ALL INDIA
BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED
EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION
Central Headquarters, New Delhi

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No:- AIBSNLEACHQ/Third PRC/2025-28/116 **Dated:-10.03.2026**

To,

Shri Narendra Modi Ji,
Honourable Prime Minister of India,
Prime Minister's Office,
Seva Teerth-I (Executive Enclave),
Near Raisina Hill, Kartavya Path,
New Delhi-110001

Subject: Humble request to waive off the affordability clause for the implementation of 3rd Pay Revision Committee (PRC) recommendations for BSNL employees.

Ref.:- 1. No-W-08/0003/2017-DPE(WC) Dated:- 16th August 2017
2. Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings(18th Lok Sabha) on Bharat Sanchar Nigam limited (Presented to Lok Sabha on 12th August 2025)

Respected Sir,

This Country has been blessed with an extraordinary and visionary leader after a long time, whose vision, thoughts, dedication and decisions clearly reflect the roadmap for building Bharat into a developed Nation by 2047. It is pertinent to mention that the journey towards becoming a developed Nation can only be achieved when the Country becomes not only self-reliant but also capable of developing Indigenous technologies.

In the field of telecommunications, technology evolves very rapidly, and dependence on foreign technology can never fully support our dream of making Bharat a developed Nation. In this regard, your Government has laid a strong foundation in the telecom sector through Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) by promoting the development of an Indigenous core network in the wireless segment.

We all remember the era of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji, who laid the foundation of BSNL by reorganizing Department of Telecommunications (DoT) employees and recruiting qualified engineering graduates, chartered accountants and diploma holders at entry-level posts such as JTO, JAO and JE. This visionary reform yielded fruitful results when nationwide

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cellular services were inaugurated in October 2002 by the then Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji.

In 2014, the scenario changed once again when the people of the country entrusted leadership to your hands. Your futuristic approach paved the way for the revival of BSNL through three revival packages to this fully government-owned public sector undertaking. The employees of BSNL embraced this opportunity with dedication and worked tirelessly to develop an Indigenous 4G network.

Their efforts bore fruit when the Indigenous 4G network was dedicated to the people of Bharat in September of 2025. With this achievement, Bharat now stands among the few nations in the world that have developed their own 4G technology.

As a Government organization, BSNL continues to deliver telecom services in border areas, hilly regions, remote rural locations and far-flung parts of the Country despite operating under financially challenging conditions. BSNL employees have been working tirelessly to maintain and expand the Nation's Telecom infrastructure. These efforts have been appreciated by your good self on several occasions.

However, while employees in other Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) have been enjoying the benefits of revised pay scales for several years, BSNL employees continue to draw salaries based on the 2nd Pay Revision Committee (PRC) scales. Residual benefits are also still pending. This prolonged delay has caused stagnation in both employee morale and financial well-being.

In view of the above, we humbly request the implementation of the 3rd PRC for BSNL employees on the following grounds:

1. Waiver of the Affordability Clause: -

The affordability guidelines under the 3rd PRC are broad guidelines designed for CPSEs operating in a stable business environment where technological advancements are relatively gradual and major financial investments for technology upgrades are not frequent.

However, BSNL operates in an exceptional and highly dynamic environment where telecom technology evolves rapidly. BSNL does not possess independent financial resources for acquiring advanced technologies without Government approval. Developing Indigenous 4G technology naturally required significant time and investment.

Despite these challenges, BSNL has achieved positive EBITDA in the last three financial years. However, due to other non-cash financial components such as depreciation, finance cost etc., the Profit Before Tax (PBT) remains negative.

In this context, **Employee compensation should be viewed as an investment in the revival of BSNL rather than merely a cost component**.

2. Pay Erosion: -

Due to the non-implementation of the 3rd PRC for BSNL employees (both absorbed DoT employees and directly recruited staff), there is a widening gap between the rising cost of living and the existing pay structure. The absence of revised pay scales and proper IDA neutralization has resulted in a real decline in purchasing power parity of the BSNL Employees.

The Committee on Public Undertakings has also highlighted this issue in its report(Ref.-2). The report clearly mentions that while one category of employees *(namely ITS – who happen to be the decision makers in BSNL)* continues to receive benefits equivalent to the 7th Pay Commission, the other two categories are still awaiting the implementation of the 3rd PRC.

3. Balancing Role in the Telecom Sector: -

Bharat largely resides in rural areas where digital connectivity plays a crucial role in linking rural populations with the rest of the world. Several flagship schemes of the Government of India, such as PM-Kisan, NSAP, Jal Jeevan Mission, and DDU-GKY, are able to reach rural citizens due to the telecom connectivity provided by BSNL.

In the present scenario, the telecom market is increasingly moving towards a duopoly dominated by two private operators. Such a situation may not be beneficial for the long-term health of the telecom sector. The presence of BSNL as a Government-owned telecom operator helps regulate tariffs and ensures connectivity in remote and underserved areas and therefore to maintain the dynamism in the organisation and to keep its employees motivated, we plead the high office for kind consideration of request of the BSNL Employees for the removal of the affordability clause in deciding the implementation of the third PRC benefits to them.

4. Secure and Reliable Operator: -

During National emergencies such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and pandemics, BSNL employees have restored and maintained communication services within very short timeframes. BSNL has always served as a reliable operator during critical situations and even during wartime conditions. This is the reason why the defence forces of Bharat continue to trust and rely on the BSNL network.

As BSNL celebrates its Silver Jubilee year, the dedicated workforce of this strategic public sector undertaking continues to wait for the rightful implementation of the 3rd Pay Revision Committee recommendations.

The employees of BSNL have stood firmly with the organization through its most challenging phases and have played a vital role in developing Indigenous Telecom technology and maintaining connectivity in the remotest corners of the country.

In this context, a compassionate and visionary decision from the Government to waive the affordability clause and allow the implementation of the 3rd PRC will not only restore the morale and financial dignity of thousands of employees but will also reinforce the strength of BSNL as a strategic National asset. Such a step will send a strong message that the Government values the commitment and sacrifices of its workforce who are contributing to the realization of the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

We therefore humbly request your kind intervention and blessings in granting this long-pending legitimate demand of BSNL employees in the larger National interest.

With warm regards

Abhishek Jain
General Secretary, AIBSNLEA

Copy to:-

1. **Shri Amit Anilchandra Shah Ji**, Minister of Home Affairs & Cooperation,Government of India,Room No-104,North Block,New Delhi for kind information pl.

2. **Smt Nirmala Sitaraman Ji**,Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs ,Government of India, Room no-15074-15075,5th Floor,B-Wing,Kartavya Bhawan-I,New Delhi for kind information pl.

3. **Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia Ji**, Hon'ble Minister of Communications & DoNER, Government of India, Room No-105,1st Floor, Sanchar Bhawan,New Delhi for kind information please.

4. **Dr. Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar Ji**, Hon'ble Minister of State for Communications and RD, Government of India, Sanchar Bhawan,20 Ashoka Road, New Delhi for kind information please.

5. **Shri Amit Agarwal Ji**, Chairman DCC and Secretary DoT, Room no-210, Sanchar Bhawan,20 Ashoka Road, New Delhi for kind information please.

6. **Shri Gulzar Natarajan Ji**, Addl Secretary DoT, Sanchar Bhawan,20 Ashoka Road, New Delhi for kind information please.

7. **Shri Deb Kumar Chakrabarti Ji,**Member(Services),Sanchar Bhawan,20 Ashoka Road,New Delhi for kind information please.

8. **Shri Manish Sinha Ji**,Member(Finance),Sanchar Bhawan,20 Ashoka Road,New Delhi for kind information please.

9. **Shri A. Robert.J. Ravi Ji**, CMD BSNL,Janpath, Delhi for kind information please.

No. W-08/0003/2017-DPE (WC)
Government of India
Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises
Department of Public Enterprises
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Public enterprises Bhawan
Block No. 14, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road,
New Delhi, Dated: 14th August, 2017
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Office Memorandum

Subject: Cabinet decision on implementation of the recommendations of 3rd Pay Revision Committee (3rd PRC) on pay revision of Executives and Non-Unionized Supervisors of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs)

The undersigned is directed to inform that the Cabinet has approved the proposal of Pay Revision of Executive (Board level executives, below Board level executives) and Non-Unionized Supervisors of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) w.e.f. 1.1.2017 in its meeting held on 19.07.2017. Accordingly, two OMs dated 3rd August and 4th August, 2017 have been issued by this Department. In this regard, it is requested to give wide publicity of the decision taken by the Government as per the 'brief' enclosed (in English & Hindi).

(Samsul Haque)
Under Secretary
Phone- 011-24360823

Encl: As above

To

1. The Press Information Bureau for publicity on Television and National/ Regional/ Local Newspapers, Bulletin on AIR News/AIR FM/Private FM Radio Stations (small write-up for electronic media also enclosed)
2. To all Administrative Ministries concerned with CPSEs for disseminating through their respective social media accounts (Facebook & Twitter)
3. All the Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India and CPSEs for circulation of the 'brief'
4. NIC for uploading on the website of Department of Public Enterprises

Brief

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the pay revision of Executives and Non-Unionised Supervisors of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) based on the recommendations of 3rd Pay Revision Committee. The pay revision will come into effect from 1.1.2017.

2. As against 23 months wait at the time of implementation of 2nd PRC recommendations, the 3rd PRC recommendations are being implemented within about 7 months from the due date.

3. The 3rd PRC was headed by Justice Satish Chandra (Retd.) and its other members were Shri Jugal Mohapatra, Ex-IAS officer, Prof. Manoj Panda, Director, Institute of Economic Growth Delhi, Shri Shailendra Pal Singh, Ex-Director (HR), NTPC Ltd. and Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises (DPE).

4. On the basis of decisions taken by the Cabinet two OMs dated 3.8.2017 and 4.8.2017 have been issued by DPE for implementation of pay revision of Executives and Non-Unionised Supervisors of Central Public Sector Enterprises which inter-alia include the following:

i) There is focus on affordability of a CPSE to implement the pay revision without its impact being detrimental to its financial sustainability. The additional financial impact in the year of implementing the revised pay package in a CPSE should not be more than 20% of the average Profit Before Tax (PBT) of the last 3 financial years preceding the year of implementation.

ii) A uniform fitment benefit of 15% of Basic Pay (BP) plus Dearness Allowance (DA) in case the additional financial impact of the pay revision is within 20% of the average PBT of the last 3 financial years has been approved. Besides, part fitments of 10% & 5% for those CPSEs in which the additional financial impact of pay revision on the average PBT of last three financial years is likely to be more than 20%, has also been approved. Subsequent to the implementation, profitability of a CPSE would be reviewed after every 3 years.

iii) A uniform rate of 3% of BP will be applicable for both annual increment as well as promotion increment.

iv) The Board of Directors of CPSEs are empowered to decide on the perks and allowance admissible to the different categories of the executives, under the concept of 'Cafeteria Approach', subject to a ceiling of 35% of BP.

v) The house rent allowance to the employees of CPSEs will be 24%, 16% and 8% for X-class City, Y-class City and Z-class city respectively. The rates of HRA will be revised to 27% 18% & 9% for X, Y and Z class cities respectively when IDA crosses 25% and further revised to 30% 20% and 10% when IDA crosses 50%.

vi) The payment of work based hardship duty allowance upto 12% of Basic Pay shall be admissible for the period the executives / non-unionized supervisors has actually performed one of the following hardship duty:-

a) For performing duty in Underground mines, and
b) For performing duty at Offshore exploration site

vii) Regarding Performance Related Pay, the overall ceiling of 5% of the year's profit from core business activities has been continued. The ratio of relevant year's profit to incremental profit for working out PRP has been however, revised to 65:35 as against 60:40 earlier. Besides, CPSE's and individual performance, weightage will also be given to team's performance while determining the PRP payable to an executive.

viii) The 3rd PRC's recommendation for discontinuation of "Bell curve" to the extent that the forced rating of 10% as below par /poor performer should not be made mandatory, has been accepted.

ix) The existing provisions regarding superannuation benefits have been retained and as per which CPSEs can contribute upto 30% of BP plus DA towards Provident Fund (PF), Gratuity, Post-Superannuation Medical Benefits (PRMB) and Pension of their employees. The ceiling of gratuity of the executives and non-unionised supervisors of the CPSEs would be raised from Rs 10 lakhs to Rs 20 lakhs with effect from 01.01.2017 and the funding for the entire amount of Gratuity would be met from within the ceiling of 30% of BP plus DA. Beside, ceiling of gratuity shall increase by 25% whenever IDA rises by 50%. Further, the existing requirement of superannuation and of minimum of 15 years of service by a CPSE employee will not be mandatory for the pension, whereas Post-Retirement Medical Benefits will continue to be linked to requirement of superannuation and minimum of 15 years of continuous service (except for Board level Executives).

x) The corpus for post –retirement medical benefits and other emergency needs for the employees of CPSEs who have retired prior to 01.01.2007 would be created by contributing the existing celling of 1.5% of PBT. The formulation of suitable scheme in this regard by CPSEs has to be ensured by the administrative Ministries/Departments.

xi) The revision of scales of pay for Non-unionized Supervisory staff would be decided by the respective Board of Directors.

xii) An Anomalies Committee consisting of Secretaries of Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), Department of Expenditure and Department of Personnel & Training has been constituted for a period of two years to look into further specific issues/problems that may arise in implementation of the Government's decision on 3rd pay revision Committee's recommendations.

xiii) The expenditure on account of pay revision is to be entirely borne by the CPSEs out of their earnings and no budgetary support will be provided.

