



## Editorial

### MIGRATION HEADACHES

**W**hen the Government proposed a Comprehensive Pension Management System for DoT/BSNL absorbed Pensioners in the year 2017, intending to take over the pension disbursement function from the banks/post offices, AIBSNLREA immediately reacted by expressing our apprehension that the proposal may invite more troubles than resolving the existing problems. Our concerns were that the staff deployed in the CCA offices are mostly on deputation having no accountability and also are not professionally so equipped to work with computers etc., and would hardly be able to handle the work; non-existence of any Grievance redressal mechanism in CCA Offices; pensioners/family pensioners at their old age cannot travel long distances to visit CCA Offices to get their grievances resolved to get Form 16 and submit Life Certificates; lack of proper office accommodation for CCAs and absence of required infrastructure; efficiency of CCA Offices already being under question because of their inability even to issue revised PPOs with 78.2% fitment; absence of any evolved mechanism to issue monthly Pension Slips intimating details of basic pension, dearness allowance, income tax

deducted, arrears etc through SMS/e-mail to the pensioners/family pensioners.

**B**ut DoT insisted that the new system will benefit the pensioners in numerous ways viz. Direct transfer of pension by the CCA to the pensioner's bank account through CPMS will eliminate the delay caused by involvement of the CPPC; It will eliminate the need for transfer of pension cases from one Circle to another. This in turn will ensure that pensioners drawing pension in a bank located in another state (different from where he retired) start getting pension without any time-lag; Any revision in pension will get effected without delay. Calculation and payment of arrear will take place automatically once the pension is revised; The time-lag between change in Dearness Relief (DR) and its payment will be minimized as latest DR rates will be updated centrally.: Age-linked enhancement of pension will take place on attaining the designated age; The pensioner will be able to access and take print-out of details of pension payment by logging into CPMS with the login ID provided to the pensioner and TDS and Form-16 will be provided by the CCA

without any intervention from the pensioner.

**C**PMS was launched in December 2018 and those who retiring in January 2019 and afterwards were initially covered under CPMS and SAMPANN. Since the monthly addition of pensioners in the new Centralised System was very less, there were no major complaints, except for difficulties in obtaining Form 16 and submission of Life Certificate, which were slowly resolved. Even the bulk addition of pensioners due to BSNL VRS 2019, did not see major problems. But ever since migration of pre- January 2019 pensioners to SAMPANN commenced last year, there have been quite a lot of complaints from the pensioners that their personal data entered in SAMPANN are wrong, with incorrect date of birth, mis-spelt names, blanks in spouse's name, mobile number, incorrect bank account number, IFSC and so on. Requests for corrections still remain unattended, except in a few cases. It is said that the corrections are to be done centrally and the CCA offices have no role. This has resulted in delayed payment of pension, non-payment of pension due to wrong bank details, delay in ordering family pension and restoration of commuted value of pension after 15 years. The case of the pensioners whose mobile numbers are left blank, is more pathetic, as they are not even aware that they have been migrated to SAMPANN, as no SMS is received and they cannot log in to check the data and register a complaint. It

takes a lot of time and effort on the part of the pensioners and their associations to pursue each case for getting the mobile numbers added. All these could not be dismissed as teething trouble, as months have passed since migration commenced.

**A**nd there have been quite a number of complaints of unwarranted/excess recovery of TDS, in spite of documents related to deductions eligible under IT Act having been submitted to the banks prior to migration. One CCA even recovered TDS even before its own deadline for submission of documents expired.

**A**fter the launching of CPMS in December 2018, the DOT, in its FAQ, had stated that all grievances can be taken up with CCAs on given phone numbers. But, the experience of the pensioners is that there is no response either over phone or for emails or for the complaints registered online. Given our experience with the functioning and attitude of the officials in CCA Offices, we find that timely resolution of grievances is next to impossible under this arrangement. These officials feel that the pensioners are at their mercy, forgetting that their sole job is servicing the retiral benefits of the pensioners and redressing their grievances regarding pension and related issues. They also look at the pensioners' associations as hindrances, ignoring the fact that the pensioners' associations are only complementing their job. There is a complete lack of empathy towards the senior citizens. It is

true that they are facing a workload they had never seen before and feel overwhelmed. But we had anticipated such a situation and had even warned DoT when it proposed the CPMS.

