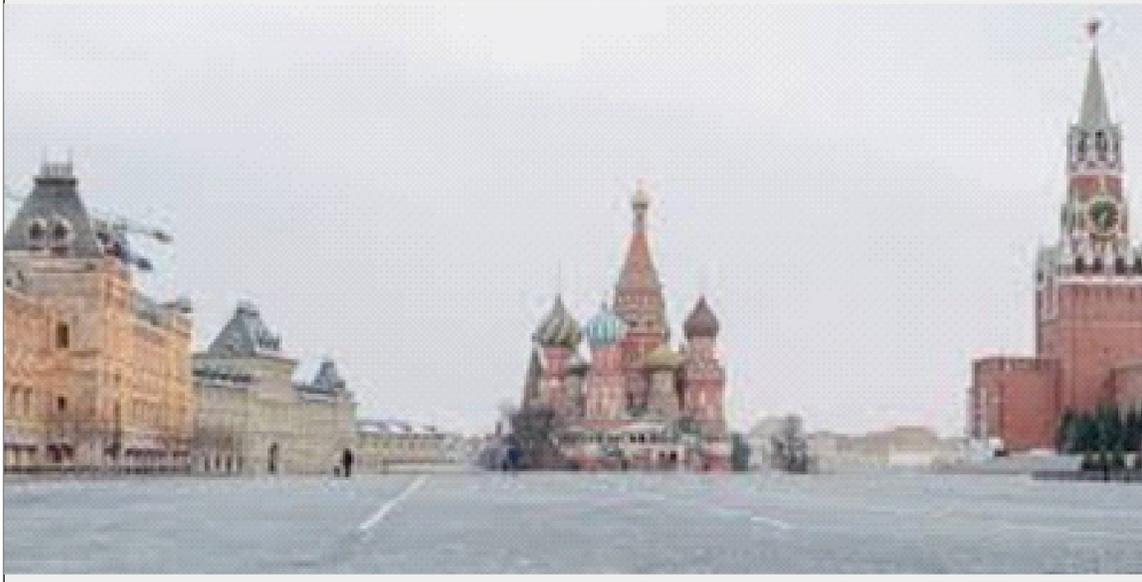
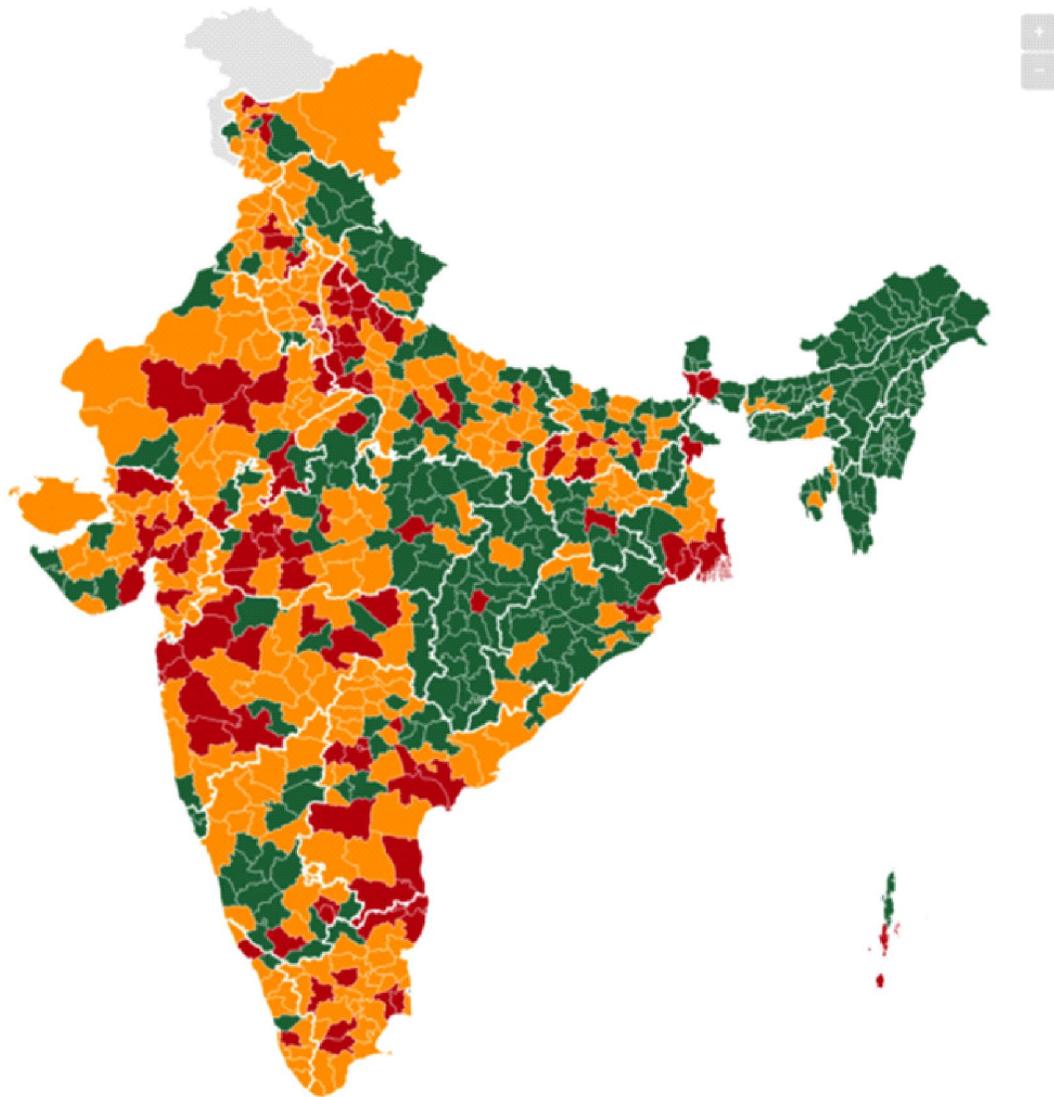
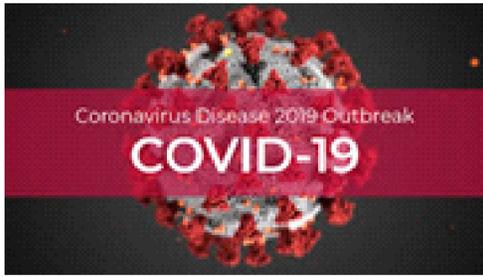


