

# ALL INDIA BSNL PENSIONERS' WELFARE ASSOCIATION

[Regd. T 1833/09]

## Central Head Quarters

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### CIRCULAR No. 2/2018 dated 26-11-2018

#### **Congratulations**

3<sup>rd</sup> phase of programme of "Hunger Strike" on 22/11/2018 demanding pension revision from 1/1/2017 on the basis of fitment factor of 32%, recommended by 7<sup>th</sup> CPC, to BSNL/MTNL absorbed retirees was conducted successfully and enthusiastically throughout the country. In this agitation, along with AIBSNLPWA, RTOWA, Delhi & Mumbai, AIRBSNLEWA, MTNL (DoT) Retired Association, MTNL Senior Executive Association also joined. Hundreds of pensioners participated in this programme in many cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkatta, Bengaluru, Hyderabad etc. Almost in all SSAs, whether big or small, this programme was conducted and sent the resolution to the Secretary (T). In Tamilnadu, despite rain in some districts including Chennai, fast was observed. In Delhi programme, our president could not participate since his flight was cancelled but he participated in Ernakulam; Vice-president DG and GS Gangadhara Rao participated and addressed the gathering in Delhi. Many senior leaders of pensioners' organizations like S.C.Maheswari (BPS), M.K.Bagchi, Rajendra Prasad, R.P.Sharma, G.L.Jogi, S.S.Nanda, Prahalad Rai, Kishan Singh, addressed the gathering. Leaders of working employees Unions like Dharan Raj (MTNL BMS), V.K.Tomar (MEA), A.K.Kaushik (TEAM) and Sebastian (SNEA) also spoke and announced their unconditional support to our demand. During his speech Com Maheswari explained that he presented this demand before the 7<sup>th</sup> CPC when there was

a chance for oral evidence and later submitted supplementary memorandum also as requested by 7<sup>th</sup> CPC. During that oral evidence Com VAN Namboodiri opposed this demand before the 7<sup>th</sup> CPC. Our AGS Com Anupam Kaul in tandem with Coms Nanda & Mudgal did wonderful work and he gave vote of thanks to all. There was a good coverage in most of the places by press & electronic/social media. Being national capital, Delhi programme is most important. I could not find any suitable word except sincere thanks to all the organizers and participants.

#### **New organization born**

We invited leaders of pensioners' organizations who agree to the demand of pension revision with 32% fitment factor as recommended by 7<sup>th</sup> CPC from 1/1/2017. Sincere attempts were made to bring AIBDPA & BDPA also for this meeting. But it became futile at present. Let us hope that other organizations also would join in due course. On our invitation, apart from RTOWA, three more organizations viz. AIRBSNLEWA, MTNL S.E. Association & MTNL (DoT) Retired Association positively responded and we had a meeting on 21/11/2018 in Kidwai Bhawan, New Delhi under the presidentship of Com D.Gopalakrishnan. 19 leaders viz. D.Gopalakrishnan, P.Gangadhara Rao, Anupam Kaul, J.S.Dahiya, G.L.Jogi, Munshilal, Shikher Chand Jain, G.L.Umrai, R.L.Dhar, M.S.Arya (AIBSNLPWA), M.K.Bagchi, S.S.Nanda, R.K.Mudgal, S.K.Bhatia (RTOWA Delhi), Prahalad Rai,

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Kishan Singh, A.K.Gupta (AIRBSNLEWA), Rajendra Prasad (MTNL Sr.Exe.Asscn.) and R.P.Sharma (MTNL (DoT) Retd. Asscn. Participated in that meeting which was held for nearly 4 hours. An umbrella organization called "**Committee of BSNL/MTNL Pensioners' Associations**" was formed with Com P.Gangadhara Rao as convenor. The committee consists of Coms. D.Gopalakrishnan, P.Gangadhara Rao, Anupam Kaul (AIBSNLPWA), M.K.Bagchi, S.S.Nanda, R.K.Mudgal (RTOWA, Delhi), Prahalad Rai, Kishan Singh, A.K.Gupta (AIRBSNLEWA), Rajendra Prasad (MTNL Sr.Exe.Asscn.) and R.P.Sharma (MTNL DoT Retd. Asscn.). Later Com Jawahar was contacted and he gave the following six names from MTNL, Mumbai. Coms K.Jawahar, B.R.Pathak, J.S.Yadav (RTOWA, Mumbai), S.G.Pawar, S.M.Sawant, Kishore Haldankar (MTNL PWA, Mumbai). Totally 17 members are there in this committee. This committee is formed mainly for achieving the demand of pension revision with 32% fitment factor recommended by 7<sup>th</sup> CPC. The pensioners' organizations which agree with the demand can be included. This meeting finalized the press brief and letter to Secretary (T). It was also decided to approach all MPS belonging to all parties, present memorandum and seek their effective intervention; seek the support of senior ministers like Hon. Home Minister etc. All leaders contributed in the discussion and portrayed their maturity. Formation of this umbrella organization has created lot of enthusiasm and confidence among the pensioners. It is a perfect move organizationally.