In view of migration related grievances being reported by some branches across the country, it has been decided to request all Branches to collect details of specific grievances and send to CHQ for

taking up with the concerned authorities requesting to resolve technical as well as CCA staff related issues which are creating persistent headache to many pensioners whose pension has been migrated to SAMPANN. Any digitalization and centralization should ensure ease of living to the targeted group. We cannot allow the pensioners to suffer at this old age without mental peace.



## Important Developments of the Month

- ✚ According to calculations based on All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers for the months March, April and May 2023, the revised IDA rate due w.e.f. 01.07.2023 is 205.6%% [increase by 3.3%] for CPSEs where the last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.2007 and 415.9%% [increase by 5.5%] for CPSEs where the last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.1997.
- ✚ During the last several months, some of the pensioners associations were making a false claim that DoT has delinked pension revision from pay revision. We had clearly explained in the Editorial of May 2023 E-Journal, as to how even in DoT's August 2022 proposal, pension revision was still linked with pay revision. DoT, today has debunked the false claim, in response to a representation from one of those associations, categorically stating that "pension revision is intrinsically linked with pay revision of serving employees to avoid anomaly of pension amount between present and future retirees of the same status & grade and pension revision follows pay revision of serving employees. Earlier also, pension of permanent absorbees in BSNL/MTNL drawing pension in IDA pattern has been revised on implementation of 2nd PRC in 2007 for serving employees." [View the DoT response](#)
- ✚ In a significant move, as part of the revival strategy, the Union Cabinet approved a third revival package for BSNL with the total outlay of Rs.89,047 crore, which includes allotment of 4G/5G spectrum for BSNL through equity infusion. The authorised capital of BSNL will be increased from 1,50,000 crore to Rs.2,10,000 crore. [View the PIB Press Release](#)
- ✚ A virtual meeting of AIBSNLREA CHQ office bearers was held on 02.06.2023 under the Presidentship of Shri V.Chinnappiah, CHQ President. After President welcomed the participants, GS briefly explained the CHQ activities during the

last month, the issues taken up by CHQ, the responses received from concerned authorities and how BSNL pensioners are inclined to agree with our correct understanding that pension revision is inseparable from pay revision. Organising Secretaries provided details of their efforts taken on holding of Branch meetings in their area, increase in membership and other organisational measures. All the office bearers expressed happiness over the CHQ activities during the last month and gave inputs regarding their own efforts made on the organisational front. It was decided to get the Editorial in AIBSNLREA Ejournal of May 2023 circulated by all CHQ office bearers to their contacts/groups and subsequently by the Branch Secretaries to reach maximum number of BSNL Pensioners. All CHQ office bearers except one AGS who was pre-occupied in some social scheme in his village participated in the virtual meeting and shared their views. With happy faces and purposeful discussions, the meeting went on for more than 105 minutes, providing more impetus to the functioning of the CHQ.

✚ **AIBSNLREA PALAKKAD BRANCH (KERALA STATE) EXTENDS HELPING HAND TO THE FAMILY OF DECEASED CASUAL WORKER:**



The general body meeting of Palakkad branch held on 6.6.2023 had decided to raise a fund towards the family relief of Shri Subash, BSNL casual driver of Palakkad, who had died at younger age, with out other source of regular income to support his family. It was proposed to give Rs one lakh in this regard to the bereaved family. As per the decision taken in the GB meeting, the Relief fund of Rs. 1.31 Lakhs was handed over to Smt. Siji Subhash on 12th June 2023 at Top In Town, Palakkad by Shri N. Bhaskaran, DGM (Retd), Former President of Palakkad Branch.