AIBSNLPWA

E JOURNAL 3

17 MAY, 2020







DANCE WITH THE DEVIL

As on today, the tiny Virus has attacked more than 46 Lakhs people and killed 3 Lakhs world over in 215 countries. It is *demon's dance*. Never in the past had it happened. In India 90674 are infected and 2819 died. In US more than 15 Lakhs got infected and 90000 succumbed to the deadly virus.

WHO advises us to 'learn to live with the virus'. Because the Corona virus can not be eliminated totally. Mr. Lav Agarwal, the spokesman for Indian Health Ministry, also asked us to 'live with the virus'. He revealed that the number of cases is doubling within 13.9 days now. 90000 may reach 1.8 Lakh by end of May, 3.6 Lakh by 15th June and 7.2 Lakh by end of June and it may cross Ten Lakhs by middle of July. We wish it should not happen. And, Dr Randeep Guleria, Director of AIIMS, New Delhi warned that the peak of the disease in India may be reached in June-July 2020. Data confuses. Morning data becomes irrelevant by evening. Different organizations project different numbers. 50 days have passed since lockdown was declared. Despite all earnest efforts the situation varies from state to state. That makes uniformity in lockdown or relaxation quite impossible. Still, India is far better compared to other 'developed' countries and 'strong economies'.

It is the time for all to join together and fight the demon. Petty political issues should be buried. Leaders should show their leadership quality coming out of regional feelings. Without people where is politics?

17-5-2020

P S Ramankutty, Editor



SADDEST DAY

On 16-5-2020, the FM announced :

FDI will be raised from 49% to 74%
in Defence Manufacturing.

Power distribution in Union Territories to be privatized.

Ordnance Factories to be corporatized.

6 more airports are thrown open for auction

Private Companies will be allowed to use the
facilities in the prestigious and critical Indian
Space Research Organization (ISRO)

Govt. monopoly to be removed in Coals.

50 Mining blocks will be thrown open for auction

No experience required to bid.

(So, Ambanis also can bid)

WORST TIME FOR NATION; BEST TIME FOR THEM.

This is done when the entire Nation is fighting the deadly corona virus; when 5000 people are falling every day due to the virus. On 14th day of Kurushetra War, Kauravas wanted to attack Pandavas in the night. Guru Dronacharya asked them not to do so pointing out the rule that war can be fought from sunrise to sunset only. In modern world, there is no such rule. There is no such guru to advice. In the darkness, Indian economy is being attacked. BMS has condemned the decisions saying that yesterday was the Sad Day for the nation. It is the SADDEST.



The state Governments in UP, MP and Assam find it the most opportune time of lockdown situation in the country to reverse labour laws, removing all the provisions that protect rights of the workers. These governments want

- To encourage contract labour in all fields
- To deny job security
- To deny social security system and pension

This nefarious move has support of Central Govt.

All Trade Unions oppose the reforms.

Even BMS, trade union wing of RSS opposes it.

Chamber of Commerce welcomes it. Industrialists welcome it. Some 'research firms" paid and maintained by Industrialists support it.

The reforms are implemented when the whole nation is passing through an unprecedented crisis, created by coronavirus; when crores of workers are in streets jobless; when people cannot assemble together and raise a protest voice.

WHEN THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE,
THEY PLAY THE 'TRUMP' CARD.

ATTACK ON THE WORKING CLASS

D Gopalakrishnan, VP, AIBSNLPWA

Utilising the Pandemic COVID-19 and lock-down, the Govt. at the centre and many State Governments are pushing through the so-called reforms because the workers and the trade unions cannot go on protest actions.

On 16/5/2020 Finance Minister Ms. Nirmala Sitaraman announced privatization of 6 Airports, privatization of eight sectors including civil aviation, Coal, Mines, Defence Production, Space etc.

