.00 PM (with 1.30 PM to 2.00 PM break) on Monday to Friday and 7.30 AM to 2.00 PM on Saturday, w.e.f 17th January 2022. While Consultations on Internal Medicine will be available on all days, ENT will be available on Tuesday & Friday, Ophthalmology on Monday, Wednesday & Friday, Orthopedics on Monday & Thursday and Psychiatry on Wednesday



Issues taken up

17.01.2022: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE MINISTER OF FINANCE SUGGESTING RELIEF TO SENIOR CITIZENS/PENSIONERS IN THE UPCOMING UNION BUDGET:

AIBSNLREA has drawn attention of the Minister of Finance to the fact that in the recent years, Pensioners' income from interest on deposits has steeply eroded, while the cost of living has been peaking, leaving them most vulnerable to financial crisis. The reliefs being offered in Income Tax is a paltry compensation compared to their financial woes. AIBSNLREA therefore suggested some measures to be incorporated in the upcoming Union Budget, so that the Senior Citizens/Pensioners get some relief to cheer about. [View the letter](#)

15.01.2022: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE DIRECTOR (HR) REQUESTING TO ALLOW REIMBURSEMENT OF CLAIMS OF OUTDOOR MEDICAL TREATMENT WITH VOUCHER,

WITH THE LATEST AVAILABLE PRESCRIPTION, IN VIEW OF THE RESURGENCE OF ACTIVE CASES OF COVID-19:

In the background of more and more restrictions being placed by the State governments to control spread of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 and the risks involved in visiting the Doctors/Clinics considering the fact that Omicron variant is stated to be the fastest spreading virus known to humankind, AIBSNLREA has addressed Director (HR) requesting issue of similar orders as has been issued by Director General CGHS, permitting submission of claims with the latest available prescription, till the present wave of Covid-19 subsides. [View the letter](#)

14.01.2022: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE SECRETARY DPE FOR EARLY RELEASE OF ORDERS FOR REVISION OF IDA DUE FROM 01.01.2022:

AIBSNLREA has written to the Secretary, DPE, conveying its concern over delay in issue of orders for Revision of IDA w.e.f. 01.01.2022 and requesting early issue of orders. [View the letter](#)

13.01.2022: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO THE SECRETARY (PENSION), DoP&PW SUGGESTING IMPROVEMENTS IN CPENGRAMS BASED ON EXPERIENCES OF SHORTCOMINGS IN THE SYSTEM AND LACK OF REAL MONITORING OF RESOLUTION OF GRIEVANCES:

AIBSNLREA has written to the Secretary (Pension), DoP&PW explaining in detail its observations as an association of BSNL retired Executives on the shortcomings in CPENGRAMS and suggesting improvements in the system in order to obviate the pain and agony of the pensioners and to ensure that the real purpose of formulating the system is achieved. [View the letter](#)



G O V E R N M E N T / B S N L O R D E R S & L E T T E R S

28.01.2022: STORAGE OF CGHS CARD ON DIGILOCKER PLATFORM FOR ITS ACCESS AND USE FOR CGHS SERVICES:

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued an O.M conveying its decision to provide an option to store CGHS card in DigiLocker, which is available as a mobile application. Through DigiLocker Platform, a CGHS beneficiary would be able to download his/her CGHS card on the mobile device. [View the DoH&FW O.M](#)

27.01.2022: DPE ISSUES ORDERS ON REVISED IDA RATES DUE FROM 01.01.2022:

DPE has issued orders revising IDA rate to 184.1% w.e.f 01.01.2022 in respect of CPSEs where last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 01.01.2007. [View the DPE OM](#)

27.01.2022: DPE ISSUES ORDERS ON REVISED IDA RATES DUE FROM 01.01.2022:

DPE has issued orders revising IDA rate to 379.6% w.e.f 01.01.2022, in respect of CPSEs where last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 01.01.1997. [View the DPE OM](#)

24.01.2022: CGHS EXTENDS TIMINGS OF E-SANJEEVANI TELECONSULTATION:

CGHS has issued a O.M. extending the timings of eSanjeevani Teleconsultation from the existing 9.00 AM - 12 Noon, to 9.30 AM - 6.00 PM (with 1.30 PM to 2.00 PM break) on