## Issues taken up

### **22.06.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO DG CGHS SUBMITTING SUGGESTIONS TO ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERINGS OF CGHS BENEFICIARIES OF AGRA:**

AIBSNLREA has taken up with DG CGHS the difficulties faced by CGHS beneficiaries of Agra in availing quality health services through CGHS, causing avoidable sufferings to the pensioner beneficiaries and suggesting opening of more wellness centres and empanelling of more private hospitals in Agra. [View the letter](#)

### **09.06.2023: AIBSNLREA AGAIN WRITES TO PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA ON UNJUSTIFIABLY FORCING BSNL TO PAY PENSION CONTRIBUTION ON MAXIMUM OF PAY SCALE INSTEAD OF EXISTING PAY IN RESPECT OF THE BSNL ABSORBED EMPLOYEES AND REQUESTING HIS INTERVENTION:**

AIBSNLREA has again taken up with the Prime Minister of India, while expressing gratefulness for the Revival Package for BSNL, the third one in the last few years, this time amounting to Rs.89047 crore, in view of the strategic importance of BSNL as a 100% Government PSU, discharging the social obligations of the Government of India despite incurring huge losses due to the unviable services provided by it in rural and remote areas and drawing his attention to the fact that Cabinet has not been apprised of another financial distress inflicted on BSNL by unjustly forcing it to pay Pension Contribution in respect of its absorbed employees on the basis of maximum of the pay scales under FR 116, while calculating pension contribution under FR 116 has been modified w.e.f. 1.1.2006 as "on the basis of existing pay of the Government servants on deputation." Pointing out that "Even during the recent tragic train accident in Odisha it was only BSNL which had immediately set up an Emergency mobile tower and had offered free connectivity to the traumatized passengers and their families", AIBSNLREA has sought his personal intervention in this matter for impressing upon the Minister of Finance and the Department of Expenditure, so that BSNL is also allowed to pay pension contribution in respect of its absorbed employees on 'existing pay' w.e.f. 1.1.2006 and the excess amount paid by BSNL all these years is refunded." [View the letter](#)

### **08.06.2023: AIBSNLREA AGAIN WRITES TO CMD BSNL ON PENSION CONTRIBUTION BY BSNL IN RESPECT OF ITS ABSORBED EMPLOYEES – CLARIFICATIONS REQUIRED BY DOE YET TO BE SUPPLIED BY BSNL:**

AIBSNLREA has again taken up with CMD BSNL drawing his attention to our earlier letter on the subject and the response from BSNL that "BEING POLICY MATTER ONCE DECISION TAKEN SAME SHALL BE CONVEYED. THANKS FOR TAKING UP THE ISSUE." Since we are not aware of any decision taken afterwards, AIBSNLREA has requested his personal and urgent attention to the issue, clearing any miscommunication between BSNL and DoT on the issue and immediate submission of the required clarifications, if not already submitted. [View the letter](#)

**01.06.2023: AIBSNLREA WRITES TO CGCA, DOT ON HARASSMENT OF SAMPANN PENSIONERS BY THE OFFICE OF CCA TAMILNADU BY UNWARRANTEDLY RECOVERING TDS EVEN BEFORE EXPIRY OF DEADLINE FOR 'PROPOSED INVESTMENT DECLARATION':**

AIBSNLREA has taken up with Controller General of Communication Accounts, the above issue, pointing out that bulk of BSNL absorbed SAMPANN pensioners under CCA Tamilnadu were in for a rude shock on receiving their pension for the month of May 2023. TDS has been recovered from their pension, although the time-schedule prescribed by the office of CCA Tamilnadu itself for submission of option form for Old Tax regime and for 'Proposed investment Declaration' under Old Tax Regime was 31st May 2023. More seriously TDS has been recovered even in respect of those pensioners who had duly submitted actual investment declaration along with requisite documents. Even those who would have remained in default New Tax regime due to their cumulative pension not exceeding Rs.7 lakhs, have not been spared. AIBSNLREA has requested CGCA, DoT for immediate intervention and instructions to CCA Tamilnadu for corrective measures and for speedy refund of the TDS recovered, without pushing the pensioners to the ordeal of waiting for one more year for getting refund from Income Tax authorities. [View the letter](#)