The policy of the Govt. of India whether it is UPA led by Dr. Manmohan Singh or NDA led by Shri Narendra Modi is to privatise the public sector undertakings. During UPA-II period (2009-10 to 2013-14) total disinvestment was to the tune of Rs.99,367 crores whereas during NDA-II period (2014-15 to 2018-19) it rose to Rs.2,78,622 crores (Source: Dept. of Investment & Public Asset Management, Ministry of Finance). The disinvestment during NDA-II is 280% more than UPA-II.

The argument in support of privatization is it is efficient and profitable whereas the PSUs are inefficient and incurring loss. If that is so, why Aircel became bankrupt in 2018? Why Reliance Communication became bankrupt in 2019? Why IDEA has to cease its operations and merge with Vodafone?

In 2019-20 profit making PSUs like Bharat Petroleum, Shipping Corporation of India, Container Corporation of India were privatized. Loss making PSUs like Air-India, IDBI are also in the threshold of privatization. Profit making LIC, which has earned the confidence of crores of people is to be listed through IPO, a step towards privatization.

Even the loss-making PSUs can be made profitable provided there is political will to do it. PSEs can also be used for achieving public policy objectives. For instance, the Kerala State Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (KSDP) - reportedly the only state government-run pharmaceutical PSE in India which was running into losses, was transformed to become profitable last year. Interventions for a turnaround was made keeping in mind the public policy objectives that KSDP can cater to. KSDP is expected to supply drugs

that are used in the post-organ transplant treatment at Rs.128 for a day as compared to Rs.250 per day by other companies. Similarly, the proposed oncology park under KSDP will make cancer drugs more affordable to people. Kerala has the highest number of cancer cases detected in India.

So, privatization is not a panacea for all the ills. PSUs can be brought on profit-mode if there is a will. Privatisation means no pension for the employees.

Labour is in the concurrent list (which means that both Central Govt. and State Govts. Can enact laws). There are 47 laws by the Central Govt. and nearly 200 laws by State Governments. In the name of streamlining, the Central Govt. introduced new labour laws.

Subsuming Payment of wages Act 1936, Minimum wages Act 1948, Payment of Bonus Act 1965 & Equal Remuneration Act 1976 a new bill called "Code on wages" was introduced in Lok Sabha on 23/7/2019, passed by it on 30/7/2019, passed by Rajya Sabha on 2/8/2019 and gazette notification was issued on 8/8/2019.

Factories Act ensures 8 hours work per shift, with overtime wages, weekly-

offs, leave with wages and measures for health, hygiene and safety. The Industrial Disputes Act provides for workers participation to resolve wages and other disputes through negotiations so that strikes/lockouts, unjust retrenchments and dismissals are avoided. The Minimum Wages Act ensures wages below which it is not possible to subsist.

Trade unions have played an important role in transforming the life of a worker from that of servitude to one of dignity. In the scheme of socio-economic justice the labour unions cannot be dispensed with.

Code on Occupational Safety, health and working conditions 2019 introduced in Lok Sabha on 23/7/2019, Code on Industrial Relations 2019 introduced in Lok Sabha on 28/11/2019 and Code on Social Security 2019 bill introduced in Lok Sabha on 11/12/2019 are all pending.

There is an adage "never waste a crisis". Section 5 of the Factories Act empowers the State Governments to exempt only in case of a 'public emergency'. There is no public emergency now. But taking advantage of lock-down, imagining it as a 'public emergency' UP Govt. has issued an ordinance keeping in abeyance for 3

years almost all labour laws including laws on maternity benefits and gratuity; the Factories Act 1948; the Minimum Wages Act 1948; the Industrial Establishments Act 1946; and Trade Union Act 1926. Several states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra etc. have exempted industries from complying with various provisions of laws. Odisha Govt. has increased the working hours. Congress-ruled states like Punjab, Rajasthan etc. are considering for increasing the working hours. The alibi is because of COVID-19, social distancing has to be maintained. But it is a fact that CII (Confederation of Indian Industry) has suggested to the Govt for 12-hour work shifts and that Government issue directions to make workers join duty failing which the workers would face penal actions. It takes the country 100 years backward. All the rights of the workers were granted after a fierce fight and sacrifice. There was a time that workers had to work for 16 hours a day. After protests it was reduced to 12 hours by Factories Act 1911. During the British regime in 1920s and after independence also there were series of strikes and the leaders were even arrested under Defence of India Rules. Factories/Establishments are not obliged to provide canteen, Creche, shelter etc. as per the announcements by the State Governments.

In fact there is little evidence to suggest that amendment of key labour laws by Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in 2014 took them any closer to their goal of creating more jobs or industrial growth. Depriving workers of fundamental rights such as freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and a set of primary working conditions will create a fertile ground for the exploitation of the working class.

All of us in some way or the other are responsible for bringing those protective laws and during our service we have enjoyed them. Now, the present workers particularly the low-wage earners are under severe attack. No job security, no safety and 12 hours work are all nothing but an attack on the working class. That is why even Bharat Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), a trade union wing of RSS is also opposing the so-called reforms. We have to raise our voice along with the rest of the working class against this onslaught.

