

**The tripartite Meeting with DoT, BSNL and BMS Affiliated Associations and Unions (AIGETOA, BTEU BSNL and BDPS) was held on dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at Sanchar Bhawan, New Delhi as per the pre-decided schedule:**

The meeting was chaired by Shri A K Sahu, Member (Services), Digital Commission, DoT. The meeting was attended by Shri Sunil Kumar Verma - Jt Secretary (Admin), Smt Roshni Sohni - DDG (Estt) DoT, Shri Virendra Prasad - DDG (SR) DoT and other officers from DoT Side. BSNL was represented by Shri Kalyan Sagar Nippani - Director (HR), BSNL Board, Shri Adhir Singhal - PGM (Pers), Smt. Anita Johri - PGM (SR), Shri S P Singh - PGM (Estt) and other officers from BSNL HR unit. BMS Affiliated Association and Unions (AIGETOA, BTEU-BSNL, BDPS) were represented by Shri Veerabhadra Rao, Shri Ravi Shil Verma, Shri R C Pandey, Shri Aftab Ahmad Khan, Shri Badri Kumar Mehta, Shri Vivek Kumar Singh, Shri Sunil Kumar Gautam and Shri Veerendra Yadav.

The holding of Tripartite discussions between DoT, BSNL and BMS Affiliated Associations and Unions is one of the landmark occurrences and the need for same was felt because every time, with respect to our issues, the ball kept rolling between DoT and BSNL leading to the delay in resolution and a big communication gap. **That was the reason, Hon'ble MoC desired that a tripartite meeting be convened so as a well deliberated and informed discussion can take place.**

The meeting started with a welcome note by Hon'ble Member (Services) who assured that DoT is open to all suggestions and committed to resolve the long pending issues. JS (Admin) also welcomed all the participants and assured that DoT and BSNL will work as team for addressing the issues pertaining to employees. GSs of AIGETOA and BTEU thanked Hon'ble MoC, Secretary DoT and Member (Services) for convening this tripartite meeting which was the need of the hour. The General Secretaries also extended the gratitude on behalf of employees to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India and Hon'ble MoC for ensuring the series of revival packages to BSNL which was almost on ventilator few years ago. We expressed that but for the support received from government, the National Telecom career was almost in a state of Peril. **We expressed our thankfulness to Government of India for providing the much-needed support for BSNL and assured that each and every employee of BSNL is committed to the vision of Atma Nirbhar Bharat in Telecom and will stand firmly in support of all the endeavours taken by Government of India for the benefit of organisation in general and for the benefit of Nation in Particular.** The employees of BSNL have also performed to perfection in realising this dream of nation and now its high time that the employees must be rewarded with resolution of their long pending dues.

Discussions on all the agenda points submitted to Hon'ble MoC was held in a positive and cordial manner.

**1. Residual issues of 2<sup>nd</sup> PRC related to implementation of standard pay scales of E2 and E3 for the initial two levels of executive grade to BSNL Recruited Executives and issue related to various pay losses:**

Association side informed the chair that issue has been pending since long and it is a residual issue of 2<sup>nd</sup> PRC. It was highlighted that two issues of 2<sup>nd</sup> PRC (Pay Scales for initial two grades and 30 % SAB) was left out to be implemented by BSNL and the irony is that the issue was affecting mostly the new recruits and a huge pay loss is being faced by executives due to this negation of the Pay Scales. **We further said that the contentions raised by DoT while negating the Standard Pay Scales of E2 and E3 for initial two grades do not hold true and the issue can very well be settled without cascading effect.** We also told that while DoT has mentioned that DPE has given concurrence to the Presidential orders of 2017, **in an RTI**

**reply filed by AIGETOA, DPE has replied that no such endorsement or concurrence has been given.** We presented the documents in support of our submissions. **We also told that DoT's contention of giving the E1A scale to BSNL recruits erroneously also do not hold any substance as there is no mention of E1 scales for BSNL recruits in the PO issued for notification of E1A and E2A Pay scales by DoT in 2004 and it is categorically mentioned that all the BSNL Recruits at the level of JTO/JAO shall be placed in the E1 A Payscale of 9850/- as the initial basic.** All the details were explained to the chair and notably the DoT side was convinced on the submissions from association/union side.