**GOVERNMENT/BSNL ORDERS & LETTERS**

**30.06.2023: DOT DEBUNKS CLAIMS BY SOME PENSIONERS ASSOCIATIONS THAT PENSION REVISION HAS BEEN DELINKED FROM PAY REVISION:**

During the last several months, some of the pensioners associations were making a false claim that DoT has delinked pension revision from pay revision. We had clearly explained in the Editorial of May 2023 E-Journal, as to how even in DoT's August 2022 proposal, pension revision was still linked with pay revision. DoT, today has debunked the false claim, in response to a representation from one of those associations, categorically stating that "pension revision is intrinsically linked with pay revision of serving employees to avoid anomaly of pension amount between present and future retirees of the same status & grade and pension revision follows pay revision of serving employees. Earlier also, pension of permanent absorbees in BSNL/MTNL drawing pension in IDA pattern has been revised on implementation of 2nd PRC in 2007 for serving employees." [View the DoT response](#)

**28.06.2023: CASHLESS TREATMENT FOR CGHS BENEFICIARIES NOW AVAILABLE AT THREE MORE INSTITUTES OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE:**

In addition to the 6 AIIMS located at Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Jodhpur, Raipur and Rishikesh, which have been already approved for providing cashless treatment to CGHS beneficiaries, MoU will be signed now for cashless treatment at AIIMS New Delhi, PGIMER Chandigarh and JIPMER Puducherry. [View the PIB Press Release](#)

**19.06.2023: REVISION OF CGHS RATES FOR 36 RADIOLOGICAL / IMAGING INVESTIGATIONS:**

Directorate of CGHS in an OM vide F.No.Z15025/8/2023/DIR/CGHS dated 19th June 2023 has revised CGHS rates for 36 Radiological / Imaging investigations w.e.f. 19.06.2023. [View the DG CGHS OM](#)

## RESPONSE/ACTION TAKEN ON AIBSNLREA'S REPRESENTATIONS



### 23.06.2023: CGHS RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 05.05.2023 SUBMITTING SUGGESTIONS FOR PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE MEDICAL CARE FOR CGHS BENEFICIARIES RESIDING IN NON-CGHS AREAS:

AIBSNLREA vide its letter dated 5th May 2023 has submitted suggestions to DG CGHS for providing accessible medical care for CGHS beneficiaries residing in non-CGHS areas, which included opening of CGHS wellness centres at least one in every District Headquarters. CGHS has responded to the letter stating that "This is a suggestion in r/o policy matter pertaining to applicability of CGHS facility and is therefore noted for future reference, whenever the policy is revisited." [View the CGHS Response](#)

### 07.06.2023: BSNL RESPONDS TO AIBSNLREA LETTER DATED 16.03.2023 ADDRESSED TO CMD BSNL REGARDING DISPLAY OF DEFAULT/SEIZURE NOTICE BY GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION IN CHENNAI BSNL EXCHANGES – DAMAGING THE REPUTATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OWNED PSU – REQUEST INTERVENTION TO AVOID SUCH INSTANCES IN THE FUTURE:

In response to AIBSNLREA letter dated 16.03.2023 expressing immense mental pain and humiliation felt by the BSNL pensioners over the disheartening event of display of default/seizure notice by Greater Chennai Corporation on the main gates of three BSNL Telephone Exchanges and requesting to cause some mechanism to be put in place, to avoid such situations in the future, BSNL CO has informed us about the details of efforts taken to avert the situation and also the meeting with Deputy Commissioner of Greater Chennai Corporation on 16.03.2023 after which the Deputy Commissioner agreed to remove the posters and accept the request for reconciliation as per an earlier direction of Madras High Court. [View the BSNL letter](#)