#### **Extend solidarity to AUAB**

Since DoT is adopting a negative attitude with regard to the charter of demands, presented by AUAB, particularly pay revision as recommended by 3<sup>rd</sup> PRC, they have unanimously decided to go on 'Indefinite Strike' from 3/12/2018. This serious action necessitated because the discussion and other form of agitations did not yield desired

result. It is our duty to extend our solidarity support to them. CHQ requests to extend it in whatever manner possible depending upon the local situation.

#### **Meeting with officers**

We three (DG/PGR/AK) met **DDG (Estt.) Shri S.K.Jain and Director (Estt.) Shri Sanjay Agarwal** on **20/11/2018** and discussed for nearly two hours. In the interaction, we were informed:-

- 1) DoT sought the opinion of DoP&PW for de-linking pension revision from pay revision. In turn DoP&PW sought certain details and DoT Establishment section has prepared the reply and sent to DoT finance for vetting which is pending there.
- 2) DoT has not yet taken a final call on pay revision for serving employees.
- 3) There are three types of demands from pensioners' associations for pension revision viz. a) fitment as per 7<sup>th</sup> CPC fitment, b) as per 3<sup>rd</sup> PRC, c) sending cabinet note for pension revision and pay revision simultaneously.
- 4) If delinking is agreed to by DoP&PW, which is unlikely, then only DoT can think of the formula.

We told the officers that the letter dated 6/11/18 sent by DoT to BSNL clearly reveals the mind-set of DoT on pay revision to serving employees. Though Rule 49(2) of CCS (Pension) Rules 1972 was amended from 1/1/2016 after 7<sup>th</sup> CPC, the minimum pension for BSNL IDA pensioners was not increased to Rs.9000/-. DDG asked whether any BSNL IDA pensioners are getting less than Rs.9,000/- (pension + DR) we replied that there are thousands of family pensioners who are getting less than that. We also told them about the history of the RM/Gr.D officials who were in the select panel were placed in LM scale (from 2550 scale to 2750 scale)

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in the absence of posts in PM cadre which was decided by DoT in consultation with Departmental council of JCM and issued orders to that effect before formation of BSNL. When PM posts were available, they were posted and placed in 3050 CDA scale. These officials retired in 2016, 2017. Now at the time of their retirement, CCA, Tamilnadu reduced their LPD saying that the trained RM/Gr.D officials were placed in LM scale temporarily and hence that cannot be taken into account. Pension was fixed for all these people at reduced rate than 50% of their actual LPD. We also told them that we have already written a letter in this regard few months back. But they wanted another letter again. This was discussed with Member (F) also on 22/11/2018. After hearing the case patiently she asked us to send a letter to her. She would call for a report from CCA, TN and inter-act with establishment section of DoT also and then take a decision.

We met **Director (HR) Smt. Sujata Ray** in BSNL Corporate office on **20/11/2018** for about 30 minutes. One GM and another OSD were also with her. We raised the issue of non-payment of MRS to the retirees due to want of funds. She explained the financial position of BSNL and told that all of you are well aware of the situation. She expressed her anguish that no one including DoT is helping BSNL. She suggested that pensioners can opt for CGHS and we told her that it is available only in 26 cities in the country. She told

that atleast the pensioners in these cities get the benefit. Then we told her that the pensioner had to pay a huge amount as contribution and if BSNL makes that one lump-sum payment directly to CGHS instead of asking the pensioner to pay first and get reimbursement from BSNL later, the pensioners may be inclined to move. She asked us to give a letter as a proposal which can be considered by the corporate office. She informed that corporate office is

