



## Editorial

### EXERCISING OPTION FOR MEDICAL FACILITIES

With the start of yet another financial year, the retired employees of BSNL would naturally be preparing themselves for submission of their option to get healthcare benefit from BSNL or otherwise. But given the bitter experience that they still face to get reimbursement of medical claims for outdoor treatment and the hassles that they encountered to receive indoor treatment will certainly put them in a great dilemma. The year 2018-19 had been a nightmare for the BSNL employees in getting reimbursement of their claims from BSNL. Months after months, the claims were not settled. Though the financial year is now over, still many claims remain unsettled. Indoor treatment claims are also pending in large numbers. Given the track record of BSNL Management in not clearing the bills in time, the empaneled hospitals are gradually moving away from agreements for cashless treatment. The retired employees are, therefore, being forced to spend from their own meagre pension. Non-reimbursement of these claims naturally puts the retired employees in great hardship.

BSNL takes the plea of financial crunch in not settling these claims. It is true that BSNL's finance is now not on a solid ground. BSNL even failed to make timely payment

of the salary of its serving employees in the month of February, 2019. However, BSNL now claims that in future such situation will not be repeated. But this hardly helps to instill a sense of confidence in all the stake holders.

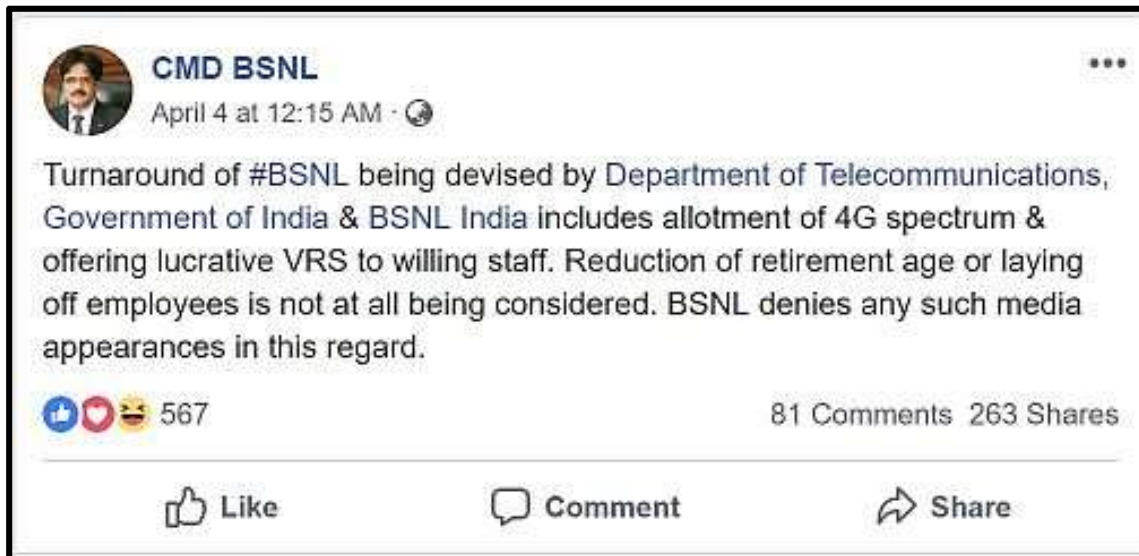
In such a scenario, the retired employees in particular, will naturally try to find alternatives. But they have very limited option left with them. They have been hoping against hope that BSNL would come out with some tangible solution when the Management formed an Internal Committee and invited the Unions/Association to give suggestions/views on introduction of medical insurance scheme. But, barring one or two associations, none came forward. Though not invited, AIBSNLREA on its part, submitted its considered opinion and suggestions. But till now, no further information is available regarding the progress made in this direction.

Under these circumstances, the retired employees will have to choose between BSNLMRS and CGHS only. The BSNL pensioners receive their pension from Central Civil Estimates. DoT has already confirmed, vide its F No. 4-12(01)/2019-PAT dated 07.03.2019, that certain clarifications issued by Ministry of Health & Family

Affairs vide its No. 5.14025/23/2013-MS-EHSS dated 29.09.2016 are applicable to the BSNL/MTNL pensioners also. These Orders were posted in this website on 10.03.2019. Moreover, some BSNL pensioners have already switched over to CGHS. Their experience with CGHS will be another important input to take a firm view for making up our mind before exercising option. It remains the fact that BSNL had

earlier committed to reimburse the onetime payment to be made to the CGHS authorities by the pensioners. However, all BSNL absorbed pensioners will not have these options available, since CGHS facilities are available only in limited number of cities. Thus, the absorbed BSNL pensioners need to exercise their option keeping the above scenario in mind. □

### Message posted by CMD BSNL in Face Book on 04.04.2019



### INCREASE IN IDA W.E.F. 1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2019

According to calculations based on All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers, IDA is set to increase w.e.f. 1.4.2019 by 2.6% for CPSEs where last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.2007 and by 4.5% where last pay revision was implemented w.e.f. 1.1.1997.