JS (Admin) queried that how cascading effect can be avoided. The same was very well explained and demonstrated by our team that issue can be resolved without cascading effect and also the 5 Time Bound Upgradations shall be kept intact. Inputs were sought from BSNL side also which was given in a positive manner. **A consensus view emerged that the issue needs to be re-examined in light of the submissions put forward by the Association.**

**It was agreed that issue shall be jointly examined by the team of BSNL officers and officers from DoT and inputs shall be taken from AIGETOA on the methodology suggested.**

We also raised the issue of pending proposals of BSNL Board for extending E1 plus five increments and Notional Pay Fixation from 01.10.2000 for the Civil/Electrical/PA/PS/PPS etc. streams which were agreed to be examined. It was also informed that BSNL has currently three set of initial basics and due to this many executives are a subject of Pay Loss. The committee constituted for resolving the pay loss issues by BSNL must submit its report and resolve the issues.

## **2. Implementation of 30% Superannuation benefit to the Direct Recruits of BSNL as per the recommendation of 2<sup>nd</sup> PRC including creation of PRMB fund:**

The issue was briefed to the chair and it was highlighted that despite provisions made by DPE, BSNL while implementing the 2<sup>nd</sup> PRC benefits in totality for all other groups, didn't implement the 30% Superannuation Benefit for BSNL Recruits. We informed that even DoT, while issuing the Presidential Orders has directed BSNL to recommend on the 30% Superannuation Benefit but still the same was completely negated by BSNL. The necessary documents were presented in the meeting.

BSNL side updated the current status. Further details were sought by DoT team. **Director HR said that management is considerate on the issue and discussions with AIGETOA and BTEU has been held in this regard. BSNL side affirmed that they shall be taking all necessary action to extend due justice. JS (Admin) directed BSNL team to discuss with AIGETOA and BTEU and share the final conclusion in this regard.**

## **3. Implementation of 3<sup>rd</sup> PRC:**

AIGETOA/BTEU team strongly demanded to extend 3<sup>rd</sup> PRC benefits to BSNL employees and expressed that given the role of BSNL in nation building and realizing the dream of Swadeshi 4G, affordability clause for implementing 3<sup>rd</sup> PRC must be waived off in respect of BSNL. DoT team asked about the inputs in respect of moving the case for waiver of affordability clause. It was explained by our team and supporting reasons were also submitted. **The inputs provided by AIGETOA/BTEU side regarding exemption from affordability clause were appreciated**

**and it is decided that it needs further deliberations between DOT and Association with more inputs to move in correct path to achieve the goal.**

#### **4. Extending the Promotional Avenues for BSNL Executives:**

The issue of pending promotions was explained in detail to the chair. The treatment given to the executives of BSNL wrt the career progression, extending only one promotion to the professionally qualified executives in a span of 23 years, the competitive qualified candidates being made junior despite qualifying for the earlier vacancy years, not extending sufficient promotional posts to the executives/non-executives was explained in detail along with supporting documents. We also highlighted that 1200 vacancies are available in DGM grade which can very well be utilized to extend promotions in the grade of AGM to DGM, SDE to AGM and JTO to SDE. **We also highlighted the fact that despite the issue of Rota-Quota remaining pending before BSNL Board, BSNL has gone ahead with revising the seniority, ignoring its own approval of the proposal by Management Committee of BSNL and also the directions of DoT to not to make "the Dewan Chand Case a precedence in future cases".** We strongly demanded promotions for the all eligible SDEs to AGM grade which is the only way to ensure justice. We also highlighted the need for increasing the promotional posts so that career aspirations can be met especially in view of the new Projects of BharatNet, 4G Saturation etc. being handled by BSNL. We said that there is huge need to extend the pending promotions across all grades and stream viz Telecom, Finance, Civil, Electrical, Architecture, CSS, PA-PS-PPS etc. grades.

**BSNL side was asked to inform the status vis-à-vis the promotions across various grades and streams and was directed to take suitable actions to ensure justice.** BSNL side assured that the issue raised with respect to promotions shall be considered and deliberations have been held with AIGETOA in this regard. **BSNL team assured that all necessary action shall be taken to extend relief to the executives with respect to their career progressions aspects. AIGETOA and BTEU was asked to submit their inputs with respect to increase in promotional posts and it was assured that suggestions shall be considered holistically during the restructuring review exercise.**

#### **5. Revision in Transport, TA/DA and other allowances at par with current market conditions:**

Our Team explained to the chair that employees of BSNL are being forced to work on 1996 rates of TA/DA/Transport etc. and there is a need to review the same at par with current rates else there will be huge reluctance in the employees to perform the outstation duties and also route duties. **BSNL Team assured to revisit the rates and informed that management remains firm on the commitments made in the recently held agenda meeting with AIGETOA.**