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Small write-up for electronic media

1. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the pay revision of Executives and Non-Unionised Supervisors of Central Public Sector Enterprises based on the recommendations of 3rd Pay Revision Committee. The pay revision will come into effect from 01.01.2017. As against 23 months wait at the time of implementation of 2nd PRC recommendations in 2008, the 3rd PRC recommendations are being implemented within about 7 months from the due date i.e. 01.01.2017.

2. Affordability of a CPSE to implement the pay revision without its impact being detrimental to its financial sustainability will be an important criterion to effect the pay revision. A uniform fitment benefit of 15% of Basic Pay(BP) plus Dearness Allowance (DA) in case the additional financial impact of the pay revision is within 20% of the average PBT of the last 3 financial years has been approved.

3. Besides, part fitments of 10% & 5% for those CPSEs in which the additional financial impact of pay revision is likely to be more than 20% of average PBT of last three financial years has also been approved. Subsequent to the implementation, profitability of a CPSE would be reviewed after every 3 years. Other benefits like Perks & Allowances based on "cafeteria approach" upto 35% of BP and Superannuation Benefits upto 30% of BP+DA have been approved.

4. The house rent allowance to the employees of CPSEs will be 24%, 16% and 8% for X-class City, Y-class City and Z-class city respectively. The rates of HRA will be revised to 27% 18% & 9% for X, Y and Z class cities respectively when IDA crosses 25% and further revised to 30% 20% and 10% when IDA crosses 50%.

सार-संक्षेप

माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अध्यक्षता में केन्द्रीय मंत्रिमण्डल ने तीसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिशों पर आधारित केन्द्रीय सरकारी लोक उद्यमों (सीपीएसईज़) के कार्यपालकों और असंघबद्ध पर्यवेक्षकों के वेतन संशोधन को अनुमोदित कर दिया है। वेतन संशोधन 1.1.2017 से लागू होगा।

2. दूसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिशों के कार्यान्वयन में 23 माह की प्रतीक्षा की तुलना में तीसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिशों को निर्धारित दिनांक से लगभग 7 माह के भीतर क्रियान्वित किया जा रहा है।

3. तीसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति के अध्यक्ष न्यायमूर्ति सतीश चन्द्रा (सेवा निवृत्त) थे और श्री जुगल महापात्रा भूतपूर्व आईएएस अधिकारी, प्रो. मनोज पाण्डा, निदेशक, इनस्टीट्यूट ऑफ इकनोमिक ग्रोथ, दिल्ली, श्री शैलेन्दर पाल सिंह, भूतपूर्व निदेशक (एचआर), एनटीपीसी लि. और सचिव, लोक उद्यम विभाग (डीपीई) इसके सदस्य थे।

4. मंत्रिमंडल द्वारा लिए गए निर्णयों के आधार पर केन्द्रीय सरकारी लोक उद्यमों के कार्यपालकों और असंघबद्ध पर्यवेक्षकों के वेतन संशोधन को लागू करने के संबंध में लोक उद्यम विभाग द्वारा दिनांक 03.08.2017 और 04.08.2017 के दो कार्यालय ज्ञापन जारी किए गए हैं जिसमें अन्य बातों के साथ - साथ निम्नलिखित को शामिल किया गया है :

(i) वेतन संशोधन को लागू करने के लिए सीपीएसई की वित्तीय सततता पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव डाले बिना उनकी देय सामर्थ्य को ध्यान में रखा गया है। सीपीएसई में संशोधित वेतन पैकेज को लागू करने के वर्ष में अतिरिक्त वित्तीय भार क्रियान्वयन के वर्ष से पहले के तीन वित्तीय वर्षों के औसत कर पूर्व लाभ (प्रोफिट बीफोर टैक्स या पीबीटी) का 20% से अधिक नहीं होना चाहिए।

(ii) मूल वेतन और महंगाई भत्ते के योग का 15% समान फिटमेंट लाभ अनुमोदित किया गया है, अगर वेतन संशोधन का अतिरिक्त वित्तीय भार पिछले तीन वित्तीय वर्षों के औसत पीबीटी के 20% के अन्दर है। इसके अतिरिक्त उन सीपीएसईज़ के लिए 10% और 5% का आंशिक फिटमेंट भी अनुमोदित किया गया है, जिनमें वेतन संशोधन का अतिरिक्त वित्तीय भार पिछले तीन वित्तीय वर्षों के औसत पीबीटी के 20% से ज्यादा होने की संभावना है। कार्यान्वयन के बाद सीपीएसई की लाभकारिता की प्रत्येक 3 वर्षों के बाद समीक्षा की जाएगी।

(iii) वार्षिक वेतन वृद्धि के साथ-साथ पदोन्नति वेतन वृद्धि के लिए मूल वेतन के 3% की एक समान वृद्धि दर को अनुमोदित किया गया है।

(iv) सीपीएसईज़ के निदेशक मंडलों को 'कैफेटेरिया अप्रोच' की संकल्पना के अंतर्गत मूल वेतन के 35% की अधिकतम सीमा के अध्यधीन कार्यपालकों की विभिन्न श्रेणियों के लिए अनुमत अनुलाभ एवं भत्तों के संबंध में निर्णय लेने का अधिकार प्राप्त है।

(v) सीपीएसईज के कर्मचारियों के लिए मकान किराया भत्ता X - श्रेणी शहर, Y - श्रेणी शहर, Z - श्रेणी शहर के लिए क्रमशः 24%, 16%, 8% होगा। एचआरए की दरों को X, Y, Z के शहरों के लिए संशोधित कर के क्रमशः 27%, 18% और 9% किया जाएगा, जब आइडीए 25% से अधिक हो जाए और जब आइडीए 50% से अधिक हो जाएगा तो फिर से संशोधित कर 30%, 20% और 10% कर दिया जाएगा।

(vi) कार्यपालकों/ असंघबद्ध पर्यवेक्षकों के लिए मूल वेतन के 12% तक कार्य आधारित हार्डशिप ड्यूटी भत्ते की अदायगी उस अवधि के लिए अनुमत्य होगी जिसमें उन्होंने निम्नलिखित हार्डशिप ड्यूटी में से किसी एक का वास्तविक रूप से निष्पादन किया हो।

क) भूमिगत खानों में ड्यूटी करने के लिए, और

ख) अपतटीय गवेषना स्थल पर ड्यूटी करने के लिए

(vii) पीआरपी के संबंध में प्रमुख व्यवसायिक गतिविधियों से होने वाले वार्षिक लाभ के 5% की समग्र सीमा यथावत रहेगी। तथापि, पीआरपी परिकलित करने के लिए संबंधित वर्ष के लाभ और परिवर्धित लाभ के संबंध में अनुपात को विगत के 60:40 की तुलना में संशोधित करके 65:35 किया गया है। इसके अतिरिक्त, कार्यपालक को देय पीआरपी का निर्धारण करते समय सीपीएसईज़ एवं व्यैक्तिक कार्यनिष्पादन के साथ साथ टीम निष्पादन को भी भारांक दिया जाएगा।

(viii) 'बेल कर्व' को उस सीमा तक समाप्त करने की तीसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिश कि 10% रेटिंग को समकक्ष से नीचे/खराब कार्यनिष्पादन के लिए अनिवार्य न बनाया जाए, को मंत्रिमण्डल ने मान लिया है।

(ix) सेवानिवृत्ति लाभ संबंधी उन मौजूदा प्रावधानों को जारी रखा है, जिनके अनुसार सीपीएसईज़ द्वारा कर्मचारियों की भविष्य निधि (पीएफ), ग्रेच्युटी, सेवानिवृत्ति पश्चात चिकित्सा लाभों (पीआरएमबी) और पेंशन के लिए मूल वेतन + महंगाई भत्ते के 30% तक का योगदान किया जा सकता है। सीपीएसईज़ के कार्यपालकों एवं असंघबद्ध पर्यवेक्षकों की ग्रेच्युटी की मौजूदा सीमा को 01.01.2017 से 10 लाख रुपये से बढ़ाकर 20 लाख रुपये किया जाएगा और ग्रेच्युटी की समग्र राशि की भरपाई मूल वेतन + महंगाई भत्ते के 30% की सीमा के भीतर की जाएगी। इसके अतिरिक्त, आईडीए में 50% की वृद्धि होने पर ग्रैच्युटी की अधिकतम सीमा में 25% की वृद्धि होगी। इसके अतिरिक्त पेंशन के लिए सेवानिवृत्ति की मौजूदा शर्त और सीपीएसईज़ में न्यूनतम 15 वर्ष की सेवा अब अनिवार्य नहीं होगी जबकि सेवानिवृत्ति उपरांत चिकित्सा लाभ को सेवानिवृत्ति और (बोर्ड स्तर के कार्यपालकों से इतर के लिए) न्यूनतम 15 वर्ष की निरंतर सेवा की शर्त से जोड़े रखने को जारी रखा जाएगा।

(x) 1.1.2007 से पूर्व के सेवानिवृत्त कर्मचारियों हेतु सेवा निवृत्ति उपरांत चिकित्सा लाभों और अन्य आकस्मिक आवश्यकताओं के लिए पीबीटी की 1.5% की विद्यमान सीमा में योगदान द्वारा कोष

सृजित किया जाएगा। सीपीएसईज़ द्वारा इस संबंध में उपयुक्त स्कीम तैयार करने के कार्य को प्रशासनिक मंत्रालयों/विभागों द्वारा सुनिश्चित किया जाएगा।

(xi) असंघबद्ध पर्यवेक्षक कर्मचारियों के लिए वेतन मानों के संशोधन के संबंध में निर्णय संबंधित निदेशक मंडल द्वारा लिया जाएगा।

(xii) तीसरी वेतन संशोधन पर सरकार के निर्णय के कार्यान्वयन में आने वाले विशिष्ट मुद्दों/समस्याओं को देखने के लिए दो वर्ष की अवधि के लिए एक विसंगति समिति के गठन को भी अनुमोदित कर दिया है जिसमें लोक उद्यम विभाग, व्यय विभाग (डीओई) और डीओपीटी के सचिव शामिल होंगे।

(xiii) वेतन संशोधन के कारण होने वाले व्यय को सीपीएसईज़ पूरी तरह से अपनी आय से वहन करेंगे और कोई बजटीय सहायता प्रदान नहीं की जाएगी।

इलैक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया के लिए संक्षिप्त लेख

तीसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिशों पर आधारित केन्द्रीय सरकारी लोक उद्यमों (सीपीएसईज़) के कार्यपालकों और असंघबद्ध पर्यवेक्षकों के वेतन संशोधन को माननीय प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अध्यक्षता में केन्द्रीय मंत्रिमण्डल ने अनुमोदित कर दिया है। वेतन संशोधन 1.1.2017 से लागू होगा। वर्ष 2008 में दूसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिशों के कार्यान्वयन में 23 माह की प्रतीक्षा की तुलना में तीसरी वेतन संशोधन समिति की सिफारिशों को निर्धारित दिनांक अर्थात् 01.01.2017 से लगभग 7 माह के भीतर क्रियान्वित किया जा रहा है।

2. सीपीएसई की वित्तीय सततता पर कोई नकारात्मक प्रभाव डाले बिना वेतन संशोधन को कार्यान्वित करने का उसका सामर्थ्य वेतन संशोधन लागू करने के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण मानदण्ड होगा। मूल वेतन एवं महंगाई भत्ते के योग का 15% समान फिटमेंट लाभ अनुमोदित किया गया है यदि वेतन संशोधन का अतिरिक्त वित्तीय भार पिछले तीन वित्तीय वर्षों के औसत पीबीटी के 20% के अन्दर है।

3. इसके अलावा, उन केन्द्रीय सरकारी लोक उद्यमों के लिए 10% एवं 5% का आंशिक फिटमेंट जिनमें वेतन संशोधन का अतिरिक्त वित्तीय लाभ पिछले तीन वित्तीय वर्षों के औसत पीबीटी के 20% से अधिक होने की संभावना है, को भी अनुमोदित किया गया है। कार्यान्वयन के पश्चात सीपीएसई की लाभकारिता की प्रत्येक 3 वर्ष के बाद समीक्षा की जाएगी। "कैफेटेरिया अप्रोच" पर आधारित मूल वेतन के 35% तक अन्य लाभ जैसे कि अनुलाभ और भत्तों तथा मूल वेतन जमा महंगाई भत्ता के 30% तक अधिवर्षिता लाभों को अनुमोदित किया गया है।

4. सीपीएसईज के कर्मचारियों के लिए मकान किराया भत्ता X - श्रेणी शहर, Y - श्रेणी शहर, Z - श्रेणी शहर के लिए क्रमशः 24%, 16%, 8% होगा। एचआरए की दरों को X, Y, Z के शहरों के लिए संशोधित कर के क्रमशः 27%, 18% और 9% किया जाएगा, जब आइडीए 25% से अधिक हो जाए और जब आइडीए 50% से अधिक हो जाएगा तो फिर से संशोधित कर 30%, 20% और 10% कर दिया जाएगा।

15

BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS (2025-26)

FIFTEENTH

REPORT

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

FIFTEENTH REPORT

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS (2025-26)

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

[Action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (18th Lok Sabha) on Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited]

Presented to Lok Sabha on 12 August, 2025

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 12 August, 2025

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 2025/Shravana, 1947(Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS (2025-26)

Shri Baijayant Panda - Chairperson

Members

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Tariq Anwar
3. Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay
4. Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi
5. Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi
6. Shri Kaushalendra Kumar
7. Shri Shankar Lalwani
8. Smt. Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam
9. Shri B.Y. Raghavendra
10. Shri Mukesh Rajput
11. Shri Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa
12. Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi
13. Shri Kodikunnil Suresh
14. Shri Prabhakar Reddy Vemireddy
15. Shri Lalji Verma

RAJYA SABHA

16. Dr. John Brittas
17. Shri Neeraj Dangi
18. Shri Milind Murli Deora
19. Dr. Bhagwat Karad
20. Shri Surendra Singh Nagar
21. Shri Debashish Samantaray
22. Shri Arun Singh

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Anjani Kumar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Kulmohan Singh Arora - Director
3. Shri Dhruv - Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Public Undertakings (2025-26) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fifteenth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (18th Lok Sabha) on 'Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)'.

