



CENTRE OF INDIAN TRADE UNIONS

भारतीय ट्रेड यूनियन केन्द्र

K. HEMALATA
President

TAPAN SEN, Ex.-M.P.
General Secretary

8th March 2019

To
Shri Manoj Sinha
Minister of Communications
Govt of India
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

I am constrained to draw your attention as well as urge upon your immediate intervention to the present situation in BSNL arising out of non-payment of salary to its 1.68 lakh workers and officers for the month of February 2019. The management has stated that owing to extreme resource crunch, such a situation has arisen. It is further reported that the Department of Telecommunication has put an embargo of stringent conditionalities for BSNL to resort to bank borrowing to meet its urgent operational requirement.

You are aware, despite BSNL being under acute financial stress, it has been earning operational profit consistently during last three years which has become possible only and only for the dedicated service by the entire BSNL collective, the employees and officers together; even in difficult and critical market situation, the overall customer base of BSNL is getting expanded steadily and this also entirely goes to the credit of the BSNL collective. Moreover, besides carrying on its usual service provider jobs, BSNL also has been successfully carrying out the huge work for expansion of telecommunication infrastructure in the country at the behest of the Govt and your Ministry in particular. And this job is also being successfully shouldered by the BSNL collective only and none else.

And despite such dedicated service to the nation, non-payment of salary to the workers and officers concerned has inflicted a severe humiliation on the entire BSNL collective, besides financial hardship on them, and utter insensitivity of the BSNL management to this phenomenon has created serious resentment among the mass of the employees and officers. But, please note, the BSNL collective and the organizations representing them have still been holding on, keeping the normal operational activities unhindered and undisturbed expecting that similar sensitivity and sense of responsibility would dawn on the management and the Ministry would intervene to ensure release of salary payment at the earliest.

In this context, it is not understood as to why the DoT has imposed undue restriction on BSNL's borrowing from the banks for operational expenses including working capital requirement. BSNL's total debt is reportedly Rs 13,900 crore, whereas the debt exposure of the private telecom operators with whom BSNL is required to compete is many times more. The Vodafone-Idea, Airtel and Reliance Jio are reportedly having debts of Rs 1,20,000 crore, Rs 1,13,000 crore and Rs 2,00,000 crores respectively, i.e., at least above 10 times more each than that of BSNL.

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In such a situation, not backing and allowing BSNL to resort to bank borrowing for its operational and working capital requirement on the part of the DoT or in that matter by the Govt tantamount to not allowing BSNL to compete and survive the ongoing stiff competition and the tariff-war. You will please appreciate imposition of such embargo on BSNL is totally unjust, unwarranted besides being destructive.

I am confident, the entire BSNL collective are determined and patriotic enough to dedicate themselves to ensure turn-around of BSNL as a major telecom service provider under public sector. In fact they have clearly proved themselves in bringing back the BSNL in operating profit status and sustaining that for last three years. But the Govt and the BSNL management, as per their mandate, also have a positive role to play in keeping up the morale of its entire workforce which may please be taken due note of.

As such, you are aware, not paying salary on time to the employees for work done is an offence under the law of the land. Besides, non-payment of salary to the employees, officers of a PSU company like BSNL hits at the morale of the employees working so sincerely and with commitment for keeping the BSNL afloat and tide over the crisis in its journey towards profitability. Such a situation cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely.

In view of the above, I would urge upon you to appreciate the gravity of the situation and appropriately intervene so that the Govt and the Ministry come forward to extend all support to BSNL including financial support, withdraw undue restrictions on them to approach banks for working capital and operational requirement and also ensure release of due salaries to all BSNL employees and officers at the earliest.

Soliciting urgent corrective intervention from your end,
With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Tapan Sen)
General Secretary