#### **6. Pension Revision of BSNL/MTNL Pensioners at par with Central Government Pensioners and implementation of Hon'ble PB CAT Judgement Dated 20/09/2023:**

The issue was deliberated by the team in detail. It was informed by DoT side that their team is working on the issue with close co-ordination with Ministry of Expenditure. It was also informed that possible options are being worked upon and all necessary efforts shall be taken in line with the earlier assurances given to the forum. **DoT expressed their support on the issue and assured that needful will be done to ensure the settlement of this long pending due.**

**7. Exercising option for Old Pension Scheme and most humble request to grant one time option to be covered under the CCS (Pension) Rules 1972 for the executives/non-executives whose recruitment process was initiated by DoT before formation of BSNL:**

Team AIGETOA/BTEU explained the issue to the chair and requested for giving due consideration to the employees of BSNL whose recruitment was notified during DoT period.

DDG (Estt) informed that the issue was referred to DoP&T who have negated the same for employees of BSNL. We said that the issue has not been dealt properly and same needs re-consideration especially in view of the recent judgments by Hon'ble Supreme Court. It was agreed to consider the fresh inputs given by AIGETOA/BTEU.

**It was decided that DDG (Estt) shall be holding a separate meeting with AIGETOA/BTEU to discuss on the fresh inputs. It was categorically assured that issue shall be given its due consideration and every possible attempt shall be taken by DoT to ensure the option for these BSNL recruits provided the inputs and documents are sufficient to prove the same before DoP&T.**

**8. Extending the facilities for person with disabilities (PwBDs) which is defined under RPwD Act 2016 or instructions given by DOPT time to time by BSNL in its true spirit:**

Association side explained that the guidelines with respect to extending the facilities for PwBDs have not been implemented in totality. Further we also requested for directing BSNL to implement the recently notified DoP&T guidelines with respect to reservation in promotions. **BSNL was directed to ensure the applicable guidelines expeditiously.**

**9. Restoration of Outdoor Medical Limits to its initial constitution of BSNL MRS scheme:**

BSNL side was asked to examine the request.

**10. Revision in NEPP (Non-Executives Promotional Policy):**

The issue was very well explained by the BTEU team and they requested for its revisit. BSNL side was directed to examine the possibility of revision for ensuring a smooth career progression.

**11. Lifting the ban on compassionate ground appointments:**

The need for lifting the ban on Compassionate Ground Appointments was explained to the chair by the team. We emphasized upon the hardships faced by the dependents in the case of untimely demise of the earning member of the family. We requested for immediate lifting of the ban.

**DoT/BSNL team was not very committal on the same. However, the need for creation of death relief fund was acknowledged and suitable action in this regard was assured.**

**12. Restoration of LTC:**

The issue was discussed however no commitment was received in this regard.

**The meeting concluded with vote of thanks. It was assured that another review shall be done through a tripartite meeting with respect to the progress and development made on the decisions taken in today's meeting. It was also assured by the DoT side that an**

**officer from DoT shall be deputed for participating in the deliberations with BSNL on need basis so that time bound action on the issues raised can be ensured and any communication gap can be avoided.**

**We also wish to inform that the meeting was held in the backdrop of the assurances made by Hon'ble MoC to the team of AIGETOA, BTEU and BDPS and all the progress is being directly monitored by the Hon'ble MoC office. We have also apprised the office of Hon'ble MoC and our Umbrella organization BMS about the discussions and deliberations held and decision taken. We expect that with such an active involvement of all concerned parties, that day is not very far when all such issues shall be resolved in totality.**

Friend's, today's development proves the fact that for resolution of issues, you need to have Perseverance, Pursuance and Patience. Issues are resolved with amicable discussions across table and firmness in the approach and we firmly affirm that we will not be lagging in any of these aspects. **We will consider today's discussions as fruitful only when each issue sees the light of the day and reaches to every member in the form of resolution.** We also take this opportunity to request all to support the endeavours of the AIGETOA, BTEU-BSNL and BDPS under the umbrella of Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh and make us stronger to ensure the resolution of all the long pending HR issues of BSNL employees.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Hon'ble MoC and his office for personally monitoring the developments, Secretary DoT, Member (Services), JS (Admin), DDG (Estt), DDG (SR) and their team for initiating the discussions at DoT Level. We also extend our thanks to Hon'ble CMD BSNL, Director HR, PGM (Pers), PGM (Estt), PGM (SR) and HR team for the meeting.

Above all, we are thankful to our umbrella organisation BMS for their consistent patronage and pursuance of HR issues of BSNL employees at the highest level.

**Team AIGETOA, BTEU BSNL and BDPS CHQ**