2. The Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (18th Lok Sabha) was presented to Lok Sabha and laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 18 December, 2024. The Action taken Replies to all the 21 recommendations contained in the Report were received from the Ministry of Communications on 23 May, 2025.

3. The Committee considered and adopted the draft Report at their sitting held on 26 June, 2025. The Minutes of the sitting are given in Appendix-I.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee (18th Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix -II.

New Delhi;
08 August, 2025
17 Shravana, 1947(S)

Baijayant Panda
Chairperson
Committee on Public Undertakings

R E P O R T

CHAPTER I

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Undertaking on 'Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)', which was presented to Lok Sabha on 08.02.2024. It contained 23 observations/recommendations.

2. Action Taken notes have been received from the Government in respect the 21 observations/recommendations of the Committee. The introductory and concluding paragraphs (1.1 and 17.1 respectively) were general observations, on which the Ministry did not offer specific comments.

(i)	Observation/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government Sl. Nos. 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 10.1, 12.1, 13.1, 14.1, and 16.1	**(Chapter II)** **(Total: 17)**
(ii)	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies. Sl. No. 3.2	**(Chapter III)** **(Total: 01)**
(iii)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government had not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration. Sl.Nos. 11.1 and 12.2	**(Chapter IV)** **(Total: 02)**
(iv)	Observations/Recommendations to which the Government has furnished interim replies and final replies are still awaited. Sl.No. 15.1	**(Chapter V)** **(Total: 01)**

3. The Committee desire the Ministry of Communication to furnish final Action Taken Notes/replies in respect of observations/recommendations contained in Chapter I of the Report.

4. The Committee will now deal with the Action Taken by the Government on some of the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee in succeeding paragraphs.

MARKET SHARE

(Recommendation No. 2.2)

5. The Committee, in their Sixth Report, had recommended the following with regard to BSNL's market share and network deployment:

> " The committee note that BSNL's limited 4G coverage, especially in rural areas, has hampered its ability to complete with private operators and BSNL has placed an order for 1 Lakh new 4G sites and plans to add more than 20,000 additional sites, particularly in underserved regions. The committee recommend that the Dot should ensure that these plans are expedited and that BSNL receives the necessary support to deploy these sites at the earliest. The Committee may be apprised of the progress made in this regard. The Committee observe that BSNL has shown progress in expanding its Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) connections. To further capitalize on this growth, Committee desire that BSNL should continue to invest in expanding its fiber network, particularly in rural and underserved areas and the DoT should support BSNL by facilitating the laying of 6,00,000 km of fiber under the BharatNet scheme, aiming to provide 1.5 crore FTTH connections over the next five years under intimation to them. Further, DoT should ensure that BSNL has access to the necessary capital and resources to continue with its modernization efforts. The details of capital and resources made available to BSNL by DoT and modernization efforts undertaken may be intimated to the Committee in the ATR. The Committee observe that BSNL's service distribution shows significant disparities between urban and rural areas, especially in wireless connections where rural areas have a higher number of 2G BTS compared to 4G BTS (47,452 vs. 3,163). Committee believes that despite rapid urbanization, majority of India still live in hinterlands and this apathy towards the rural areas is not expected from the CPSU. To address this, BSNL should prioritize the deployment of 4G and eventually 5G services in rural regions."

6. The Ministry, in their action taken reply, have stated as follows:

> "BSNL has already placed a purchase order for 100,000 indigenous 4G sites under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The deployment process is currently underway in a phased manner, with a focus on rural and underserved areas to bridge the digital divide.
> In addition, 22,215 additional 4G sites are planned under the expansion phase, especially through projects like 4G Saturation (villages without mobile coverage) and IX.2. BSNL is working closely with DoT and its strategic partners (including TCS, CDOT, and Tejas) to expedite commissioning, and has already begun field rollouts across multiple circles.
> A detailed rollout tracker has been created and is being monitored at the highest level. As on 08.03.2025, total 83,993 4G sites have been installed and 74,521 sites are ON-Air.
> Further, BSNL is implementing the various schemes of Government (funded by Digital Bharat Nidhi) to provide connectivity in rural areas:
> **Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages Project**: The project has provision to provide 4G mobile services in 24,680 uncovered villages in

remote and difficult areas including the state of Gujarat with additional provision to include 20% additional villages. It has also provision of upgradation of mobile network in 6,279 only 2G/3G covered village to 4G. The project was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 and is being implemented by BSNL, agreement for which has been signed with BSNL on 06.02.2023 at the cost of Rs. 30,620 Crores. The expected timeline for completion of the project is Jun-2025.

Under this project as on 15.01.2025, 24,006 villages are proposed to be covered by 4G mobile services by installation and commission of 17,360 Towers. Out of which, 11,604 villages have been covered by installation of 8,173 mobile towers including upgradation. This project is being reviewed and monitored rigorously by DoT for completion of the project on priority.

LWE-I Upgradation: - Govt. has approved the project for upgradation of 2,343 2G tower installed under LWE Phase-I across the 10 LWE States to 4G under the scheme and out of which 353 towers have been upgraded to 4G and providing services at 353 locations. The project was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.04.2022 and is being implemented by BSNL, agreement for which has been signed with BSNL on 09.05.2024 at the cost of Rs. 2426 Crores (including OPEX). The expected timeline for completion of the project is May-2025.

BHARATNET:

The Union Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) on 04.08.2023 at approved cost of Rs 1,39, 579 crores to be funded from Digital Bharat Nidhi. The Amended BharatNet program envisages to provide OF connectivity to 2.64 lakh Gram Panchayats on MPLS technology in ring topology and also to provide OF connectivity to the remaining Non-GP villages (approx. 3.8 lakhs) on demand basis. BSNL has been appointed as Project Management Agency (PMA) for this Program and shall select Project Implementing Agency (PIA) who shall implement this program on Design, Build, Operate & maintain (DBOM) model through competitive bidding and shall maintain network for Ten years. The RFP for selection of PIAs for 16 packages for implementation of Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) has been floated by BSNL on 15.02.2024 and opened on 07.08.2024 and has been under finalization. Also, providing 1.50 Crore home fiber connections to cover Government institutions including schools, Primary Health Centers, Anganwadis, Panchayat offices etc., using the BNU model over the next five years. The expected timeline for completion of the project is Mar-2027.

BharatNetUdyamis will be used for providing and maintaining last-mile connectivity from village to household. BNUs will be given a one-time financial incentive for activating new home fibre connections. To incentivize continuity of services, BNUs will also receive a share of the monthly revenue. BNU could be a village level entrepreneur, Internet Service Provider, Self Help Group (SHG), etc.

As on 13.01.2025, 6,92,676 km Optical Fibre Cable has been laid, and 2,09,291 GPs are Service Ready on OFC. In addition, 5,032 GPs have been connected over satellite media. Total 2,14,323 GPs are service ready. Further, 12,21,014 FTTH connections have been installed by BSNL & others ISPs using BharatNet. Overall data usage on BharatNet is about 1,41,558 (TB) for the month of Dec-2024."

7. The Committee appreciate the significant progress made by BSNL in deploying its indigenous 4G network, noting that 74,521 sites are already on-air as of March 2025. The Committee are particularly encouraged by the focused efforts to enhance rural connectivity through the 4G Saturation Project and the ambitious Amended BharatNet Program, which aims to connect all Gram Panchayats. While acknowledging the progress, the Committee urge the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and BSNL to maintain this momentum and ensure the revised completion timeline of June 2025 for the 1 lakh sites is strictly adhered to. The Committee would like to be apprised of the final completion status and its tangible impact on BSNL's rural market share.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND PATH TO PROFITABILITY
(Recommendation No. 4.1)

8. The Committee, in their Report, had noted the company's financial condition and recommended:

> " The Committee note that BSNL's revenue from operations has shown a declining trend from ₹22,668 crore in 2017-18 to ₹16,809 crore in 2021-22, with a slight recovery to ₹19,128 crore in 2022-23. Despite not having 4G services, BSNL has managed to stabilize its revenues in recent years, indicating a resilient revenue base. However, the overall income has not shown significant growth, and the Company continues to incur substantial losses, with a net loss of ₹8,162 crore in 2022-23. BSNL's capital expenditure (Capex) liabilities have been cleared, and the Company is now focused on network upgrades, including the deployment of 4G services. The Committee believe that that BSNL need to prioritizes efficient utilization of Capex, particularly in enhancing its network infrastructure to provide competitive services in the market. Given the strategic importance of indigenous technology development, BSNL's focus on utilizing domestic 4G equipment should be supported, but with clear timelines and performance metrics. The Committee recommend that BSNL and DoT should closely monitor the impact of 4G services on revenue growth and ensure that BSNL capitalizes on this new service to improve its financial health."

9. The Ministry, in their action taken reply, have stated as follows:

> " BSNL is implementing strict capex discipline by optimizing site selection, infrastructure sharing, and equipment utilization. All current investments under the ₹24,000 Cr revival package are being made using Make-in-India 4G technology, followings PoC evaluations.
> Each phase of deployment is being monitored with KPIs and milestone-based

metrics, and vendor performance is being tracked rigorously through centralized dashboards and third-party audits. The capex is aligned with both strategic national goals and long-term financial sustainability.

BSNL has a dedicated team to monitor revenue trends post-4G rollout, particularly ARPU, subscriber growth, and churn rates in newly commissioned sites. Early indicators from pilot and zones have shown positive traction, especially in areas where BSNL was previously operating only 2G/3G services.

With VoLTE and higher-speed data capabilities now rolling out, BSNL expects a significant uptick in revenue and plans to regularly brief DoT and COPU with quarterly financial impact reports."

10. The Committee note the positive financial indicators reported by BSNL, including its sustained positive EBITDA and the encouraging revenue traction from early 4G pilot zones. However, the ultimate measure of a successful turnaround is achieving net profitability. While BSNL has made progress in operational efficiency and revenue stabilization, it continues to post substantial net losses. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that BSNL, with active oversight from DoT, establish a clear and time-bound roadmap to convert its operational gains and positive EBITDA into net profit. The Committee desire to be updated on the tangible progress towards this specific goal in the subsequent reply/report.

Pay Structure and Allowances
(Recommendation No. 12.2)

11. The Committee, in their Report, had expressed concerns over the pay disparities:

" 12.1 From the information available to the Committee, it is clear that the pay and benefits for employees at BSNL and ITS are notably distinct due to differing pay structures and 77 financial constraints. Despite recommendations from the 3rd Pay Revision Committee (PRC), BSNL has not implemented these changes due to financial constraints. ITS officers, who are central government employees, receive salaries based on the 7th Pay Commission (CDA pattern), which typically results in higher pay scales compared to BSNL employees. In contrast, BSNL employees are divided into three categories: (i) those on deputation from DOT, (ii) absorbed DOT employees, and (iii) BSNL directly recruited employees. ITS officers enjoy more comprehensive allowances and perks in line with central government standards, whereas BSNL employees' benefits are constrained by the company's financial limitations. In terms of superannuation, ITS officers benefit from pensions under the CCS (Pension) Rules, providing them with a robust retirement package. On the other hand, BSNL absorbed employees also receive pensions from DOT but under different terms, while BSNL's directly recruited employees receive retirement benefits through the BSNL Employees Superannuation Pension Trust, including EPF, Gratuity, and a Pension Fund, though these benefits are less extensive compared to central government schemes. In terms of health and medical benefits, ITS officers are covered by extensive government medical schemes, whereas BSNL employees have access to the BSNL MRS Scheme and optional health insurance policies, with absorbed employees also benefiting from medical coverage under CCS

(Pension) Rules and CGHS. The Committee observe that the financial impact of these differences is significant. For FY 2022-23, BSNL's per-employee cost for directly recruited employees is notably higher than for absorbed employees, reflecting the additional contributions towards EPF, Gratuity, and the Pension Fund. Furthermore, BSNL's employee costs as a percentage of total revenue are much higher compared to private sector players like Vodafone Idea, Bharti, and Jio.Committee further observe that the promotion and career development opportunities are structured for both ITS and BSNL employees, though BSNL faces challenges related to timely promotions and career growth. While ITS officers follow central government rules for career progression, BSNL employees have encountered delays and issues with promotional avenues due to organizational constraints.

12.2 In view of the above Committee would like to suggest the Company to address the disparities between ITS and BSNL employees. BSNL should focus on harmonizing pay structures by aligning them with the 7th Pay Commission standards or as per the pay structures of the other similarly placed CPSUs. The Committee feel that enhancing 78 superannuation benefits and pushing for the implementation of the 3rd Pay Revision Committee recommendations would help improve retirement security for BSNL employees. Regular promotions and clear career development pathways are essential to address stagnation, while expanding medical coverage and post-retirement benefits would improve overall employee welfare. Reviewing and adjusting allowances to remain competitive, seeking government support for financial assistance, and maintaining transparent communication with employees are also crucial for fostering equity and satisfaction within the organization, therefore the Company should reconsider their policy toward pay structure and allowances to address the disparity amongst BSNL employees."