Monday to Friday and 7.30 AM to 2.00 PM on Saturday, w.e.f 17th January 2022. While Consultations on Internal Medicine will be available on all days, ENT will be available on Tuesday & Friday, Ophthalmology on Monday, Wednesday & Friday, Orthopedics on Monday & Thursday and Psychiatry on Wednesday. [View the CGHS O.M](#)

24.01.2022: REVAMPED CGHS WEBSITE AND MOBILE APP LAUNCHED:

Aimed at benefiting more than 40 lakh beneficiaries (both in-service and retired personnel) with real-time information from the convenience of their homes, the Health Ministry has revamped the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) website (www.cghs.gov.in) and mobile app, "MyCGHS". The basket of services is enlarged with the revamped website. With the newly provided feature of tele-consultation, the CGHS beneficiaries can seek expert advice directly through teleconsultation. The website also has a link to beneficiary login for accessing online facilities such as tracking of medical claims, grievances, status and downloading of CGHS card, accessing history of medicines, online appointment system and various other facilities.

20.01.2022: CGHS CARD IS VALID FOR REFERRAL TO EMPANELLED HCOs OF PENSIONER BENEFICIARIES THROUGH REFERRAL MODULE, IRRESPECTIVE OF CITY/WC WHERE THE CARD IS REGISTERED:

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued an order clarifying that CGHS card is valid at any Wellness Centers in India for availing CGHS facilities, irrespective of the WC/ City, where it is registered. It has been further clarified that Empanelled HCOs shall provide treatment on credit basis to CGHS pensioner beneficiaries on referral or in medical emergency, irrespective of the City / Wellness Centre where the CGHS Card is registered and the credit bill shall be sent to the CGHS of the City where the treatment is taken. [View the DoH&FW order](#)

13.01.2022: CGHS FURTHER EXTENDS PERIOD TILL WHEN CGHS BENEFICIARIES CAN PURCHASE MEDICINES WITH THE EXISTING PRESCRIPTION, UP TO 30TH APRIL 2022:

In view of the COVID-19 pandemic and resurgence of active cases, CGHS has permitted purchase of medicines based on the prescription held (prescribed by CGHS Medical Officers/CGHS Specialists/other Govt Specialists/Specialists of empanelled hospital) till 30th April 2022. The order is valid from the date of issue. [View the CGHS OM](#)

11.01.2022: BSNL ISSUES GUIDELINES UNDER BSNLMRS IN VIEW OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

In order to facilitate quick and smooth treatment during Covid-19 pandemic, BSNL has issued guidelines under BSNLMRS, relaxing certain provisions regarding visit of designated officer, treatment in non-empanelled hospitals, reimbursement of Tele-consultation and reimbursement of charges of RTPCR/Rapid antigen test applicable w.e.f. 1.1.2022 and up to 31.3.2022. [View the BSNL letter](#)

10.01.2022: CPAO WRITES TO ALL CPPCs OF BANKS REITERATING INSTRUCTIONS ON PAYMENT OF DEARNESS RELIEF TO PENSIONERS:

Central Pension Accounting Office, Department of Expenditure has written to Heads of CPPCs of Banks again, bringing to their notice that revised Dearness Relief should be paid immediately to pensioners after orders to this effect have been issued by the

competent authority, without waiting for CPAO to reiterate the orders issued by the concerned Ministries/Departments. [View the CPAO OM](#)

04.01.2022: DEARNESS RELIEF PAYABLE TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND PENSIONERS WILL BE KEPT IN ABEYANCE - PIB SAYS THE ORDER IN CIRCULATION IS FAKE AND STATES THAT NO SUCH ORDER HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE FINANCE MINISTRY:

Quoting an order purportedly issued by the Department of Expenditure about keeping in abeyance of Dearness Relief payable to Central Government employees and pensioners effective from 1.1.2022, Press Information Bureau has done a fact check and has declared the letter in circulation as fake. PIB has made it clear that no such order has been issued by the Finance Ministry. [View the PIB Factcheck tweet](#)

01.01.2022: EXTENSION OF THE TIME PERIOD OF SUBMISSION OF LIFE CERTIFICATE FOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PENSIONERS TILL 28TH FEBRUARY 2022 IN WAKE OF CURRENT COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

DoP&PW has issued an O.M. extending the existing timeline of 31.12.2021 for submission of Life Certificate for all age group of pensioners till 28.02.2022. During the extended period the pension will continue to be paid by the Pension Disbursing Authorities uninterrupted. [View the DoP&PW O.M](#)