DO NOT FORGET HISTORY

[Based on an article by Srijan Shukla in THE PRINT on 7-5-2020.]

Vande Bharat Mission:



India is on a great evacuation programme to bring back 150000 Indians stranded in 12 countries due to Covid19. 64 flights are arranged. No doubt it is a great a programme; but not the first. India has done it in the past also. Let us not forget History. Let us not blackout our history.



HISTORY: 1990 KUWAIT MISSION

In August 1990, Saddam Hussain of Iraq invaded Kuwait. The Kuwaiti royal family and the country's top government officials fled to Saudi Arabia, practically leaving the capital Kuwait City under Iraqi occupation. US declared war on Iraq.



In that war situation, 176000 Indians were held up in Kuwait and nearby areas. In India it was V P Singh Government then, supported by Janta Dal, Left and BJP. I K Gujral was the Foreign Minister. 488 Air India flights were arranged in a very difficult situation and brought back all the stranded

Indians within 63 days, between August 13 and October 20, 1990. According to the official figures 1,11,711 people were ferried to heir homeland It is still the largest civilian evacuation programme undertaken by any government in this world.

What made the exercise more challenging were the inherent complexities in planning and enforcing such a large evacuation in a tricky operational environment.

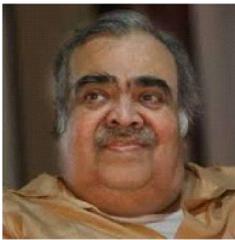


I.K. Gujral, the foreign minister, was sent to Washington under the guise of attending the United Nations General Assembly in order to convince US to withdraw its decision of attacking Iraq. This was a long shot to begin with, and Gujral failed. The next step was to convince

the exiled Kuwaiti leadership that we wanted to bring our citizens back home. While Kuwait accepted India's request, convincing Hussein was harder. I K Gujral flew to Baghdad, in Iraq. He met Saddam Hussein. The Gujral-Hussein meeting went well, and the Iraqi leader promised his cooperation. India's largest civilian evacuation operation was underway.

The Indian government had initially thought of using military aircrafts for the operation. But that was dangerous. Presence of our military planes would be misunderstood by US. Then a decision was made to use Air India. US did not permit landing of our planes in Baghdad. So, Gujral contacted the King of Jordan who gave permission to use his Amman airport .

A procedure was put into place. Buses were arranged for taking people by road to Amman. Then, given the number of Indians waiting there, a proportionate number of flights were dispatched from New Delhi. More than one lakh of people were transported in bus from Kuwait to Amman through the land of Iraq, with permission of Saddam Hussein while bombing was continuing!. The then Communication Minister Mr. K P Unnikrishnan went to Amman and stayed in the airport along with the stranded Indians for days together to oversee the operation. Minister Mr Gujral and Indian Ambassador stayed in a small hotel room and worked. Gujral's personal visiting cards were issued as 'Pass' to the passengers. India had done it, that too on government expenses.



NOTE: In 1990, no private Airlines was in the operation. Now in 2020 also no private Airlines are in the operation. When calamities strike the Nation - be it Corona or Cyclone - only the government companies come forward for rescue operations.

The above operation in 1990 was the basis of 2016 movie, AIRLIFT, starring Akshay Kumar



COMBAT COVID FUND OF AIBSNLPWA
as at 10 PM ON 16-5-2020 (50th day since appeal)

ANDHRA	1015874.00
ASSAM	20600.00
BIHAR	77655.00
CHENNAI TD	319060.00
DELHI	98500.00
GUJARAT	160600.00
HARYANA	57230.00
JHARKHAND	50500.00
KARNATAKA	1850637.00
KERALA	967031.00
MP	205410.00
MAHARASTRA	102500.00
ORISSA	100351.00
PUNJAB	241561.00
RAJASTHAN	40701.00
TAMILNADU	1915331.00
TELANGANA	702842.00
UP EAST	7681.00
GRAND TOTAL	7934064.00

Smt. L Gowramma, Retd AGM, Bangalore has donated Rs. 50,000 to the Covid Fund. Com. G C Boutekar, District Secretary, Balaghat, MP has donated Rs. 37500 to the fund. Smt. Sudhira Sabharwal, our member in Corporat Office branch has donated Rs. 32000. CHQ acknowledges and appreciates the noble gesture of them

ALL INDIA BSNL PENSIONERS' WELFARE ASSOCIATION
Central Head Quarters [Regd. No. T 1833/09]
H. No 6, G No 12th Street, Jogupalya, Halasuru, Bangalore 560008

CHQ INFORMS THE CMD, BSNL THAT IT IS ILLEGAL

Letter dated 8-5-2020

To
Shri P.K.Purwar,
The Chairman-cum-Managing Director, BSNL,
Bharat Sanchar Bhawan,
New Delhi-110001-

Sir,

Sub: **Remittance of society dues recovered from VRS-2019 optees from Leave Encashment & Ex-gratia to the concerned society - Immediate intervention requested**