12. The Ministry, in their action taken reply, have stated as follows:

" BSNL does not fall under the category for 2017 pay revision under affordability clause as per Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) guidelines dated 03.08.2017 on pay revision in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) w.e.f. 01.01.2017. BSNL has been incurring losses since 2009-10 and continues to incur loss despite many employees opting for Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), due to which the pay revision has not been considered.

As per DPE guidelines, the contributions towards Superannuation benefits- Pension and Post Retirement Medical benefits are dependent upon affordability, sustainability and capacity to pay of the CPSE.

The total contribution of BSNL towards superannuation benefits is 25.1% [12%- EPF, 4.8%- GPF, 3.3%- Post Retirement Medical Benefit (as per actuarial evaluation) and 5%-SPS] within the 30% ceiling prescribed by DPE.

BSNL has been making losses for the last several years and therefore it could not consider increase in SAB contribution. Moreover, these benefits are to be reviewed every year. Accordingly, a review will be carried out in FY 2025-26 considering the affordability and financial performance of BSNL.

Revision of allowances can be examined after revision of pay under 3rd PRC based on affordability thereafter."

13. The Committee note and appreciate BSNL's comprehensive efforts in upskilling its workforce through various training initiatives. However, the Committee are concerned with the Government's response regarding the non-implementation of the 3rd Pay Revision Committee (PRC) recommendations and the inability to increase the superannuation contribution. While the Committee is aware of the DPE guidelines on affordability, a prolonged stagnation in pay and benefits can severely impact employee morale and motivation, which is counterproductive to the Company's revival efforts. The Committee, therefore, reiterate its earlier recommendation and urge the Department of Telecommunications to engage with the Ministry of Finance to explore a one-time exemption or a phased implementation plan for BSNL employees. A motivated workforce is a prerequisite for a successful turnaround, and its welfare cannot be indefinitely postponed.

CUSTOMER CENTRIC CHALLENGES
(Recommendation No. 15.1)

14. The Committee, in their Report, had recommended improvements in grievance redressal:

> " The Committee observe that the BSNL has implemented an efficient, customer centric grievance redressal system, achieving a 96% complaint resolution rate with an average resolution time of 8 days. BSNL operates 24/7 call centers in multiple languages and uses platforms like the Teerva App and Twitter for network monitoring and customer interaction. However, despite these efforts, BSNL continues to face a high volume of complaints, particularly regarding network connectivity, which has shown a declining trend in recent years. The implementation of service level agreements (SLAs) with external partners, supported by digital monitoring tools, has improved network maintenance, but 80 BSNL still face many challenges. The Committee desire that BSNL should focus on further reducing the average complaint resolution time, potentially aiming for a benchmark closer to three hours, as they have set internally. The Committee further desire that while ongoing efforts to minimize human interaction through app-based solutions should be accelerated to enhance customer experience, BSNL, should also continue improving its network infrastructure and expand the successful elements of its SLA models to further incentivize performance and accountability among its partners. The Committee would like to suggest BSNL should prioritize the resolution of network complaints, especially in areas with persistent issues, by increasing proactive measures. The Committee may be apprised of the steps taken in these directions."

15. The Ministry, in their action taken reply, have stated as follows:

" Regarding the efforts made for fast redressal of subscriber complaints and reducing the average complaint resolution time, it is submitted that:

I. For the redressal of complaints, SLA based outsourcing contract is in place in all the circles.
II. Monitoring of network has been strengthened to ensure performance as per quality-of-service parameters prescribed by TRAI.
III. Timely availability of store items like cable etc to field units of BSNL to maintain and improve the network.
IV. Monsoon control room is set up in the circles during monsoon season to monitor the functioning of landline and broadband service.

Round the clock toll free complaint booking mechanism. A stringent monitoring procedure is being adopted for prompt and timely clearance of customer complaints through exclusive section at all level of organization."

16. The Committee note the existing mechanisms BSNL has in place for grievance redressal, such as SLA-based contracts and network monitoring. However, the reply is a statement of ongoing processes and does not sufficiently address the Committee's specific desire for BSNL to aim for a much faster resolution benchmark, such as the three-hour target mentioned during evidence. Therefore, the Committee treat this as an interim reply and desire to be furnished with a detailed action plan, including specific timelines and technological upgrades, aimed at proactively reducing complaint volumes and significantly improving the average resolution time to meet higher benchmarks.

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CHAPTER II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

MARKET SHARE

Recommendation (Sl. No. 2.1)

1. The Committee note the dominance of wireless connections (98.18 million) compared to wireline connections (6.43 million), showcasing India's preference for mobile connectivity. Kerala leads in wireline connections with 999,776, heavily driven by rural users, while Uttar Pradesh (East) has the highest wireless subscriber base at 8.65 million. Urban areas generally have a higher number of wireline connections, while rural areas show a greater uptake in wireless connections. States like Haryana and Himachal Pradesh exhibit a noteworthy rural wireless penetration, highlighting mobile network expansion in less urbanized regions. In contrast, wireline connections remain concentrated in urban hubs. This distribution reflects ongoing efforts to bridge the digital divide, although rural areas still lag in wireline connectivity. Further the BSNL's declining market share compared to private operators is a key concern. For example, in Bihar, BSNL holds a mere 6.47% market share compared to Jio's 41.22% and Airtel's 43.65%. A similar trend is observed across various Licensed Service Areas (LSAs), with BSNL's total market share in the wireless segment at 9.04%, far behind Jio's 38.21% and Airtel's 32.48%. Even in Kerala, where BSNL performs relatively well with a 24.57% market share, it still faces stiff competition from private players. Committee observe that to counter this, BSNL and the DoT have initiated various modernization and expansion efforts. These include upgrading mobile networks, with orders placed for 100,00 new 4G sites and plans to cover rural and border areas. Additionally, BSNL is expanding its Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) services, with connections rising from 1.28 million in March 2021 to 3.28 million in September 2023. Other infrastructure upgradation undertaken by BSNL include improving broadband gateways, increasing internet bandwidth capacity, and replacing outdated equipment. BSNL is also enhancing its service delivery through IT-enabled monitoring systems and partnerships with local entrepreneurs for last-mile connectivity. These includes collaboration under BharatNet to provide FTTH services in rural areas, along with extensive channel partner engagements and new enterprise services such as MPLS-VPN, leased lines, and cloud-based solutions.

Reply of the Government

"The LSA-wise details of Market share of various service providers, are as below:

Sl. No	Name of LSA	Market share (%) as on Nov'24			
		BSNL	Bharti	Vfone-Idea	Jio
1	Andhra Pradesh	8.45	39.86	11.83	38.85
2	Assam	11.58	45.15	5.44	37.82
3	Bihar	6.39	42.57	7.79	43.25
4	Gujarat	5.40	18.62	29.86	45.85
5	Haryana	16.34	27.11	24.23	32.17
6	Himachal Pradesh	19.33	39.57	4.23	36.85
7	Jammu & Kashmir	7.41	49.39	2.07	41.12
8	Karnataka	7.15	46.96	9.36	35.86
9	Kerala	22.81	20.75	30.54	25.85
10	Madhya Pradesh	6.62	20.76	17.60	54.97
11	Maharashtra	6.56	24.65	22.61	45.93
12	North East	10.63	49.33	5.26	34.77
13	Orissa	16.36	33.88	3.98	45.72
14	Punjab	12.99	35.39	17.20	33.20
15	Rajasthan	8.93	35.60	14.46	40.96
16	Tamilnadu	11.02	38.16	18.70	31.94
17	UP(E)	8.27	35.61	15.82	40.29
18	UP(W)	8.59	29.60	23.06	38.74
19	West Bengal	4.92	31.72	21.14	42.23
20	Kolkatta	10.34	23.03	20.44	45.91
21	Delhi	0.00	33.67	27.55	34.03
22	Mumbai	0.00	28.56	29.23	36.96
	Total	**8.35**	**33.16**	**17.66**	**40.20**

Regarding upgrading mobile networks, with orders placed for 1,00,000 new 4G sites and plans to cover rural and border areas, BSNL has taken the following steps :-

(i) In line with Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, under Phase IX.2 Project, BSNL has placed purchase order for 1 Lakh indigenously developed 4G sites for pan India deployment. Supply of 4G equipment has started from September 2023 and as on 08.03.2025, total 83,993 4G sites have been installed and 74,521 sites are ON-Air. The complete roll out of 1 lakh 4G sites is expected to be completed by June – 2025.

(ii) Further, BSNL has planned additional 22,215 sites to cater the supply requirement under Phase IX.2 project.

(iii) The equipment being procured through BSNL 4G project is upgradable to 5G with software upgrade and minimal change of hardware. Total 38,825 sites to be upgraded to 5G after 1 year of the launch of 4G services

(iii) Initially, BSNL 5G network is planned as NSA with upgradation of existing 4G core. However, considering the maturity of 5G related specifications, BSNL is considering the 5G Standalone (5G SA) also for implementation with radio of 32T32R & 8T8R configuration.

(iv) For start of 5G services in Delhi service area, BSNL has issued the tender on 01.11.2024 for provision of 5G as a service (5Gaas) by the Indian companies in Delhi Service area. Despite facing challenges, including limited financial resources, BSNL is making significant efforts to expand its FTTH services. The company is steadily reaching new towns and villages every month, while also upgrading existing copper-based fixed-line customers to FTTH. In addition, BSNL continues to enhance its FTTH offerings with services like high-speed internet, OTT content, Intranet Fiber TV (IFTV), Wi-Fi Roaming and VPN over broadband, all aimed at improving customer retention. As a result of these efforts, BSNL has successfully crossed 40 lakh FTTH customers base."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Recommendation (Sl. No. 2.2)

2. The Committee note that BSNL's limited 4G coverage, especially in rural areas, has hampered its ability to complete with private operators and BSNL has placed an order for 1 Lakh new 4G sites and plans to add more than 20,000 additional sites, particularly in underserved regions. The committee recommend that the Dot should ensure that these plans are expedited and that BSNL receives the necessary support to deploy these sites at the earliest. The Committee may be apprised of the progress made in this regard. The Committee observe that BSNL has shown progress in expanding its Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) connections. To further capitalize on this growth, Committee desire that BSNL should continue to invest in expanding its fiber network, particularly in rural and underserved areas and the DoT should support BSNL by facilitating the laying of 6,00,000 km of fiber under the BharatNet scheme, aiming to provide 1.5 crore FTTH connections over the next five years under intimation to them. Further, DoT should ensure that BSNL has access to the necessary capital and resources to continue with its modernization efforts. The details of capital and resources made available to BSNL by DoT and modernization efforts undertaken may be intimated to the Committee in the ATR. The committee observe that BSNL's service distribution shows significant disparities between urban and rural areas, especially in wireless connections where rural areas have a higher number of 2G BTS compared to 4G BTS (47,452 vs. 3,163). Committee believes that

despite rapid urbanization, majority of India still live in hinterlands and this apathy towards the rural areas is not expected from the CPSU. To address this, BSNL should prioritize the deployment of 4G and eventually 5G services in rural regions.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL has already placed a purchase order for 100,000 indigenous 4G sites under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The deployment process is currently underway in a phased manner, with a focus on rural and underserved areas to bridge the digital divide.

In addition, 22,215 additional 4G sites are planned under the expansion phase, especially through projects like 4G Saturation (villages without mobile coverage) and IX.2. BSNL is working closely with DoT and its strategic partners (including TCS, CDOT, and Tejas) to expedite commissioning, and has already begun field rollouts across multiple circles.

A detailed rollout tracker has been created and is being monitored at the highest level. As on 08.03.2025, total 83,993 4G sites have been installed and 74,521 sites are ON-Air.

Further, BSNL is implementing the various schemes of Government (funded by Digital Bharat Nidhi) to provide connectivity in rural areas:

Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages Project: The project has provision to provide 4G mobile services in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and difficult areas including the state of Gujarat with additional provision to include 20% additional villages. It has also provision of upgradation of mobile network in 6,279 only 2G/3G covered village to 4G. The project was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 and is being implemented by BSNL, agreement for which has been signed with BSNL on 06.02.2023 at the cost of Rs. 30,620 Crores. The expected timeline for completion of the project is Jun-2025.

Under this project as on 15.01.2025, 24,006 villages are proposed to be covered by 4G mobile services by installation and commission of 17,360 Towers. Out of which, 11,604 villages have been covered by installation of 8,173 mobile towers including upgradation. This project is being reviewed and monitored rigorously by DoT for completion of the project on priority.

LWE-I Upgradation: - Govt. has approved the project for upgradation of 2,343 2G tower installed under LWE Phase-I across the 10 LWE States to 4G under the scheme and out of which 353 towers have been upgraded to 4G and providing services at 353 locations. The project was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.04.2022 and is being implemented by

BSNL, agreement for which has been signed with BSNL on 09.05.2024 at the cost of Rs. 2426 Crores (including OPEX). The expected timeline for completion of the project is May-2025.

BHARATNET:

The Union Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) on 04.08.2023 at approved cost of Rs 1,39, 579 crores to be funded from Digital Bharat Nidhi. The Amended BharatNet program envisages to provide OF connectivity to 2.64 lakh Gram Panchayats on MPLS technology in ring topology and also to provide OF connectivity to the remaining Non-GP villages (approx. 3.8 lakhs) on demand basis. BSNL has been appointed as Project Management Agency (PMA) for this Program and shall select Project Implementing Agency (PIA) who shall implement this program on Design, Build, Operate & maintain (DBOM) model through competitive bidding and shall maintain network for Ten years. The RFP for selection of PIAs for 16 packages for implementation of Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) has been floated by BSNL on 15.02.2024 and opened on 07.08.2024 and has been under finalization. Also, providing 1.50 Crore home fiber connections to cover Government institutions including schools, Primary Health Centers, Anganwadis, Panchayat offices etc., using the BNU model over the next five years. The expected timeline for completion of the project is Mar-2027.