## BRANCHES IN ACTION

### 24.06.2023: AIBSNLREA COIMBATORE BRANCH (TAMILNADU STATE) HOLDS ITS GENERAL BODY MEETING:

General Body meeting of AIBSNLREA, Coimbatore Branch was held on 23-6-2023 at Sri Krishna Vilas Hotel, Coimbatore from 11.00 am to 1.45 pm under the Presidentship of Shri K. Thangavel, Retired SDE & Vice President of the Branch. 32 members participated in the meeting. Shri R. Damodaran, Branch Secretary, welcomed all the members and the guests. In his welcome address itself he listed the issues taken up by the Association viz. Non-payment Medical Reimbursement without voucher due to the failure of

submission option within the stipulated time, payment of medical claim of Shri D. Subramaniam, Retd AGM, Erode. [View Tamilnadu section of State News for full report]

**11.06.2023: QUARTERLY GENERAL BODY MEETING OF AIBSNLREA VADODARA BRANCH (GUJARAT STATE) HELD:**

The Quarterly General Body Meeting of Vadodara Branch (Gujarat State) was held at 18.00 hrs. of 02-05-2023 at Hotel Utsav, Vadodara. 77 members attended the meeting. Six new members joined. Gujarat State Branch representatives, new members & existing members were welcomed by President, Shri Modi K A, in his welcome speech. Shri Bhavsar B M, President & Shri Sharma S L, Secretary Gujarat State Branch have covered mostly all issues in their speech. The meeting is conducted by Shri Shah R T, Branch Secretary. The issues raised by members were replied & noted for further persuasion. The meeting ended after enjoying delicious Dinner.

**10.06.2023: GENERAL BODY MEETING OF AIBSNLREA PALAKKAD BRANCH (KERALA STATE) HELD:**

A general body meeting of Palakkad branch was held on 6.6.2023 at Top In Town Auditorium, Palakkad at 11 AM. After silent prayer, the Branch Secretary Shri Prabhakaran welcomed the gathering. 54 members including the members from far off places of the district attended the meeting. During Presidential address, the President Shri Ramanathan, emphasized the need to add more new members to the association and requested all to work unitedly to achieve the goal. During the discussions on organisational matters, the Secretary and President touched on all matters viz pension revision, BSNL MRS and CGHS and gave latest information on these issues. Shri Gopinathan, Organising Secretary (South) CHQ, briefed the recent activities being carried out by General Secretary including conducting of monthly virtual meetings to apprise latest developments to all the office bearers. The GB decided to raise a fund towards the family relief of Shri Subash, BSNL casual driver of Palakkad, who had died at younger age, without other source of regular income to support his family. It was proposed to give Rs one lakh in this regard to the bereaved family. The meeting was concluded at 1 PM after vote of thanks by Shri P.P.Krishnanunni, Asst Secretary. Lunch was served after the meeting.

**10.06.2023: GENERAL BODY MEETING OF AIBSNLREA KALYAN BRANCH (MAHARASHTRA STATE) HELD :**

A General body meeting of AIBSNLREA Kalyaan branch (Maharashtra State) was held on 3rd June 2023 in Kalabramha Hall, Kalyaan Telephone Exchange KalaTalao, Kalyaan (w). President of the branch Shri Patil presided over the meeting. He welcomed all members. The house observed 2 minutes silence in memory of departed comrades. After his Presidential address, Secretary of Kalyaan Branch Shri B. M. Hatwar thanked the members for attending the meeting in short notice. There was a good gathering & meeting was a quality meeting. [View Maharashtra Page of State News for full report]

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*Edited and published by R.R.Balasubramanian, General Secretary, AIBSNLREA.*