RESPONSE/ACTION TAKEN ON AIBSNLREA'S REPRESENTATIONS

25.01.2022: RBI RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA LETTER TO DoP&PW REQUESTING TO IMPRESS UPON THE BANKS TO IMPLEMENT THE LONG EXISTING INSTRUCTION ON DOORSTEP COLLECTION OF LIFE CERTIFICATES FROM PENSIONERS:

AIBSNLREA had addressed the Secretary (Pension) DoP&PW on 07.09.2021, with a copy marked to the Governor, RBI [\[View AIBSNLREA letter\]](#) requesting him to impress upon the CPPCs of all banks to ensure implementation of the long existing instructions to collect the Life Certificate from the doorsteps of the pensioners. In its response, RBI has informed us that banks have been advised to incorporate certain aspects in their Board approved policy for such services, with clear instructions to address the issue of collection of Life Certificate from Senior Citizens. It has further stated that, if there is any grievance against a particular bank, complaint be first lodged with the Regulated Entity (the bank) for deficiency of service and if grievance is not redressed within 30 days, the applicant can file a complaint on <https://cms.rbi.org.in>. Complaint can also be sent to the dedicated email crpc@rbi.org.in. [View the response from RBI](#)

06.01.2022: CGMT KARNATAKA FURNISHES THE SAME REPLY FOR THE THIRD TIME WHILE DISPOSING OF GRIEVANCE RELATED TO SHRI B M NYAMATI:

We had requested intervention of DoP&PW, clearly mentioning that this grievance may be forwarded to BSNL Corporate Office with an advice not to forward it as a matter of

routine to BSNL Karnataka Telecom Circle but to follow up the case with specific directions to BSNL Karnataka Circle to implement the BSNL Headquarters orders cited under Annexure-A for early resolution of the issue and rendering of justice to the aggrieved pensioner. But the matter has been again forwarded to BSNL Karnataka Circle which has no hesitation in repeating for the third time that appeal has been filed in High Court of Karnataka and therefore matter is sub judice. There is no effort to even read BSNL instructions vide No.48-7/2018-Pen (B) dated 20.12.2019, annexed with our representation, which explains the action to be taken when an appeal is pending without any stay on the lower court order. In the instant case CAT Bangalore had quashed the chargesheet filed against Shri B M Nyamati which was issued one day before the date of his retirement and BSNL Karnataka has just filed an appeal in High Court of Karnataka but there is no stay on the orders of CAT Bangalore. [View the response from BSNL Karnataka Circle](#)



BRANCHES IN ACTION

08.01.2022: ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING OF AIBSNLREA KURUKSHETRA BRANCH HELD:

The Annual General Body Meeting of AIBSNLREA Kurukshetra branch was held at Haryana Tourism Yatri Niwas on 07.01.2022 at 11.30 am under strict Covid protocol. Two minutes silence was observed and tributes were paid to condole the untimely death of late Shri Sushil Kumar Aggarwal an active life member of the branch. Shri D S Sandhu Org.Secy North CHQ briefed the members about the status of various cases pursued by the general secretary viz pension revision, anomaly case, non payment medical claims, New Pension Rules 2021, latest IDA rates and appeal in Dehli High Court regarding 78.2% arrears etc. Two new life members also joined the Association in the meeting. The Financial Secretary presented summary of accounts which was adopted unanimously.

Following office bearers were unanimously elected for the next term. President - Shri S K Verma (skverma.cao@gmail.com), vice presidents - s/Shri M L Arya and Roshan Lal, Secretary Shri Rajvir Singh Chaudhary (sde.chaudhry@gmail.com), Astt secretaries - s/Shri S.K Kakkar and Virender Kumar Harjai, Financial Secretary- Shri Ashok Kumar Sharma (ashok_gaichand@yahoo.com), Astt.Finance secretary - Sh.M L Munjal. Executive Members - s/Shri Jasbir Singh, S L Saini, Likhni Chand, Balbir Ranga, Zile Ram and Nand Kishore. The meeting concluded with vote of thanks followed by a sumptuous Lunch.



STATEMENT OF AMOUNT RECEIVED DURING JANUARY 2022

Indore Branch (Madhya Pradesh State) has deposited Rupees one thousand two hundred (Rs.1200/-) only in S/B Account of CHQ with Canara Bank on 01.01.2022 as CHQ Quota for 6 new Life Members.

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