BharatNet Udyamis will be used for providing and maintaining last-mile connectivity from village to household. BNUs will be given a one-time financial incentive for activating new home fibre connections. To incentivize continuity of services, BNUs will also receive a share of the monthly revenue. BNU could be a village level entrepreneur, Internet Service Provider, Self Help Group (SHG), etc.

As on 13.01.2025, 6,92,676 km Optical Fibre Cable has been laid, and 2,09,291 GPs are Service Ready on OFC. In addition, 5,032 GPs have been connected over satellite media. Total 2,14,323 GPs are service ready. Further, 12,21,014 FTTH connections have been installed by BSNL & others ISPs using BharatNet. Overall data usage on BharatNet is about 1,41,558 (TB) for the month of Dec-2024."

[Ministry of Communications]

(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Comments of the Committee
(Please see para 7 of Chapter I of the Report)

Assets Management

Recommendation (Sl. No.3.1)

3. Committee note that out of the 17,700 sites identified by BSNL for tower installation, land acquisition had been completed for over 15,000 sites, while around 1,800 sites were yet to be acquired. Currently, BSNL operates around 100,000 existing towers, with plans to install equipment in 20,000 new locations. BSNL's asset monetization strategy focuses on utilizing underused land and buildings. Between 2019 and August 2023, the company generated over ₹1,070 crore in revenue from land rentals and sales. Notably, in 2022-23, BSNL earned ₹257.85 crore through rentals and ₹48.51 crore from land sales. By August 2023, an additional ₹117.25 crore had been generated through rentals, and ₹39.25 crore from sales. The company has also made significant progress in leasing its tower assets. Between 2019 and 2024, BSNL leased over 12,600 towers, earning around ₹1,024 crore in 2022-23 alone. Further, BSNL's asset monetization roadmap includes plans to sell surplus land and lease vacant built-up spaces, with a target of achieving 20% revenue growth from rentals over the next three years. In addition to direct sales and rentals, BSNL's monetization efforts are supported by policy and regulatory frameworks, with approvals required for properties valued over ₹10 crore. BSNL has already processed the sale of properties amounting to ₹359.74 crore through presidential approval, while additional properties valued at ₹585.82 crore and ₹496 crore await Group of Ministers' approval. Since the Cabinet's revival plan approval in 2019, BSNL has monetized assets worth ₹5,694 crore, through both core and non-core assets, including land leases and rentals. The Committee acknowledges that BSNL has made significant progress in monetizing its assets, however, further optimization is essential to achieve the targeted consistent revenue growth of 20% year over year (YOY). The Committee believe that to achieve these goals, BSNL should adopt a more aggressive and strategic approach for monetization of assets by involving exploring innovative leasing models, exploring public- private partnerships (PPP) or the Build, Own, Operate, and Transfer (BOOT) model for certain high-value properties. The Committee also note that BSNL has identified and is effectively utilizing a substantial portion of its building space for rental income, contributing significantly to its revenue. Nonetheless,

The Committee are of the view that to reach its goal of Rs 1,000 crore in rental income, BSNL should develop a comprehensive asset utilization strategy. The Committee further observe from the information furnished to them that the BSNL's revenue from leasing towers has shown fluctuations, with a peak of ₹1,050.42 crore in 2021-22 and a decrease to ₹430.34 crore up to August 2023. The Committee feel that to stabilize and increase tower leasing revenue, BSNL should aim to expand its leasing agreements with other service providers. This could involve increasing the number of leased towers and negotiating better leasing terms. Committee believe that BSNL should also consider leveraging its tower assets for new services, such as hosting equipment for emerging technologies like 5G.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL has intended to monetize 125 numbers of land parcels in various circles across the country through development model under PPP mode in various categories such as residential, commercial, Technology Park, warehouse and solarisation for which bids for appointment of consultant to provide Transaction advisory services has been invited.
BSNL has already formulated a Comprehensive Renting Out Policy in the year 2020 (in short refereed as CROP-2020) for renting out its surplus built up areas. The rental income had been steadily rising as may be seen from the following data:

Achievements against targets assigned by Cabinet (in INR Cr.)

FY	Target	Actual/Expected Achievement		Total
		Sale	Rental	
2022-23	400	48.69	257.85	306.54(76.6%)
2023-24	600	311.78	321.31	633.09(105.5%)
2024-25	800	554.08	257.79	812.27(101.58%)(upto 31.12.2024)
2025-26	900	540	370	1,000
2026-27	1,000	600	400	1,000
2027-28	1,000	580	420	1,000
2028-29	1,000	560	440	1,000
2029-30	1,000	540	460	1,000
2030-31	1,000	520	480	1,000
2031-32	1,000	520	500	1,000
2032-33	1,000	520	520	1,000
2033-34	1,000	520	540	1,000
2034-35	1,000	520	560	1,000

*In FY 2024-25, already 812.57 Cr (554.08 Cr from land sale plus 257.79 from rental) has been achieved upto Dec 2024 against target of 800 Cr.

From above it may please be seen that monetization target assigned by Cabinet is Rs 1,000 Cr w.e.f FY 2026-27 which includes sale of land parcels and rental income.
BSNL is making all out efforts to achieve the target assigned by the Cabinet.
BSNL is having its agreements with all TSPS viz. RJIL, Airtel and Vi. BSNL is further approaching entities like Prasar Bharti and other service providers like ISPs, PMRTS etc. for leasing out the BSNL towers infrastructure for extension of their services and testing new technologies etc. to increase number of leased out towers.

BSNL has already signed agreement for 5G commercials with M/s RJIL and is in process of reaching agreement with Airtel and VIL for extending 5G services through leased towers of BSNL."

[Ministry of Communications]
F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Financial Performance

Recommendation (Sl. No.4.1)

4. The Committee note that BSNL's revenue from operations has shown a declining trend from ₹22,668 crore in 2017-18 to ₹16,809 crore in 2021-22, with a slight recovery to ₹19,128 crore in 2022-23. Despite not having 4G services, BSNL has managed to stabilize its revenues in recent years, indicating a resilient revenue base. However, the overall income has not shown significant growth, and the Company continues to incur substantial losses, with a net loss of ₹8,162 crore in 2022-23. BSNL's capital expenditure (Capex) liabilities have been cleared, and the Company is now focused on network upgrades, including the deployment of 4G services. The Committee believe that that BSNL need to prioritizes efficient utilization of Capex, particularly in enhancing its network infrastructure to provide competitive services in the market. Given the strategic importance of indigenous technology development, BSNL's focus on utilizing domestic 4G equipment should be supported, but with clear timelines and performance metrics. The Committee recommend that BSNL and DoT should closely monitor the impact of 4G services on revenue growth and ensure that BSNL capitalizes on this new service to improve its financial health.

Reply of the Government

" BSNL is implementing strict capex discipline by optimizing site selection, infrastructure sharing, and equipment utilization. All current investments under the ₹24,000 Cr revival package are being made using Make-in-India 4G technology, followings PoC evaluations. Each phase of deployment is being monitored with KPIs and milestone-based metrics, and vendor performance is being tracked rigorously through centralized dashboards and third-party audits. The capex is aligned with both strategic national goals and long-term financial sustainability. BSNL has a dedicated team to monitor revenue trends post-4G rollout,

particularly ARPU, subscriber growth, and churn rates in newly commissioned sites. Early indicators from pilot and zones have shown positive traction, especially in areas where BSNL was previously operating only 2G/3G services.

With VoLTE and higher-speed data capabilities now rolling out, BSNL expects a significant uptick in revenue and plans to regularly brief DoT and COPU with quarterly financial impact reports."

[Ministry of Communications]
F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Comments of the Committee
(Please see para 10 of Chapter I of the Report)

Recommendation (Sl. No.4.2)

5. Committee note that BSNL has encountered significant challenges, including high maintenance costs for outdated equipment, delays in 4G deployment, and intense competition from private telecom companies. To address these issues, BSNL has adopted a new business model by partnering with local entrepreneurs for Service delivery and network expansion. This approach has effectively reduced operational costs and enhanced service quality. Committee advice BSNL to closely monitor the success of this partnership model and to consider expanding it if it continuous to deliver positive results. Furthermore, BSNL has informed the committee that, because of its decision to attempt to "Make in India" and adherence to GFR provision as against readily available from components from global vendors, have slowed down BSNL's rollout of 4G services. Developing and maturing indigenous 4G technology poses challenges, but as a government entity, BSNL's efforts will boost local manufacturing and technological advancement, making it a source of national pride. The committee acknowledge that Government policies, such as the "Make in India" initiative and adherence to GFR provisions, might have influenced BSNL's operational flexibility. Therefore, the Committee recommend and desire that DoT in consultation with other Government agencies involved in the process should adopt a more balanced approach that supports domestic industry development while ensuring that BSNL can remain competitive in the fast-changing telecom sector. The Committee may be apprised of the action taken and progress made in these directions.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL's Franchisee initiatives, has proven effective in cost reduction and quality enhancement. These models have expanded service reach even in the most remote areas without incurring major operational expenditure.

Based on success stories, BSNL is now formalizing frameworks to scale this model nationwide, including digital onboarding portals, partner training, and incentive-based performance structures. A centralized MIS is being maintained to track and evaluate partner contributions. BSNL is fully aligned with the Government's push to support domestic telecom manufacturing. However, BSNL, in coordination with DoT, is ensuring that the chosen

vendors are subject to strict SLAs, field validations, and timely delivery milestones, to ensure competitiveness is not compromised. The indigenous stack is being deployed with tiered rollout plans and early support mechanisms, and periodic reviews are held with all stakeholders including R&D institutions, vendor consortia, and DoT."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Financial Handholding

Recommendation (Sl. No.5.1)

6. The Committee note that the BSNL's survival and operations have been heavily dependent on substantial government support. The Company has explicitly acknowledged that it would not have survived without this government intervention, especially post-2020. The Committee further note that BSNL has not sought any assistance from international financial institutions, relying instead on extensive financial packages from the Indian government, totaling over ₹2 lakh crores. This support has been crucial in stabilizing BSNL's operations, enabling it to clear significant vendor dues and avoid defaults, which would have otherwise jeopardized its existence. The government's financial assistance includes ₹22,000 crore allocated for CAPEX investment over four years, with funds earmarked for wireline and wireless network improvements. BSNL has already begun utilizing these funds, particularly for enhancing its optical fiber network. Additionally, the Government has administratively allocated spectrum in the 900/1800 MHz bands and settled AGR dues through equity conversion, further reducing BSNL's financial liabilities and enabling it to focus on network modernization. Further, the Viability Gap Funding (VGF) of ₹13,789 crore has been provided to support BSNL's rural wireline operations, ensuring that the company continues to serve unviable but essential areas. Moreover, BSNL has raised ₹22,828 crore through Sovereign Guarantee Bonds, helping to manage its debt and liquidity. While these measures have kept BSNL afloat, the Committee feel that the company must now focus on reducing its reliance on Government aid, and there is a need to enhance its operational efficiency, explore new revenue streams, and strategically invest in infrastructure and technology to ensure long-term sustainability. The Committee would further recommend BSNL to closely monitor the progress of CAPEX and VGF (Viablity Gap Funding) utilization to ensure that the funds are being used effectively and within the stipulated timelines. The Committee would like to recommend an audit mechanism to be developed by the controlling Ministry to ensure that the investments and other measures lead to tangible improvements towards achieving the long-term goals of the Company such as the network infrastructure and service quality.

Reply of the Government

BSNL has taken step to reduce reliance on Govt. aid by focusing on revenue growth through both strengthening of existing revenue streams and exploring new area of revenue growth along with aggressive expansion of 4G network and strengthening the core transmission network, BSNL expects the revenue to grow by at least 15% in the coming year to reduce dependency on government support. The receipt & utilization of CAPEX and VGF is being monitored very closely by BSNL. Though the CAPEX utilization is subject to physical

progress of the project the efforts are being made for timely utilization of funds for faster rollout of the project. The VGF received during the last three financial years have been progressively utilized for bank loan repayment and other debt service obligations as well as for repayment of pending OPEX liabilities. Regular capex monitoring meeting for physical progress of project, and the financial expenditure is being held on quarterly basis by DOT, against all government funded project.