### ISSUES TAKEN UP

**AIBSNLREA REQUEST DIRECTOR(HR), BSNL TO ENSURE PAYMENT OF REIMBURSEMENT OF MEDICAL CLAIMS WITH OR WITHOUT VOUCHERS UNDER BSNLMRS BEFORE 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH, 2019:** AIBSNLREA has addressed a letter to Director (HR) pointing out that claims from the pensioners for reimbursement of their medical bills for outdoor treatment with or without vouchers for the financial 2018-19, which attract deduction of income tax, are pending for a long time with the

respective BSNL units from which they retired. The Association has further requested Director (HR) “to cause issue of instructions to clear payment of all the pending claims before 31.03.2019, so that the pensioners do not find any difficulty in submitting their income tax returns for the assessment year 2019-20”. [\[View posting dated 26.03.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

**DENIAL OF THE BENEFIT OF NOTIONAL PROMOTION AND CONSEQUENTIAL PENSIONARY BENEFITS IN TERMS OF DOP&T OM NO. 22011/3/2013-ESTT.(D) DATED 25.01.2016 TO SHRI SHANKAR SINGH YADAV, RETD JTO OF MAHARASHTRA TELECOM CIRCLE – AIBSNLREA TAKES UP THE ISSUE WITH SECRETARY(PENSION), DOP&PW:** AIBSNLREA has now taken up the above issue with Secretary(Pension), Department of Pension & Pensioners’ Welfare, since the issue remains unsettled even after the concerned pensioner made several representations and the Association also taking up the issue with Director(HR), BSNL as back as on 12.02.2018. Shri Shankar Singh Yadav, Retd JTO was ordered to be promoted as TES Group Officer by DOT in 1998. But this could not be implemented since a CBI case was registered against him. Subsequently, the Special Court of CBI acquitted him of the charges after his retirement. After this, he was also got absorbed in BSNL and now he is entitled to get the benefit of notional promotion and all other consequential pensionary benefits as per DOP&T OM No. 22011/3/2013-Estt. (D) dated 25.01.2016. The Association has sought the personal intervention of Secretary (Pension) in this case so that justice is bestowed on Shri Shankar Singh Yadav, Retd JTO by allowing him the benefit of “notional promotion” and other consequential pensionary benefits as stipulated in DOP&T OM No. 22011/3/2013-Estt. (D) dated 25.01.2016. [\[View posting dated 25.03.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

**ARBITRARY DEDUCTION OF THE COST OF MEDICINES @ 12% FROM THE MEDICAL CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF THE PENSIONERS/EMPLOYEES IN MAHARASHTRA TELECOM CIRCLE-AIBSNLREA AGAIN WRITES TO DIRECTOR (HR), BSNL:** AIBSNLREA had earlier taken up the above issue with Director (HR) requesting her intervention and to advise the CGMT, Maharashtra Telecom Circle to withdraw his order directing the employees/ pensioners to purchase medicines only from the medical stores having large network of stores and offering discounts along with the facility of home delivery or face rejection of their medical claims in cases of purchase of medicines from other medical shops not allowing 12% discount (view posting dated 20.09.2018 in this website to read the letter). Since there was no response and also the Maharashtra Telecom Circle has already started deduction @12% from the claims of the pensioners/employees against the medicines purchased from medical pharmacies not offering discounts, the Association has again addressed a letter to Director (HR), BSNL with copy endorsed to Secretary (Pension) and Secretary (Telecom). [\[View posting dated 17.03.2019 in this website to read the letter\].](#)

**NON-EMPANELMENT OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS FOR INDOOR TREATMENT OF BSNL EMPLOYEES/BSNL PENSIONERS BY CGMT, BSNL, HIMACHAL PRADESH CIRCLE - AIBSNLREA AGAIN TAKES UP THE ISSUE WITH DIRECTOR (HR), BSNL:** AIBSNLREA addresses another letter to Director(HR) on the above issue drawing her attention to the Association’s previous letter dated 17.10.2018 and stating that no action seems to have been taken on the said

representation. The Association now encloses the List of Private Hospitals empanelled (within the state) with the Government of Himachal Pradesh in which the Central Government employees have also been permitted to take treatment. The Association has further urged that “We request that CGMT, Shimla, BSNL also allows treatment of the BSNL IDA pensioners and its serving employees in these private hospitals after due negotiations, if needed.” [\[View posting dated 13.03.2019 in this website to read the letter\]](#).