We are getting complaints from our members of some circles particularly from Andhra Pradesh (**Recovered Dues to the society from AP alone comes to nearly Rs.42 crores**) that the recovered amount was not remitted to the concerned society. Due to non-remittance of recovered amount, interest is being levied from the retiree for the entire period from their accumulated thrift fund and share capital with the society. **This is illegal.**

2. With regard to the above subject-matter BSNL C.O issued guidelines vide its letter dated **17/1/2020**. As per the guidelines, the employee should clear such dues and intimate with necessary documentary evidence to DDOs by **7/2/2020**. Alternatively, he may authorize the concerned DDO to recover the outstanding dues/loans from leave encashment and if leave encashment amount is not sufficient, the balance amount may be recovered from first instalment of ex-gratia payable to them.

3. The amount so recovered should be remitted to concerned banks/societies only after obtaining funds from BSNL C.O. We do not know whether the C.O. has allotted the required funds to the circles in this regard. We are also not aware whether the recovered amount was utilized for some other purpose. May we draw your kind attention to the legal position on this issue?

4. We would like to draw your kind attention to Section 60 of Multi-State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002. Section 60 (2) clearly states **"pay the amount so deducted to the**

society within a period of fourteen days of the date on which deduction has been made". We would like to point out that this Act is violated.

5. Section 60 (3) states '**default in remitting the amount deducted to the multi-State-co-operative society, the society shall be entitled to recover any such amount from such employer as arrears of land revenue and the amount so due from such employer shall rank in priority in respect of the liability of such employer equal to that of the salary or wages in arrears**'.

6. Society dues can be recovered under section 7(j) of Payment of Wages Act, 1936. Non-remittance of the recovered amount to the society is an offence. Section 20 of Payment of Wages Act, 1936 provides for penalty for offences under the Act.

7. In any case, the employees retired under VRS cannot be burdened with payment of interest for the negligence of BSNL Company. Needless to point out that only the Company is answerable if any affected VRS optee approaches the Court against the illegal action.

8. May we seek your kind intervention and direct the circles to remit the recovered amount to the concerned society without any further delay. A line in reply is highly solicited.

Thanking you
Yours faithfully,


P. Gangadhara Rao, **
General Secretary.

BSNL order No. BSNL/Admn/2020/Medical dated 4-5-2020
Extension of revalidation of BSNL MRS Cards for retired BSNL employees:

Representations have been received from Unions/associations to extend the revalidation of BSNL MRS Medical Card for BSNL retired employees on Pan India basis till 30-6-2020 in view of current lockdown scenario due to COVID 19. BSNL CO has already extended the validity of medical card up to 30-06-2020.

In this regard, it has been decided with the approval of competent authority to extend the validity of BSNL MRS Medical card of BSNL retired employees up to 30-06-2020 or till further order. All circles are requested to take necessary action and extend the validity up to 30-06-2020 or till further order.

This issues with the approval of competent authority.



IT IS BREACH OF TRUST

CHQ Letter Date: 14/5/2020 to the Communciations Minister

**Sub: Honouring the commitment -
Payment of Ex-gratia to VRS-19 optees -
Request intervention**

The Union cabinet approved BSNL/MTNL revival proposal, which includes VRS to BSNL/MTNL employees, on **23/10/2019**. The employees of BSNL numbering **78,407** opted for VRS, trusting the Government. Seeing the response of the employees opting for VRS, Hon. MoC & IT even appreciated them on the floor of parliament. **The Cabinet approved Rs.17,169 crore for payment of ex-gratia for both BSNL & MTNL. Out of this amount the share of BSNL is Rs.14,000 crore.**

2. BSNL corporate office issued order vide No. 1-15/2019-PAT (BSNML) dated **4/11/2019**. Annexure I (e) stated **“An employee retiring voluntarily under the scheme shall be paid the amount of ex-gratia in two equal instalments of 50% each. The first instalment shall be paid in FY 2019-20 and the second instalment in first quarter of FY 2020-21”.** It is nothing but a promise and commitment.

3. BSNL corporate office issued another order on **23/3/2020** vide F.No.550/163/2019-20/CA-III/BSNL. Para 2 of that order stated **“The payment of ex-gratia will be done to the VRS optees with the budgetary support of the Government of India. The first instalment to be paid shall be in proportion to the funds allocated by the Government vis-à-vis the Government’s provisional amount of ex-**

gratia that an employee is eligible for. The amount that will be paid to the VRS optees shall be 31.3% of the gross provisional amount of ex-gratia as verified by the circles for each such optee”. **This amounts to breach of trust.**

4. DoT instead of releasing Rs. **7,000** crore for payment of first instalment of ex-gratia released only Rs. **4,196** crore vide F.No.30-4/2019-PSU affairs (Pt.I) dated **26/3/2020**. **As a consequence, VRS optees got 18.7% short of their assured ex-gratia in March 2020.**