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Revival Plan

Recommendation (Sl. No.6.1 & 6.2)

7. The Committee note that BSNL has significantly reduced its total debt by ₹13,410 crore over the 18 months, i.e. from ₹32,978 crore as of March 2022 to ₹19,568 crore by September 2023. This debt reduction was primarily achieved through the issuance of sovereign guaranteed bonds and repayment of high-cost loans using viability gap funding. The Committee commend BSNL's efforts in debt restructuring and encourage continued financial prudence to further reduce interest costs and improve cash flow. The Committee, further, observe that the first BSNL revival package, approved in 2019, was pivotal in addressing immediate financial strains. Key components included a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for about 93,000 employees, which aimed to reduce the company's wage burden. Sovereign guarantees enabled BSNL to raise ₹15,000 crore at low interest rates. Spectrum allocation for 4G, valued at ₹24,084 crore (revised to ₹14,148 crore), was intended to bolster network capabilities. The monetization of BSNL's assets, such as leasing 12,663 towers and generating over ₹1,000 crore from land sales, provided crucial liquidity. Despite these efforts the Committee observe that some challenges persisted, including the postponement of the MTNL merger and incomplete spectrum allocation for Delhi and Mumbai. Similarly, the second revival package, approved in 2022, introduced measures to further stabilize BSNL. The package provided a sovereign guarantee of ₹22,828 crore to restructure debt, with ₹4,184.70 crore successfully raised in FY 2022-23. AGR dues, amounting to ₹33,404 crore, were settled through equity conversion, and the allotment of 5G spectrum was supported with equity infusion. Viability Gap Funding (VGF) of ₹16,189 crore addressed rural operations, and the merger of BBNL with BSNL, now finalized, was aimed at enhancing operational efficiency. The support of ₹22,471 crore for CAPEX saw partial release, with ₹3,013 crore disbursed, underpinning infrastructure improvements. The third package, approved in 2023, marked a significant escalation in support with an allotment of ₹89,047 crore for 5G spectrum, further enhancing BSNL's technological capabilities. The authorized capital was increased to ₹2,10,000 crore to accommodate spectrum costs and capital expenditures. The government's ongoing commitment, demonstrated through continuous funding and policy reforms, reflects a strategic focus on long-term sustainability. The infusion of ₹13,789 crore in VGF for unviable rural operations and the procurement of 4G equipment under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative emphasize a comprehensive approach to BSNL's revival, aiming to ensure both technological advancement and financial stability.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL has initiated the largest-ever indigenous 4G rollout with end-to-end Indian technology and mass rollout is currently progressing in all states.
Parallelly, BSNL has initiated preparatory work for 5G trials, using the same core as the 4G solution, ensuring seamless migration and technology reusability. The spectrum allotment under revival packages is being utilized optimally, with technical readiness underway for 5G Non-Standalone and eventually Standalone deployments.
As a part of financial control, it is ensured that funds received are used for the intended purpose. The utilization certificates of the funds are being submitted to DOT at periodic intervals.
There is a mechanism of internal audit, statutory audit as well as P&T audit which ensure the utilization of funds for the intended purpose.
There is a review mechanism by administrative ministry through which periodic reports are being given to DOT for review purpose.
BSNL achievement against MoU rating are being monitor on quarterly basis based on the quarterly financial results. Nodal units within BSNL are assigned the target and are being monitored on regular basis. The quarterly performance and informed to DOT with progress on target assigned for each of the parameter. The performance is also reviewed by Board level in BSNL on regular basis."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Recommendation (Sl. No.6.2)

8. As clear from the above, the revival packages emphasize infrastructure upgrades and spectrum allotments, including significant investments in 4G and 5G technologies. The Committee would recommend BSNL to focus on accelerating the rollout of these technologies to enhance service quality and expand market reach. Further, the substantial financial support provided through the revival packages—totaling over ₹2 lakh crore—highlights the critical need for effective financial management. To maximize the impact of these funds, Committee would suggest BSNL to implement robust financial controls and reporting systems. Regular audits and transparent reporting of capital expenditures, asset monetization, and debt management should be enforced to ensure that resources are utilized efficiently and that financial goals are met. The Committee would like to see the progress in this regard. Lastly, the Committee observe that aaccording to the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), BSNL's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) ratings have ranged from "Fair" in 2013-14 to "Very Good" in 2022-23. This fluctuation underscores the company's evolving operational efficiency and performance. The ratings over the years indicate that while BSNL has made notable progress in some areas, there have been sustained issues impacting its overall effectiveness. Given the mixed MoU ratings of BSNL over the past decade, the Committee believe that it is crucial to establish a more rigorous

monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Regular performance reviews should be conducted by the administrative ministry incorporating clear bench

Reply of the Government

"BSNL has initiated the largest-ever indigenous 4G rollout with end-to-end Indian technology and mass rollout is currently progressing in all states.
Parallelly, BSNL has initiated preparatory work for 5G trials, using the same core as the 4G solution, ensuring seamless migration and technology reusability. The spectrum allotment under revival packages is being utilized optimally, with technical readiness underway for 5G Non-Standalone and eventually Standalone deployments.
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There is a review mechanism by administrative ministry through which periodic reports are being given to DOT for review purpose.
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[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Addressing the Transition to 4G/5G for BSNL

Recommendation (Sl. No.7.1)

9. The Committee note that BSNL has faced a challenging and delayed transition to 4G/5G technology, when compared not just with global standards but with the national standards as well. As per BSNL's testimony, while 4G technology was introduced globally a decade before India, BSNL's decision to develop this technology was only made in 2020, resulting in a considerable lag. BSNL is actively deploying swadeshi 4G technology across approximately 100,000 sites, with a completion target set for December 2024. Committee further note that the 4G infrastructure being installed is designed to be easily upgradable to 5G through software updates, although the full transition to 5G is projected to commence only from December 2024. This approach aligns with the government's policy of promoting indigenous technology, which, while beneficial for national self-reliance and data security, presents unique challenges in terms of technology maturity and market competition. BSNL faces several hurdles in its expansion efforts. Firstly, the deployment of indigenous 4G technology, though crucial for national security and technological self sufficiency, is complicated by its relative novelty and the lack of extensive global testing. This has resulted

in delays and concerns about the stability and performance of the network in live environments compared to established foreign technologies. Additionally, BSNL is at a competitive disadvantage as it is still reliant on 2G/3G networks for a significant portion of its services, whereas competitors are rapidly expanding their 4G and 5G services. The lack of 4G spectrum availability further exacerbates this issue, with 98% of current market revenue and traffic generated by 4G services that BSNL cannot fully tap into. To address these challenges, the committee would suggest BSNL to consider a multipronged strategy, firstly, accelerating the testing and stabilization of indigenous 4G technology is crucial, therefore BSNL should enhance collaboration with Indian technology developers and global experts to expedite the validation and refinement process. Further, the committee feel that BSNL may explore partnerships with foreign technology providers for temporary integration which could help bridge the technology gap while the indigenous solutions reaches maturity. Given the financial and operational pressures, it is recommended that BSNL reassess its investment strategy in 5G technology by, focusing on clear use cases and potential return on investment before substantial expenditure. Lastly, continue support from the government in term of policy and financial packing will be essential for BSNL to overcome these hurdles and achieve its ambitious target for network expansion and technology upgradation.

Reply of the Government

"(i) In line with the 'AtmaNirbhar Bharat' initiative of the Government of India, BSNL placed PO for procurement of 1 lakh eNodeBs & associated core equipments on PAN India basis including Delhi & Mumbai LSA of MTNL on turnkey basis under Phase IX.2 Project.

(iii) The PO has been issued to M/s ITI (RQ) on 08.06.2023 for west Zone RAN, M/s TCS for Core Hardware in all zones and RAN in NZ+SZ+EZ & M/s CDOT for software of 4G Core for all zones on 22.06.2023.

(iv) Out of 1 lakh eNodeBs, as on 08.03.2025, total 83,993 4G sites have been installed and 74,521 sites are ON-Air. The roll out of 1 Lakh eNodeBs is expected to be completed by June – 2025.

(v) Further, BSNL has planned additional 22,215 sites to cater the supply requirement under Phase IX.2 project.

(vi)The equipment being procured through BSNL 4G project is upgradable to 5G with software upgrade and minimal change of hardware. Total 38,825 sites to be upgraded to 5G after 1 year of the launch of 4G services.

(vii) Initially, BSNL 5G network is planned as NSA with upgradation of existing 4G core. However, considering the maturity of 5G related specifications, BSNL is considering the 5G Standalone (5G SA) also for implementation with radio of 32T32R & 8T8R configuration.

(viii) For start of 5G services in Delhi service area, BSNL has issued the tender on 01.11.2024 for provision of 5G as a service (5Gaas) by the Indian companies in Delhi Service area."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Assessing the progress of BSNL in 4G Deployment and Future 5G plans

Recommendation (Sl. No.8.1)

10. The Committee observe that adoption and deployment of 4G technology, began in 2020 despite its global introduction a decade earlier which has placed BSNL at a competitive disadvantage, with the majority of the telecom market now dominated by 4G and even 5G technologies. This delay has directly impacted BSNL's revenue generation capabilities, with 98% of the market's revenue stemming from 4G services, while BSNL continues to rely heavily on 2G and 3G networks. The Committee therefore feel that BSNL needs to prioritize the expedite testing and deployment of the indigenous 4G technology to reduce the competitive disadvantage it currently faces. Given that the technology is still under evaluation, the Committee desire that BSNL should explore partnerships or technology-sharing agreements to ensure rapid stabilization and performance optimization, along with capturing the unexplored market or where 4G/5G services are yet to be given by any Company. It will not only contribute in Bharat Net project by GOI but also enhance Company's business with its objective/mission to fulfil the demand in far flung areas. The Committee observe that the BSNL has embarked on deploying indigenous 4G technology across 1 lakh sites, with plans for completion by December 2024. This equipment is designed to be upgraded to 5G with minimal hardware changes, indicating a future-proofing strategy. However, the deployment and testing of this indigenous technology have faced challenges due to the complexity and the nascent stage of development. Only 200 sites have been commissioned so far, and the technology's performance is still under evaluation in a live environment. The Committee applaud the BSNL's strategy of deploying 4G equipment that is upgradable to 5G. However, the Committee urge BSNL to establish a clear and actionable roadmap for the 5G upgrade starting in December 2024, ensuring minimal disruption and swift implementation to stay competitive in the telecom market. The Committee would like to be apprised of the further developments taking place in this regard.

Reply of the Government

" BSNL, in collaboration with CDOT and TCS, has already completed Proof of Concept and is now in production rollout phase across multiple circles. Field performance is being monitored and optimized continuously.

BSNL is also exploring MoUs with academia, start-ups, and R&D units to accelerate performance tuning and use case development. The 4G stack is being evolved with a 5G-ready architecture, ensuring rapid stabilization and expansion in uncovered and rural markets.

(i) In line with the 'AtmaNirbhar Bharat' initiative of the Government of India, BSNL placed PO for procurement of 1 lakh eNodeBs & associated core equipments on PAN India basis under Phase IX.2 Project. The PO was issued to M/s ITI (RQ) on 08.06.2023 for west Zone RAN, M/s TCS for Core Hardware in all zones and RAN in NZ+SZ+EZ & M/s CDOT for software of 4G Core for all zones on 22.06.2023.

(iv) Out of 1 lakh eNodeBs, as on 08.03.2025, total 83,993 4G sites have been installed and 74,521 sites are ON-Air. The I& C of 1 Lakh eNodeBs is expected to be completed by June

– 2025.
(v) Further, BSNL has planned additional 22,215 sites to cater the supply requirement under Phase IX.2 project.
(vi)The equipment being procured through BSNL 4G project is upgradable to 5G with software upgrade and minimal change of hardware. Total 38,825 sites to be upgraded to 5G after 1 year of the launch of 4G services.
(vii) Initially, BSNL 5G network is planned as NSA with upgradation of existing 4G core. However, considering the maturity of 5G related specifications, BSNL is considering the 5G Standalone (5G SA) also for implementation with radio of 32T32R & 8T8R configuration.
(viii) For start of 5G services in Delhi service area, BSNL has issued the tender on 01.11.2024 for provision of 5G as a service (5Gaas) by the Indian companies in Delhi Service area."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Strategic Spectrum Allocation
Recommendation (Sl. No.9.1)

11. The Committee observe that the DoT has a structured process for spectrum allocation that includes seeking recommendations from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), obtaining approval from the Union Cabinet, and conducting auctions through an online platform. Thus, ensuring a transparent and fair allocation process. Along with that, the process also includes mechanisms, such as spectrum caps, to prevent monopolization, which is crucial for maintaining a competitive market. The Committee would thus suggest that to ensure the equitable and effective allocation of spectrum, the DoT should continue to refine its auction process, making sure that reserve prices are set at such levels that balance revenue generation with the need to foster competition. When auctioning spectrum, the DoT should consider the current market positions of both private and public sector players, since, unlike private sector operators, public sector units like BSNL have social obligations mandated by the Government. Additionally, the DoT should provide clearer guidelines and support mechanisms for state-owned operators such as BSNL, who may face financial constraints. This will ensure that PSUs can participate effectively in spectrum auctions without being disadvantaged due to their financial position. The Committee note that prior to the revival package in 2022, BSNL did not have access to the necessary spectrum to provide 4G services. The Company was allocated 10 MHz of spectrum in the 2100 MHz band as part of the revival package, allowing it to roll out 4G services. However, the deployment has been limited to around 8,900 sites due to restrictions on using indigenously developed technology, which, while in the national interest, has posed significant operational challenges. BSNL has faced financial difficulties in acquiring spectrum due to its inability to raise funds from the market. The historical debt burden from previous spectrum payments has further strained its financial position. The Committee further note that unlike private operators who have received significant investments, BSNL's financial struggles have limited its ability to compete effectively in the market. Therefore, the Committee would like to recommend that the Company should also invest in building

capacity for indigenously developed technology, as mandated by the Government, to overcome the operational challenges it currently faces.

Reply of the Government

“ BSNL has launched internal training and upskilling programs for its field engineers and core technical teams in partnership with CDOT and other vendors. A dedicated knowledge transfer framework is being instituted across zones.

Further, through institutions like NTIPRIT and BSNL training centers, the company is building deep expertise in next-gen telecom technologies including IMS, 5G, O-RAN, and software-defined networks to ensure smooth operations of the indigenous stack.”