thinking of some insurance policies for health and some initiative is taken. If any proposal is given by our association then it can also be considered she said. She also informed that they are expecting some funds in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of December 18 and if all is well funds may be allotted to circles by 2<sup>nd</sup> week. But payment priority will be in the order of 1) for hospitals 2) Indoor treatment to retirees 3) Indoor treatment to serving employees 4) Without voucher for retirees. We told her about the case of Shri Sethuraman (AGM, STR, Chennai) case of deduction of incometax for leave encashment. She asked Shri V.K.Sinha, OSD to note down the case and take necessary action. He asked us to send him a mail about the details.

We also told her that in some areas, rent-free residential telephone connections were withdrawn which were working on CDMA technology. As an alternative, the pensioners can be given a BSNL sim card to use them for certain amount. We also told her that we have already given a letter in this regard. She asked the GM to consider it and we gave a copy of our previous letter to him.

Member (F) Smt. **Anuradha Mitra** gave us time at 1600 hrs on **22/11/18** and we met her for about 30 minutes. DDG (Accts.) Madam **Lynda** was also with her. We discussed about the '**Direct payment by CCAs**'. On this issue, we were informed the following:-

- 1) **Direct payment for new pensioners from Dec 18**
- 2) **For existing pensioners from Apr 19**
- 3) **Post offices are not linked to the new soft-ware for the present**
- 4) **Banks have agreed to accept the life certificate and the payment of commission for this service is under discussion**
- 5) **Every pensioner shall be given a log-in-id**

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6) Interaction with pensioners, particularly with pensioners' associations shall be ensured by CCAs. It will be held soon which may help to allay the apprehensions of the pensioners.

7) She assured that all the problems of pensioners shall be addressed

8) Form 16 can be taken digitally or CCAs shall give

Regarding 'pension revision' she told that "you should not try to take the best every time (i.e. whichever formula that is more beneficial for pension revision) and there should be a single formula and it can't be changed every time". We explained that we raised the demand of fitment factor recommended by 7<sup>th</sup> CPC be made applicable to BSNL IDA pensioners also as soon as the Govt. announced the appointment of 7<sup>th</sup> CPC in September 2013 and at that point of time nobody knows about the outcome of 7<sup>th</sup> CPC or 3<sup>rd</sup> PRC. Consciously we raised the demand with a vision that it would be a permanent solution. We also told her that we are consistent with our demand from 2013 onwards. We informed her that a reply to DoP&PW is prepared by Establishment section of DoT and sent to DoT finance for vetting which was told to us by DDG (Estt.). Then she told that she was not here for a week and it would have gone to Advisor and 'vetting' would be done soon if it is sent by establishment section. If DoP&PW agrees to delinking and if a proper proposal comes to DoT finance, that would be considered by us, she told. Ultimately DoP&PW and DoE have to agree and as far as DoT finance is concerned, 'it will go with the flow' she said.

We along with Coms. G.L.Jogi and S.S.Nanda met **Member (S) Shri Ravi Kant**. Member (S) was really busy since he was looking after the post of Member (T) also. He told that he can meet us only for 5 minutes but we had meeting for more than 15 minutes from 6.05 pm on 22nd. When we raised the issue of pension revision he told that he got brief from DDG (Estt.). When we questioned about the real bottleneck, he told about the likelihood of anomaly. We told that suitable solution can be found to address that problem. We explained the justification for the demand in brief. He patiently heard our views and said that he would study the issue from that angle and asked to meet him after a week. We told the leaders in Delhi should meet him after a week and pursue further.

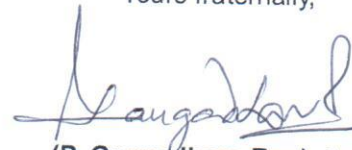
**Comrades,**

In the background of these developments, our CWC which is going to meet in Kanyakumari in February 2019 has to seriously discuss and take appropriate decisions with regard to Pension Revision and MRS.

We once again request you all to observe 'Pensioners' Day' in December 18 by conducting meetings and explain the above development to the members.

**With greetings**

Yours fraternally,



**(P. Gangadhara Rao)**  
General Secretary.

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