5. Before retirement (on 31/1/2020) VRS optees were asked to give an option for availing tax exemption upto five lakhs under 10C of Incometax Act for ex-gratia payment and all the officials **opted for availing that exemption in the first instalment itself thinking that they would get 50% as assured.** But it was reduced to 31.3% and because of that, many officials have to pay more tax from the second instalment since **10C exemption is allowed only once.** For example an official is entitled for **Rs.10,95,905** as ex-gratia and the official was given **Rs.3,43,018** as share of **31.3%** in the first instalment and 10C was availed. The official will get the remaining amount of **Rs.7,52,887** as second instalment and the entire amount would be added as income for the purpose of calculating income tax in FY 2020-21. This puts the official in an dis-advantageous position. As assured if 50% is given the official would have got **Rs.5,47,953** and the taxable

income would come to **Rs.47,953** in the first instalment in FY 2019-20 and **Rs.5,47,953** as income in FY 2020-21. **In view of this, the officials should be given another option to avail 10C either in 1st instalment or 2nd instalment.** Many VRS optees have financial commitments to fulfil in their families and the short-fall has affected them.

and pay the remaining 68.7% of ex-gratia before the end of May 2020.

Thanking you

Yours faithfully,


P. Gangaohara Rao, **
General Secretary.

6. May we request for your kind intervention, sir, to instruct the authorities to ask for fresh option from the officials for availing 10C exemption

Copy to

Secretary (Telecom)

Sanchar Bhawan,

20, Asoka Road, New Delhi-110001

BSNL ORDER

Office Order No. BSNL/Admn.-1/15-12/18 dated 08-05-2020

**Sub:- Procedure for Outdoor medical claim for BSNL employees
(Serving/Retired)**

The approval of competent authority is hereby conveyed for the following modifications in the procedure for outdoor medical reimbursement to BSNL employees (Serving/Retired).

1. Serving Employees:

The ceiling for outdoor medical claim with voucher in a financial year shall be 15 days (basic pay + DA). Remaining terms and conditions same as mentioned in OM No. BSNL/Admn-1/15-12/18 dated 19-07-2018 with Basic Pay +DA as on 01--4-2020. The Basic Pay + DA as on 01-04-2020 will remain the basis for calculation till further orders.

2. Retired Employees:

The following three options are allowed:

- a. C G H S
- b. 15 days pay with vouchers (Basic Pay + DA on date of retirement)
- c. Without Vouchers flat Rs 1000/- (one thousand) per month.

Sd/-
(Rajiv Kumar Sharma,
Dy General Manager (Admn).)

WE WANT FUNDS, NOT VAIN ORDERS

CHQ letter dated 15-5-2020 to CMD, BSNL

on Medical Policy- modification - review- request for:
Ref: Office Order No. BSNL/Admn.-1/15-12/18 dated 08-05-2020

We regret to note that BSNL adopts a very negative attitude towards its retired employees with regard to their medical care. Latest example is the modification of the Medical Policy as conveyed through the OM dated 8-5-2020, referred to above.

Number of retirees opted for 'with voucher scheme' because they incur a huge amount every month for treatment for age related problems like BP, Diabetes, Heart problems, Cholesterol, Kidney problems etc which require constant medication. Reduction in entitlement to 15 days Pay virtually denies them the medical care at the old age. It is just oppose to what the Hon'ble Prime Minister has asked all to take care of the elderly persons. Many of the empanelled hospitals refuse to continue the contract as huge amount is due from BSNL. All over India many hospitals are reluctant to admit retired BSNL staff. Result is that the retired employees are denied proper medi-care

The OM referred above simply repeats three options available to Retirees. You are aware that those pensioners who migrated to CGHS are still waiting for reimbursement of the premium amount

they paid to CGHS as BSNL CO has not released sufficient funds to Circles.

Another option made available to Retirees is the monthly allowance of Rs 1000 without voucher. BSNL Circles have not paid the said allowance for more than two years for want of funds. Issuance of such vain orders by Corporate Office without allotting funds is nothing but a mockery. The pensioners cannot appreciate or enjoy such fantasy or mirage.

Our Association requests you to kindly review the policy, repeal the said OM and

- a) *Restore the conditions for 'with voucher scheme'*
- b) *Allot funds to clear all bills from the empanelled hospitals*
- c) *Allot sufficient funds to clear all medical claims with voucher from Pensioners for outdoor treatment*
- d) *Ensure immediate reimbursement of fees paid by Retirees to CGHS*
- e) *And ensure full payment of quarterly allowance to the pensioners @ Rs 1000 per month.*

Yours faithfully.


P. Gangaohara Rao,
General Secretary.

EX GRATIA SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM INCOMETAX

CHQ letter dated 15-5-20-220 to CMD, BSNL

**Sub: VRS optees are eligible for tax exemption under 10C & U/S 89
Ref: Your letter No.1001-09/2019-20/Taxation/BSNL VRS 2019/
3723 dt.11/2/2020**

We would like to bring to your kind notice the following issue with a request for a positive decision.

2. Para iii of the above referred letter states “The VRS optee(s) can claim either exemption U/S 10(10C) or relief U/S 89, but not both, on such amounts received or receivable on or after 1/4/2009. This exemption is to be provided one time only in a single Assessment Year upon first time receipt of exgratia. Such exemption cannot be given proportionately”.