[Ministry of Communications]

(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Telecom Services

Recommendation (Sl. No.10.1)

12. The Committee note that BSNL have a vast network infrastructure with 19,062 exchanges and a total switching capacity (Wireline Copper) of 154.166 lakh lines, which is currently being underutilized, with only 27.068 lakh in active use. The inclusion of 31.548 lakh FTTH connections has bolstered BSNL's wireline customer base, highlighting a strategic shift towards fiber technology over traditional copper lines. The Committee also note that in mobile services, BSNL operates 155,614 BTS, predominantly focused on 2G and 3G, with a limited 4G presence, indicating a slow transition to more competitive technology. The Committee further note that rural mobile coverage also remains a challenge, with only about two-thirds of villages covered by BSNL’s network. Further, BSNL's broadband services are evolving, with a decline in copper-based connections to 3.96 lakh, offset by an increase in FTTH connections, now at 32.68 lakh. Despite the potential, Wi-Fi services remain underutilized, with just 6.05 lakh unique users. Financially, the outdated copper infrastructure is becoming less viable, with revenues dropping significantly. However, FTTH services have seen a revenue increase, helping BSNL stay competitive. Government initiatives like BharatNet, with BSNL as a key player, are crucial in expanding rural broadband connectivity, supporting digital inclusion across India. The Committee hope that BSNL would continue the expansion of FTTH services to mitigate the decline in copper broadband connections and also focus on increasing Wi-Fi hotspots in public and educational institutions to widen its broadband user base. The Committee in this regard would suggest BSNL to use government initiatives like BharatNet and the Smart City project to utilize their infrastructure and services offerings to capitalize on these projects to enhance its enterprise services and expand its market presence along with improving digital literacy of the rural areas of the Country.

Reply of the Government

“ BSNL has already taken policy initiative for engagement of local Telecom Infrastructure Provider (TIPs) to expand high Bandwidth fiber based FTTH Services. After such policy initiative, FTTH segment in BSNL has gained pace from 2019. BSNL has gained progress from approx. 3.35 Lakh connections as on 31.03.2019 to approx. 41.12 Lakh connection as on 31.01.2025.

BHARATNET:

The Union Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) on 04.08.2023 at approved cost of Rs 1,39, 579 crores to be funded from Digital Bharat Nidhi. The Amended BharatNet program envisages to provide OF connectivity to 2.64 lakh Gram Panchayats on MPLS technology in ring topology and also to provide OF connectivity to the remaining Non-GP villages (approx. 3.8 lakhs) on demand basis. BSNL has been appointed as Project Management Agency (PMA) for this Program and shall select Project Implementing Agency (PIA) who shall implement this program on Design, Build, Operate & maintain (DBOM) model through competitive bidding and shall maintain network for Ten years. The RFP for selection of PIAs for 16 packages for implementation of Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) has been floated by BSNL on 15.02.2024 and opened on 07.08.2024 and has been under finalization. Also, providing 1.50 Crore home fiber connections to cover Government institutions including schools, Primary Health Centers, Anganwadis, Panchayat offices etc., using the BNU model over the next five years. The expected timeline for completion of the project is Mar-2027.

BharatNet Udyamis will be used for providing and maintaining last-mile connectivity from village to household. BNUs will be given a one-time financial incentive for activating new home fibre connections. To incentivize continuity of services, BNUs will also receive a share of the monthly revenue. BNU could be a village level entrepreneur, Internet Service Provider, Self Help Group (SHG), etc.

As on 13.01.2025, 6,92,676 km Optical Fibre Cable has been laid, and 2,09,291 GPs are Service Ready on OFC. In addition, 5,032 GPs have been connected over satellite media. Total 2,14,323 GPs are service ready. Further, 12,21,014 FTTH connections have been installed by BSNL & others ISPs using BharatNet. Overall data usage on BharatNet is about 1,41,558 (TB) for the month of Dec-2024.

BSNL is also implementing the 4G Saturation Project and LWE Phase-I Upgradation to increase its reach in rural areas.

Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages Project: The project has provision to provide 4G mobile services in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and difficult areas including the state of Gujarat with additional provision to include 20% additional

villages. It has also provision of upgradation of mobile network in 6,279 only 2G/3G covered village to 4G. The project was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 and is being implemented by BSNL, agreement for which has been signed with BSNL on 06.02.2023 at the cost of Rs. 30,620 Crores. The expected timeline for completion of the project is Jun-2025.

Under this project as on 15.01.2025, 24,006 villages are proposed to be covered by 4G mobile services by installation and commission of 17,360 Towers. Out of which, 11,604 villages have been covered by installation of 8,173 mobile towers including upgradation. This project is being reviewed and monitored rigorously by DoT for completion of the project on priority.

LWE-I Upgradation: - Govt. has approved the project for upgradation of 2,343 2G tower installed under LWE Phase-I across the 10 LWE States to 4G under the scheme and out of which 353 towers have been upgraded to 4G and providing services at 353 locations. The project was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.04.2022 and is being implemented by BSNL, agreement for which has been signed with BSNL on 09.05.2024 at the cost of Rs. 2426 Crores (including OPEX). The expected timeline for completion of the project is May-2025."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Pay Structure and Allowances

Recommendation (Sl. No.12.1)

13. From the information available to the Committee, it is clear that the pay and benefits for employees at BSNL and ITS are notably distinct due to differing pay structures and 77 financial constraints. Despite recommendations from the 3rd Pay Revision Committee (PRC), BSNL has not implemented these changes due to financial constraints. ITS officers, who are central government employees, receive salaries based on the 7th Pay Commission (CDA pattern), which typically results in higher pay scales compared to BSNL employees. In contrast, BSNL employees are divided into three categories: (i) those on deputation from DOT, (ii) absorbed DOT employees, and (iii) BSNL directly recruited employees. ITS officers enjoy more comprehensive allowances and perks in line with central government standards, whereas BSNL employees' benefits are constrained by the company's financial limitations. In terms of superannuation, ITS officers benefit from pensions under the CCS (Pension) Rules, providing them with a robust retirement package. On the other hand, BSNL absorbed employees also receive pensions from DOT but under different terms, while BSNL's directly recruited employees receive retirement benefits through the BSNL Employees Superannuation Pension Trust, including EPF, Gratuity, and a Pension Fund, though these benefits are less extensive compared to central government schemes. In terms of health and medical benefits, ITS officers are covered by extensive government medical schemes,

whereas BSNL employees have access to the BSNL MRS Scheme and optional health insurance policies, with absorbed employees also benefiting from medical coverage under CCS (Pension) Rules and CGHS. The Committee observe that the financial impact of these differences is significant. For FY 2022-23, BSNL's per-employee cost for directly recruited employees is notably higher than for absorbed employees, reflecting the additional contributions towards EPF, Gratuity, and the Pension Fund. Furthermore, BSNL's employee costs as a percentage of total revenue are much higher compared to private sector players like Vodafone Idea, Bharti, and Jio.Committee further observe that the promotion and career development opportunities are structured for both ITS and BSNL employees, though BSNL faces challenges related to timely promotions and career growth. While ITS officers follow central government rules for career progression, BSNL employees have encountered delays and issues with promotional avenues due to organizational constraints.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL does not fall under the category for 2017 pay revision under affordability clause as per Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) guidelines dated 03.08.2017 on pay revision in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) w.e.f. 01.01.2017. BSNL has been incurring losses since 2009-10 and continues to incur loss despite many employees opting for Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), due to which the pay revision has not been considered.

As per DPE guidelines, the contributions towards Superannuation benefits- Pension and Post Retirement Medical benefits are dependent upon affordability, sustainability and capacity to pay of the CPSE.

The total contribution of BSNL towards superannuation benefits is 25.1% [12%- EPF, 4.8%- GPF, 3.3%- Post Retirement Medical Benefit (as per actuarial evaluation) and 5%-SPS] within the 30% ceiling prescribed by DPE.

BSNL has been making losses for the last several years and therefore it could not consider increase in SAB contribution. Moreover, these benefits are to be reviewed every year. Accordingly, a review will be carried out in FY 2025-26 considering the affordability and financial performance of BSNL.

Revision of allowances can be examined after revision of pay under 3rd PRC based on affordability thereafter."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Merging BBNL and BSNL

Recommendation (Sl. No.12.1)

14. The Committee observe that the merger of Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) represents a strategic initiative by the Indian government to optimize the utilization of telecom infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

The Union Cabinet approved this move in July 2022, with the intent to enhance BSNL's service capabilities by integrating BBNL's middle-mile infrastructure with BSNL's extensive telecom network. The Committee have been informed that this merger is expected to address the previously underutilized BBNL network by leveraging BSNL's panIndia reach, field presence, and ability to provide end-to-end connectivity, including lastmile services. The Committee further note that the BSNL has already created a dedicated vertical within its structure to manage the integration, deploying significant manpower, including officers and contractual staff, to supervise and execute the BharatNet projects. The Committee note that the integration has shown promising results, particularly in rural areas where BSNL has successfully extended BharatNet Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) connections through local entrepreneurs, significantly increasing data consumption from these connections. The average data consumption in rural areas has reached 170-180 GB per month, which is close to the urban average, indicating the project's success and potential to bridge the digital divide. The Committee are happy to note that the merger of BBNL with BSNL and believe that this is a well-timed and necessary step towards optimizing telecom infrastructure in India, particularly in rural areas. The success of this initiative will depend on BSNL's ability to effectively manage and expand the integrated network, ensuring that the benefits reach the most remote areas of the country. The Committee would like to be apprised about the progress made in this regard.

Reply of the Government

" Under Amended BharatNet Project (ABP), the plan has been made to provide FTTH connections in 1,60,745 GPs. The FTTH connections will be provided in 2,71,674 villages on demand basis. The network has been planned on ring connectivity so that the network availability is increased and consumers get better uptime.

However, Infrastructure created under BharatNet project by BSNL are being utilized for providing FTTH (Fiber to Home) connections by optimizing telecom infrastructure in the country, particularly in rural areas to expand integrated network. These high-speed internet connections are being used to bridge digital divide and expand the integrated network, ensuring that the benefits reach the most remote areas of the country. The details are as:-

BharatNet Phase-I project

S. No.	Circle	No of Blocks	Total GPs including BHQ	Service Ready GPs
1	A&N	1	7	7
2	Assam	129	1,615	1,615
3	Bihar	354	6,009	6,009
4	Chhattisgarh	64	4,114	4,114
5	CTD	18	193	193
6	HR	122	6,204	6,204

7	J&K	13	427	427
8	Karnataka	177	6,251	6,251
9	Kerala	152	1,129	1,129
10	Maharashtra	203	15,373	15,369
11	MP	173	12,716	12,716
12	Punjab	94	8,053	8,053
13	Rajasthan	221	8,967	8,967
14	Sikkim	9	55	32
15	UPE	275	17,983	17,983
16	UPW	167	10,466	10,466
17	Uttarakhand	30	1,849	1,849
18	WB	264	2,762	2,762
19	Other States			
		2,466	1,04,173	1,04,146

BharatNet Phase-II project

S. No.	Circle	Total Blocks	Total GPs including Blocks	Service Ready GPs
		Nos	Nos	Nos
1	MP	77	5,345	5,345
2	UPE	225	16,933	16,770
3	UPW	36	2,175	2,175
	Total	338	24,453	24,290

Further, since April, 2022, when Utilisation of BharatNet (BN) has been entrusted to BSNL, around 10.3 lakh FTTH connections have been provisioned on the BN network.

Through this, around 73,000 GP/Villages have been provided with FTTH connections. Further, out of these, there are around 41,000 GPs where FTTH connection has been given in around 1.68 lakh rural Government Institutions.

The average monthly usage has increased to 157K TB in March, 25 from around 11k TB in FY 22-23.

Further, the per user monthly usage has also reached to around 198 GB in March, 25."

Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)

Recommendation (Sl. No.14.1)

15. The Committee note that Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), established under the Indian Telegraph Act (Amendment) 2003, is vital for providing quality mobile and digital services in India's rural and remote areas. With ₹46,127 crores disbursed over nine years, USOF supports key projects like BharatNet and various mobile schemes in challenging regions, including the North Eastern Region and island territories. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has reported significant progress, such as increased connectivity through mobile towers and submarine cables, enhancing digital access and enabling 5G services in remote areas. The Committee note that BSNL, as the key implementing agency, continues to expand its network, particularly with ongoing 4G rollouts in underserved villages. However, while significant progress has been made, there are areas where further efforts are needed. For instance, the 4G equipment for sites in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas is yet to be fully received, and the complete rollout of BSNL's 4G network is expected to extend into December 2024. The Committee applaud the effective utilization of the USOF in expanding telecom infrastructure across rural and remote areas and encourages the continuation of such efforts to ensure universal coverage. The Committee desire that the timely completion of ongoing projects, particularly the rollout of 4G services in underserved areas, should be prioritized to meet the growing demand for digital connectivity and also recommend that the DoT and BSNL expedite the procurement and deployment of necessary equipment, especially in sensitive regions like LWE areas, to enhance network reliability and support socio-economic development.

Reply of the Government

“ BSNL has made the rollout in underserved, LWE, and border areas a high priority. Project teams are working in mission mode to ensure on-time delivery, especially for 4G Saturation sites. Special monitoring cells have been created in Corporate Office and Circle HQs for tracking progress in sensitive regions.

The procurement processes have been expedited with coordination from DoT and vendor consortiums, and logistical challenges in remote areas are being addressed with the help of local administration and security agencies.”

[Ministry of Communications]

(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Network Security

Recommendation (Sl No. 16.1)

16. Committee observe that the DoT has implemented a comprehensive approach to network security, including the development of the Telecom Security Operations Centre (TSOC), which plays a crucial role in monitoring and detecting cyber threats. The TSOC has successfully identified and mitigated numerous security risks, including botnets, ransomware, and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks. Additionally, the DoT has established strict protocols to ensure that telecom equipment is sourced from trusted suppliers and that updates undergo rigorous checks to prevent security breaches. While appreciating the measures, the Committee would suggest that the DoT should continue to enhance the capabilities of TSOC by integrating advanced artificial intelligence and machine learning tools to improve threat detection and response times. Regular updates to security protocols should be enforced, especially in light of emerging technologies and evolving cyber threats. Further, the Committee would like Ministry to undertake public awareness initiatives such as cybersecurity which may aid in reducing risks at the user level, complementing the efforts made at the infrastructure level.