**DENIAL OF BENEFIT OF FIXATION OF PENSION BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE EXTRA INCREMENT GRANTED ON POST-BASED PROMOTION UNDER BSNL EXECUTIVES PROMOTION POLICY – AIBSNLREA AGAIN TAKES UP THE CASES OF THE EXECUTIVES RETIRED BETWEEN JULY 2017 AND APRIL 2018:** AIBSNLREA again writes to Secretary (Telecom) and seeks her intervention in the case wherein a section of the BSNL Executives, who were granted extra increment on their post-based promotion under the then BSNL’s Executive Promotion Policy, 2007 and retired between July 2017 and April 2018, are still being denied the benefit of fixation of pension by taking into account the said extra increment. The Association has also mentioned that those who retired before July 2017 and those retired/retiring after April 2018 face no such problem. The Association has pointed out that “In the whole exercise, only those pensioners who had retired between July 2017 and April 2018, have been discriminated since they have not been given back the benefit of extra increment. Whereas, those who retired before July 2017 and after April, 2018 received the benefit of one extra increment to fix their pension”. The Association has further stated that this action of the DOT violets the principle laid down by various courts that all pensioners be considered as a homogenous group and there cannot be any discrimination among them. [\[View posting dated 11.03.2019 in this website to read the letter\]](#).

## GOVERNMENT/BSNL ORDERS

**CGHS FACILITY TO BSNL PENSIONERS – APPLICABILITY OF CLARIFICATIONS ISSUED BY MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE:** In the background of several court cases, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India had issued certain clarifications vide its OM dated 29.09.2016 in regard to eligibility for various medical benefits to the pensioners. Now, Department of Telecommunications has issued another order clarifying that the facilities as mentioned in the said Ministry of Health & Family OM are also applicable to the BSNL/MTNL pensioners drawing pension from Central Civil Estimates. [\[View posting dated 10.03.2019 in this website to read the DoT letter enclosing Ministry of Health & Family Affairs OM \]](#).

## BRANCHES IN ACTION

**VALSAD BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HOLD GB MEETING:** Valsad Branch (Gujarat State) of AIBSNLREA held a General Body Meeting on 10.03.2019 at PWD Circuit Hose, Valsad. The meeting started at 11.00 hours. The House first observed 2 minutes silence to pay homage to Shri A B Patel, ex-State Secretary, AIBSNLREA, Gujarat State Branch and the martyrs of Phulwama terror attack. Branch Secretary Shri Vasudev J Suthar presented his report on the activities of the branch and other issues connected with the pensioners. All the members participated in the discussions.

Non-payment of claims for reimbursement of medical bills with or without vouchers remained as an important issue. The meeting was followed by Lunch served to the participants.

**BI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF AIBSNLREA, EAST GODAVARI BRANCH HELD:** East Godavari Branch (AP State) of AIBSNLREA held its bi-annual Conference on 17-03-2019 at Hotel Surya in Rajahmundry. The meeting started with prayer at 09.30 hours under the chairmanship of Branch President Shri G V Rasma Krishna which was attended by seventy members. Shri CH Gandhi, Organizing Secretary (South), CHQ was also on to the dais. After prayer, the house observed two minutes silence to pay homage to the departed CRPF personnel who were martyred in the terrorist attack at Pulwama and also to Late Shri N Krishna Murty, AGM (Retd), AP Circle. S/Shri GV Rama Krishna and Ch Gandhi briefly addressed the House. District Secretary Shri GSVSS Vara Prasad narrated the social responsibilities taken up by the association with full support of the members of the Branch. He informed the house that the District association contributed Rs 1,25,000/- to CHQ towards Legal expenses and donation. He expressed his sincere thanks to the members for the trust they reposed on the District Executive Body during the period 06.12.2016 to 17.03.2018. He also informed the house that the Branch had also donated Rs 80,000/-to the CM Flood Relief Fund for rehabilitation of the victims in Kerala flood. He also presented the status pending medical claims for both the outdoor treatment and indoor treatment. He further informed about the position of pension revision, available options and the stand taken by various associations and the DoT. He then discussed about the CPMS introduced by DoT and the concerns expressed by the Association on few of its aspects. Shri CH Gandhi explained the CHQ's stand on all these issues. S/Shri KS Prakasa Rao, B Ananda Rao, KP Sreenivasa Rao, B Suryanarayana, A Chakram, G Sundara Rao, M Venkateswara Rao participated in the discussions. District Secretary also informed the house that some important but typical issues regarding 78.2% pay fixations of nearly 8 members were got settled. Some cases of them were in STR, Karnataka and Maharashtra Circle CCAs which responded positively after examining the rules and instructed the concerned SSAs to settle as represented by us. Many a times, the Maharashtra SSA denied to settle the case of Shri J Satyanarayana , EE who retired at Sholapur. " Difference between value of pension as per pre revised pension and commutation value due to 50% merger of IDA. TYPE IV of DOT OM F.No-40-16/2012-pen(T) Dated 10.06.2013." Now this gave benefit to all similarly placed pensioners in Maharashtra Circle. This order was earlier got implemented in E G SSA in 2014 which benefited 45 Executives and 70 non executives.