3. We would like to state that the VRS optees are eligible for tax exemption u/s 10C and u/s 89 as per the verdict of two constitutional courts viz. Hon. Karnataka High Court and Hon. Bombay High Court.

4. Division Bench of Hon. Karnataka High Court delivered a judgement on 21/9/2005 in Commissioner of Incometax Vs P Surendra Prabhu case. Para 39 of the judgement states “In conclusion, in view of our discussion made in the earlier paragraphs, we are of the opinion that the assessee-employee of the respondent-bank is not only entitled to benefit of exemption under Section 10(10C) of the Act to the extent prescribed in the provisions itself and any amount over and above the prescribed limit under the aforesaid provision, the assessee is also entitled to relief under Section 89(1) of the Act read with Rule 21A of the Rules. To put it in the simple language possible, the amount received by the assessee under the voluntary retirement scheme after the exempted income under Section 10(10C) of the Act is compensation received in connection with

the termination of his employment within the meaning of Section 17(3)(i) of the Act. Accordingly, the question of law framed by us in IT Appeal No.189/2005 is answered in favour of the assessee and against the Revenue”.

5. Division Bench of Hon. Bombay High Court delivered a judgement on 9/4/2007 in Commissioner of Incometax Vs Nagesh Devidas Kulkarni case. Para 25 of the judgement states *“For all the aforesaid reasons, the decision of the Tribunal in holding that the assessee is entitled to the exemption under Section 10(10C) of the Act and also rebate under Section 89 of the Act in respect of the amount received in excess of Rs.5,00,000 on account of voluntary retirement, cannot be faulted”*.

6. Not only Incometax tribunals but also two constitutional courts have clearly declared that the VRS optees are entitled for tax exemption not only under 10(10C) but also under 89 of IT Act.

7. In view of the above facts, we request you, sir, to modify the above-referred order and issue suitable guidelines in this regard.

Thanking you


P. Gangadhara Rao, **
General Secretary.

THE AIR IS PURE; BUT USE FACE MASK
HANDS ARE CLEAN; BUT DONT SHAKE HANDS
STAY HOME; STAY SAFE.

[Extracts from a write up by Pawan Kumar Pandey, a journalist.]

POST CORONA LIFE

Nobody thought last year that world's strongest economies and most powerful armies would be so helpless before a tiny virus. And yet, here we are. At the time of writing, the disease has been responsible for more than 2,81,000 deaths world over.

The economic impact has been devastating. Economists are predicting a return of Great Depression of 1929. The industrial output has fallen to almost nil, trade with outside world remains restricted to essential supplies and workers in organised sector are staring at mass unemployment. The unorganised sector has almost completely shut down and migrant workers are headed to home in their millions. It is the biggest crisis we are seeing since Second World War.

We must come to terms with new realities. Work from home, social distancing, online courses, taking exams from home will be the order of tomorrow.

Agriculture and food supply chain will change. Customer will demand hygienic food having negative impact on roadside vendors of vegetables, food, cooked food and snacks and small restaurants etc. Changes will reform agriculture market and consumers can get fresh and cheap food directly from the farms. Vendors selling food items will have to adopt some hygienic practices like wearing a mask, gloves and a hairnet while hawking their goods.

Service providers like hairdressers, bank tellers, and shopkeepers/shop attendants of all kind should take precautionary measures. We will definitely see some rise in inflation as the cost has to be passed on to the customer.

Education sector will witness lot of changes moving to video conferencing apps. However, many chinks remain. Connectivity is an issue in most of the country. Our internet infrastructure is not robust enough. Another big issue is too much screen time for children. It is clear that even if all the chinks are removed, online classes cannot replace offline classrooms. So schools have to be innovative. The primary objective at present is social distancing, which can be ensured by reducing class sizes by half. There can be evening and morning sessions at school or even 3 day week for two sets of students. Of course, this cannot continue for long. Schools will have to come back to normal schedules. In the long term, schools have an important role in ensuring children are made aware of the correct hygienic practices. Civic Sense must be inculcated in the mind of every student.

Governments have to be more effective and systematic. People in general have to adapt the new technology and go for online business. Telecommunication will become more important in the daily lives of the people and the nation. New vistas

will be open to the telecom manufacturing sector. People will prefer new mobile phones with new apps. Even land phone will become essential. Distance has to be maintained for communicating each other also. Other imperatives should be to increase energy production and improve logistics infrastructure.

Future preparedness for such lockdowns is of prime importance. This will not be the last viral epidemic. Apart from that, climate change and other unforeseen emergencies may force us to lockdown again in future. It is thus important that we evolve a standard operating

procedure. This should incorporate learnings from current lockdown including facilitating the huge migration, dealing with religious gatherings and ensuring essential supplies move freely. Every small unit of administration has collected huge amounts of data regarding shops of essential supplies and list of volunteers, these lists and data should be preserved and updated for future use.

The future is uncertain and the plan for it should be flexible enough to permit discretion by local level administration. Coming to terms with the post-corona world will be one of the key challenges of next decade.

