

Dear Comrades,

I greet you all participating in the 12th Formation Day celebrations. In the present extra ordinary situation we have to adopt extra ordinary methods to survive the crisis. Many Circle and District Units are holding virtual meetings today, same time. I am invited to all. As it is not possible to attend every meeting I prefer to give this message.

In 2008, Govt issued orders accepting 6th CPC report. Pay of serving Executives in BSNL also was revised based on 2nd PRC. Both were denied to us, the BSNL pensioners. Regional organizations of BSNL pensioners were functioning at Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Madurai, Vijayawada etc. They could not do anything effectively at national level. In that background we decided to have an all India organization to fight for Pension revision.

First, we had a small meeting of 12 leaders from 8 circles in Delhi in March 2009. There it was decided to hold a national level convention and form an all India organization. An adhoc committee with late Com. Chhidu Singh as its Convener was constituted. Chennai and Tamilnadu Circle comrades came forward to host the convention.

On 20th August 2009 we met at Tambaram . We expected some 100 or 150 people. But to our surprise, 456 comrades came from 15 Circles, meeting the travelling expenses from their own pockets. Convention lasted for only 5 or 6 hours. During that short time, we adopted a bye law and launched AIBSNLPWA. Forgetting all earlier affiliations - political or organizational - we elected unanimously a new team of office bearers. Urge for united action guided us all. It was a historic decision.

It was a historic event. And we did create a History.

We achieved pension revision. We got the formula modified. We got annulled the 60:40 formula on pension liability sharing. We achieved many gains, now, known to all BSNL pensioners. To me, the most important gain of AIBSNLPWA is something else.

Till August 2009, nobody talked about BSNL pensioners. Now, no body can ignore BSNL pensioners. We have carved out a space for BSNL pensioners in the field of Indian Pensioners community. That is the greatest gain. Historic One.

The delegates to Tambaram convention gave Rs 4000. Bangalore comrades gave Rs 10000 as advance quota. Delhi comrades gave Rs 5000 as advance quota. Chennai Traffic comrades also gave Rs 5000. After few days The Reception Committee made over Rs 39197, being the balance amount with them. We started with hope. Today we have fixed deposit of Rs Two crore. That shows our growth. We started with Zero membership. Today we have 56000 life members and about 25000 annual members.

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That shows our growth. We maintained unity. We followed the path of trade union democracy.

We have explicitly expressed our social commitment whenever some natural calamity struck our country wholly or partly. Donation of Rs 104 LAKHS to Combat Covid Fund is the latest example.

We have grown. We have spread all over the country . We have achieved the pension revision. We are still struggling for the next pension revision.

Bureaucracy is always negative. Minister is also negative now. Legal fight is a long affair. But we have no alternative. We are on the way.

We have won a legal battle on Pension Anomaly. About four years are gone. Delhi High Court has upheld CAT decision. Still the CAT order is not honoured. We have filed a Contempt of Court petition and it is admitted yesterday by Principal Bench of CAT.

Denial of Medical Care is another problem haunting us all.

Comrades, We can't take rest. We have to cover a long distance. Remember; nothing came to us as a grace. We struggled and got them. We have to struggle. Nobody else will do it for us. On this 12th Formation Day let us take a pledge to move further unitedly.

Present gloomy days will also go. Clouds of despair will disappear; Brightness awaits us.

Thank you all,

P S Ramankutty,

20th August 2020