The District Secretary proposed to add third Joint member "Secretary" in the AIBSNLREA S/B account and also proposed to operate the account by any two out of the three joint operators of the account – President, Secretary and Treasurer. The house accepted the proposal unanimously and authorized the Branch to take necessary steps with Karur Vysya Bank Ltd.

President then dissolved the existing body and adjourned the house for election. The house proposed Shri Chalapati Rao KV Retd DGM(Fin) to conduct the election in the presence of Shri Ch Gandhi, OS (South) CHQ member. Election of new office bearers was unanimous. The new body then took charge.

Thereafter, Shri Vithal Durga Prasad, GMTD, East Godavari was welcomed by the Distt Secretary and the members were also got introduced. GMTD informed the status of BSNL and its options for revival. GMTD also shared his feelings with the veterans. GMTD and the members honored Shri Danakarnudu G, Retd DE who crossed 80 years of age by presenting bouquet, garland and shawl. GMTD and the members also honored Shri Suryanarayana KSVV Retd Sr. SDE, who crossed 75 years of age, with bouquet, garland and shawl.

District Secretary then invited Dr Vaddadi Suresh, M.D, a General Physician and Professor in DSL Medical college and introduced him to the members. He was requested to address the members on the problems faced by the Sr citizens, precautions and the remedial measures to be observed. Dr Suresh gave a wonderful power point presentation regarding diabetic, hyper tension, brain related problems, fits, paralysis and other common problems. Doctor gave first aid treatment and the importance of the golden hour. The presentation was appreciated by all members. The Doctor and the GM TD were also honored with presentation bouquets, garlands and shawl. Thereafter, the meeting was declared concluded and Lunch was served.

**15.03.2019 INDORE BRANCH OF AIBSNLREA HOLD GB MEETING:** Indore Branch of AIBSNLREA held a General Body Meeting on 09.03.2019. Apart from discussions on the issues related to the pensioners, the Branch organized a “samman samaroh” to felicitate S/Shri R K Mishra, N K Choudhary, A C Jain, A G Naik and Yusuf khan, all members of the Branch, on their completion of 75 years of age. These members were honoured by presentation of shawl and shreefal. Brief introduction about these members were given and they also shared their experience with the participants. The meeting ended after presentation of vote of thanks.

### **STATEMENT OF AMOUNT RECEIVED DURING MARCH 2019**

**Ahmednagar Branch (Maharashtra State)** has deposited Rupees five thousand five hundred (Rs. 5500/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 25.03.2019, collected from 11 members, as contribution to seek legal remedy on pay/pension arrears.

**East Godavari Branch (AP State)** has deposited Rupees twenty-five thousand (Rs. 25000/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 12.03.2019 as contribution (Rs 12500/-) to seek legal remedy on pay/pension arrears and donation (Rs 12500/-) on receiving pension arrears.

**Varanasi Branch (UP State)** has deposited Rupees one thousand two hundred (Rs. 1200/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 12.03.2019 as CHQ quota for 6 new Life Members.

**Shri S P Contractor, Retd Sr SDE from Surat (Gujarat State) and a Life Member** of this Association has deposited Rupees two thousand (Rs. 2000/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 11.03.2019 as donation.

**Shri S R Pattabiraman, from Kombakonam, Tamilnadu** has deposited Rupees one thousand (Rs. 1000/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 07.03.2019 as contribution to seek legal remedy on pay/pension arrears.

**Shri S P Contractor, Retd Sr SDE from Surat (Gujarat State) and a Life Member** of this Association has deposited Rupees two thousand (Rs. 2000/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 11.03.2019 as donation.

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**East Godavari Branch (AP State)** has deposited Rupees twenty-five thousand (Rs. 25000/-) only in the S/B Account of CHQ with Syndicate Bank on 12.03.2019 as contribution (Rs 12500/-) to seek legal remedy on pay/pension arrears and donation (Rs 12500/-) on receiving pension arrears.

-----**Edited and Published by Shri S.Basu, General Secretary, AIBSNLREA** -----