MOVE WITH MOVING WORLD

**COVID will not go for ever.
We must adjust and live with it.**

Senior citizens must not rush to doctors and clinics for small problems. Go back to traditional home remedies.

Avoid taking food outside. Keep away from junk food and save your life. Eat to survive; don't survive to eat.

**Man is social animal. We cannot avoid social gatherings.
But go for unavoidable social gatherings that too with proper protective measures.**

Familiarize with ATM, On-line payments, GooglePay, Bhim, Paytm, PhonePe etc.

Young generation is new generation; adjust with them, encourage them and enjoy life.

Law of Change: Everything changes. The environment, nature, social system, family system, politics, art, culture, education, administration, attitude... Everything except the Law of Change.

We must also change our mind-set.

PMNRF & PM CARE

Some debates are going on in media about PM CARE fund. There is politics behind the debate. We are not at all interested in that politics. But, some of our members ask why CHQ directed to send donations to PM CARE? Through our Extra Ordinary Appeal on 29-3-2020 we called upon members to donate on-line to CMDRF only and intimate the DS and CS. Some comrades preferred to send the donation to PM CARE, some others to PMNRF.

PMNRF:

It was established 70 years ago, during the India-Pak partition. It is subject to audit by an independent auditor. At present M/s Sarc & Associates are the auditors. An accumulated sum of Rs 3800 Cr.. is available with PMNRF now. In 2018-19 alone, according to the audit report, a sum of Rs 779.26 Crore was received and a sum of Rs 212.5 Cr. was spent. PM is the authority to decide how to utilize the fund. Prime Minister is the chairman of the Trust managing it. In addition to some ministers, President of Indian National Congress and representative of Tata Trust are also members. Presence of INC President in the PMNRF Trust may be a reason for the present government to establish a new PM CARE.

PM CARE:

In March 2020, the Modi government started a new trust called Prime Ministers Citizens Assistance and Relief in Emergency fund. PM is the chairman. Minister for Home, Minister for Defense and Minister for Finance are other Trustees. Allegation is that it is not ministers but S/s Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and Nirmala Sitaraman as individuals are members of the Trust and the Fund is not subject to audit. We did not investigate into these details.

In both the Trusts, the PM's word is final. In states, the concerned Chief Minister is the final authority. Some are clean and some others are corrupt. We can't help.

Our members responded very positively and promptly to our call. Within 40 days, despite lockdown situation, they have donated more than Rs 75 lakhs, on-line.

Entire nation is facing a financial crisis. So also the states. We hope that the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Chief Ministers will use their discretion and utilize the donations received in a transparent manner. It is nothing but natural to expect that the migrant workers are transported to their native places free of cost.

News:

“..... 8 migrant workers travelling from Maharashtra to UP were killed and 50 injured in a road accident at Guna, MP on 13-5-2020. ...50 migrant labours were injured in Shivpuri on 11-5-2020. On an average 50,000 to 1 lakh labours are travelling from Maharashtra to MP and UP every day for the last one week. In most of the cases they are being charged Rs 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 per head by truck drivers In Muzaffarnagar, UP an uncontrolled bus has mowed down six migrant laborers to death and injured four critically. These workers were going from Punjab to Gopalganj in Bihar on foot.... On 16-5-2020 morning, 26 migrant workers going from Rajasthan to Bihar/Jharkhand have been killed in another accident. ”

THEY ARE BREAD WINNERS

Media is full of news items about NRIs coming from US, Canada, UK or Gulf countries. Let the Govt., the media and all of us understand that these ordinary workers are the breadwinners for their families. They are also citizens of 'atma nirbhar Bharat'. 8 Crores of families in Bihar, Odisha, UP, MP or Jharkhand live on the money these workers send every month from other states. Under the lockdown situation they lost their jobs and wages. Unable to live in slums they go back to their villages even by walking for more than 1500 KMs from Punjab to Bihar or by bicycles from Maharashtra to Orissa. We have witnessed the exodus, first time ever since the Indo-Pak partition.

They migrate for many a reasons. If they get a better wage in their own places workers will not migrate. Labour migration is a larger issue. Empty promises or catchy slogans are not enough to address the problem.

The Govt. has come out with new packages. But, unfortunately, benefits of many noble projects do not reach the really needy people due to the inefficient and corrupt system.

People donate liberally to PM CARE fund. Government should utilize a small portion of it to transport these poor workers from their working place to their home villages.

THEIR LAST JOURNEY

[Please see the photo next page.]

Some innocent and ignorant workers, rendered jobless due to COVID, were walking through the railway lines to their homes in MP. As train services were suspended, they slept on the railway track somewhere near Aurangabad (Mah.), where they reached on 8-5-2020. A Goods Train came and run over them next day early morning. 16 died on the spot. Only parts of their bodies are left behind and few clothes. They are name-less; only numbers now. They are Indians, Victims of COVID. Their idiotic ignorance cost a lot to their families.



**THIS IS BALANCE SHEET OF
THEIR LIVES,
THEIR DREAMS....
End of Journey at Aurangabad
on 9-5-2020**