Reply of the Government

" Telecom Security Operation Center (TSOC) employs state of the art technologies to generate potential cyber threats to Indian Telecom network infrastructure. The meta data of internet traffic is analysed in memory by Big-data based distributed real time streaming cybersecurity analytics engine. Further, DoT is committee to further enhance the capabilities of TSOC, by harnessing big data with AI-driven applications to improve cyber security analytics.

DoT has notified Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Rules, 2017 enabling Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecommunication Equipment (MTCTE), which prescribes that any telegraph which is used or capable of being used with any telegraph established, maintained or worked under the licence granted by the Central Government in accordance with the provisions of section 4 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, shall have to undergo prior mandatory testing and certification in respect of parameters as determined by the telegraph authority from time to time. The ComSec Scheme, as a part of Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecom Equipment (MTCTE), envisages testing and certification of security aspects of telecom/ICT products.

National Centre for Communications Security (NCCS) is a centre under DoT responsible for implementation of ComSec scheme, having following objectives:

a. To develop country specific standards, processes and specification called as Indian Telecommunication Security Assurance Requirements (ITSAR) for telecom/ICT products.
b. To develop testing and certification ecosystem i.e. designating sufficient number of Telecom Security Testing Laboratory (TSTL) which will carry out security testing and submit the report to NCCS for the issuance of certificate after due evaluation of reports.
c. To ensure telecom network elements meet security assurance requirements.

d. To ensure compliance of regulatory requirements pertaining to security testing.

Framing an ITSAR, is a consultative process, which is fair, transparent and open for participation of all stakeholders. The industry inputs are sought while preparing draft ITSAR. Subsequently, it is put to public comments from all concerned stakeholders like OEMs, TSTLs, Academia, general public, industry associations etc by publishing them on websites of NCCS, DoT and TEC. Sufficient time of three weeks is given to stakeholders to offer their comments and suggestions. Then, it is followed by a consultative meeting with the stakeholders. The finalized ITSAR is further reviewed by a multi-ministerial committee before being approved by the scheme controller. This process takes almost 4 to 6 months providing adequate opportunity to all stakeholders to put forward their reviews and also prepare themselves for the impending regulations. During the process the security requirements of the telecom products is adequately covered in the ITSARs.

Sanchar Saathi is a citizen centric initiative of DoT to empower mobile subscribers, strengthen their security and increase awareness about citizen centric initiatives of the Government. Sanchar Saathi provides various citizen centric services.

Chakshu – Report Suspected Fraud & Unsolicited Commercial Communication:

a. Block your lost/stolen Mobile handset
b. Know mobile connections in your name
c. Know genuineness of your Mobile handset
d. Report incoming international call with Indian number
e. Know your wireline Internet Service Provider

DoT launched Sanchar Saathi app on 17.01.2025 as an extension to Sanchar Saathi Portal and undertook extensive promotional efforts to ensure widespread media coverage. Some of key initiatives are outlined below:

a. Coordination with DoT field units to deliver state-specific briefings and disseminate content in local languages.

b. DoT has partnered with various Government organizations, banks and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) for awareness about the Mobile App to ensure widespread publicity their various channels like website, App, ATMs and Kiosks.

c. Developed creative content, arranged officer interviews and facilitated in-depth media interactions. These efforts resulted in extensive coverage across leading print and electronic media."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Assets Management

Recommendation (Sl No. 3.2)

17. The Committee observe that the C&AG has recommended that BSNL undertake a thorough reconciliation of its real estate data to ensure accurate records of estate holdings. C&AG also suggested for formulating a time-bound plan to assert its legal rights over its properties and actively address encroachments. Such measures could significantly enhance the efficiency of BSNL's estate management and contribute to its financial stability. In the same vein, the Committee would like to recommend that BSNL must prioritize the creation of a unified and accurate database for its real estate holdings. The audit identified a significant mismatch between databases with inconsistencies in records for over 757 land parcels, which hampers effective management. The Committee would recommend BSNL to reconcile its estate records, establish a centralized, validated system, and ensure regular physical verification of assets. Additionally, they should develop a clear, time-bound action plan to resolve legal and documentation issues hindering monetization.

Reply of the Government

1. "To keep an effective unified data of its real estate holdings and its reconciliation, a centralized Real Estate Module (REM) of ERP is already maintained and monitored by the BSNL to resolve the issue of mismatch between databases. The land data has been purified by the Circles/BAs by revisiting each land parcel and necessary updation is done in the REM. Further, the data entered in the REM is updated by the Circles/BAs on weekly basis. The Legal Due Diligence (LDD) of land parcel which are shortlisted by the Circles for monetization has been carried out.
2. In accordance with DOT approved policy for monetization BSNL land parcels read along with detailed operating instructions, an executive, not below the rank of SDE, has been assigned with the duty of Custodian of Land Records (CLR) in each BA who visits each land parcel in his jurisdiction at least once in every six months for physical verification of its assets and maintains all records of the land parcels under BA."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Human Resources

Recommendation (Sl. No. 11.1)

18. The Committee note that the BSNL workforce has drastically reduced from 183,522 in 2018 to 58,736 in 2023. The reduction is approximately 68%. As of September 2023, BSNL employs 58,736 workers, with a breakdown as follows: SC (12,256), ST (4,203), OBC (12,658), and Women (11,220). The distribution of women employees is notably lower, particularly in executive, i.e. 4490 against the total strength of 29485 executive strength as of 30.09.2023 indicating potential gender disparity in higher positions. Also, as per the information shared with the Committee, it is evident that the BSNL's employee cost as a percentage of total revenue is significantly higher at 38.4% compared to private sector competitors like Jio (1.8%), Bharti Airtel (2.3%), and Vodafone Idea (4.0%). The Committee observe that despite this significant reduction, BSNL has managed to maintain operations without service disruptions. While the Committee applaud BSNL for effectively managing operations with a reduced workforce, it also recognize that this may place additional strain on the remaining employees, potentially impacting service quality and employee morale. Consequent to the reduction in workforce, the employee benefits expense has drastically reduced from ₹14,837 crore in 2017-18 to ₹7,949 crore in 2022-23, largely due to the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) implemented by BSNL. Given the drastic reduction in workforce, the Committee suggest that BSNL should focus on optimizing its remaining workforce through targeted training programs and IT-based systems. Additionally, BSNL may consider outsourcing non-core activities to reduce employee costs and increase operational efficiency. Further, to address the gender disparity, particularly in executive roles, BSNL should implement targeted recruitment and promotion policies for women. This could include mentorship programs, leadership training, and flexible working conditions to attract and retain more women in higher positions. Lastly, the Committee opine that BSNL should aim to increase its contribution towards superannuation benefits to the 30% ceiling as per DPE guidelines.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL acknowledges and appreciates the committee's recommendation to optimize the remaining workforce post-VRS through focused training programs and IT-driven systems. In order to meet the objective, BSNL, with its nine strategically located training centers across the country, has developed comprehensive training plans. These plans are specifically tailored to meet the needs of field units, empowering employees with the essential knowledge and skills to succeed in a highly competitive market environment.

1. **Annual Capacity Building Plan (ACBP):**

Aligned with the government's vision, BSNL launched its Annual Capacity Building Plan (ACBP) for 2023-24, focusing on individual competency gaps to boost employee performance and productivity. ACBP is being updated regularly in every quarter.

2. **Customer/Citizen-Centricity, Behavioural Training**:

In line with Mission Karmayogi and vision of Govt., BSNL introduced a Customer/Citizen-Centricity training program post VRS in year 2022. Till date more than 55,000 employees have been imparted this training.

3. **BA Head/IFA Training Program**:

BSNL launched a targeted training program for Business Area (BA) Heads and IFAs, with 263 BA Heads/ IFAs successfully imparted the training to improve leadership and decision-making.

4. **FTTH Teams and Partners Training:**

BSNL introduced "SWIFT (SWIFT- Skillfully Wiring India with Fibre Technologies) Training". The initiative targets the up-skilling of all Bharatnet Udyamis/TIP Partners and their team members. Till date around 55733 TIPs, Bharatnet Udyamis and their team have been imparted this training in last two years.

5. **EB/ Digital marketing Executive Training**:

BSNL also conducted an executive training program for SAG-level officers in the EB/ digital marketing stream in collaboration with IIM Lucknow, focusing on leadership and strategy.

6. **IT Tools:**

BSNL leverages its in-house Central Training Management System (CTMS) portal to manage training requirements. Additionally, BSNL has developed its own Learning Management System (LMS) to further streamline training processes. To complement these systems, BSNL also utilizes the iGOT portal of Karmayogi Bharat, meeting the diverse training needs of its employees, with many benefiting from its contents.

7. A brief summary of training conducted in year 2024-25 (till Dec-2024) is attached herewith **as Annexure-1**)

Further, As per the advice of the committee more and more such targeted training programs shall be conducted in future.

Annexure-I

ANNUAL REPORT INPUTS OF TRAINING CELL FOR YEAR 2024-25

Training serves as a vital support system for the diverse business units within BSNL, facilitating the development of human resources in the telecommunications sector to ensure the sustenance of operations in a fiercely competitive market landscape. With nine training centers strategically positioned nationwide, including the headquarters situated at ALTTC Ghaziabad. These centers deliver a spectrum of training programs tailored to the specific needs of field units, empowering employees with the requisite knowledge and skills essential for success.

Brief of various important in-house trainings conducted during from April 2024 to December 2024 (till 11th December 2024):

Sr. No.	Type of Course	No. of Course	No. of Trainees
1	In-service	382	7,949
2	Seminar/Workshop	140	6,800
3	Induction	38	1,073
4	WEBINAR/ Online in-service courses	128	2,898
5	Upgradation Courses under Executive Promotion Policy	336	3,699

ii. To enhance customer interaction and fortify BSNL's position in the fiercely competitive telecom market, the company has implemented comprehensive Motivational Training program for its employees, spanning both executives and non-executives. Total 2,971 BSNL Employees have been trained from 1stApril, 2024 to 11th December, 2024.

iii. Introducing "SWIFT Training", a strategic program aimed at elevating the expertise of CFA business partners to accelerate the attainment of Bharatnet connections targets through Udyamis. The initiative targets the up-skilling of all Bharatnet Udyamis/TIP Partners and their team members. Remarkably, between April, 2024 to December, 2024 (till 11th December 2024), a significant milestone was achieved with the training of 11,992 FTTH partners/Bharatnet Udyamis/Related BSNL staff.

iv. The Management Trainee Induction program, spanning 52 weeks, commenced at ALTTC in Ghaziabad and BRBRAITT in Jabalpur for a total of 135 candidates. The classroom component of the training, conducted at ALTTC Ghaziabad and BRBRAITT Jabalpur.

v. The comprehensive training program was organized at IIM, Lucknow. The details are as under:

SL. No.	Training Program	Duration	No of participants
1.	BA Heads/IFAs (One Batch - 9th)	One week (5 Teaching Days)	29
2.	Digital Marketing for S&M Heads (One Batch)	One week (5 Teaching Days)	25
3.	Enterprise Business Training for EB Heads (One Batch)	One week (5 Teaching Days)	27

BA Heads/IFA training is a two-week initiative included a Core Module training session held at ALTTC Ghaziabad, followed by a Transformational Leadership Training program conducted at IIM Lucknow, each spanning one week. Through these rigorous trainings, participants have gained invaluable insights and skills essential for effective leadership and financial management with their respective roles.

vi. **International trainings**:

During the period from April 2024 to December 2024, BSNL organized two APT courses; one at ALTTC Ghaziabad and one at RGMTTC Chennai. Additionally, four courses were conducted at BRBRAITT Jabalpur for Nepal Telecom. These courses served to foster collaboration, strengthening partnerships and promote mutual growth in the telecommunications sector.

vii. **Domestic External Training**:

- Staff deputed to attend/participate in Training Programs/ workshops/ etc. events conducted by external organization dealt by Training Cell, BSNL CO.
- Officers attended the various domestic external trainings between April, 2024 to December, 2024 (till 11th December 2024)

viii. **Training Revenue**:

BSNL Training Centres provides vide range of training programmes to various levels of non-BSNL trainees, viz. students/individuals, Govt. or Pvt. Organizations, etc on payment basis.

During the period from April, 2024 to December, 2024, revenue of Rs. 16.47 Cr. was generated by imparting training to non BSNL trainees and by sharing of training infrastructure.

ix. **Planned Activities from January, 2025 to March, 2025**:

a. The JTO Phase-I Induction training will be organized for the LDCE qualified candidates.

b. Induction training for Junior Engineers (T) will be conducted for the LICE qualified candidates.

c. Induction training for Telecom Technicians will be conducted for the LICE qualified candidates.

d. Upgradation Trainings under Executive Promotion Policy will be conducted as scheduled.

e. One batch for Nepal Telecom planned at BRBRAITT Jabalpur in March 2025.

For non-core activities like repair and maintenance, Housekeeping, Security etc the SLA (service level agreement) based tender are being floated in BSNL to reduce employee cost and increase the operational efficiency.

BSNL is aware of its responsibilities to provide ample opportunities to women in the company. BSNL have made several provisions for the benefit of women employees which include recruitment policies for employment including women without any discrimination for protection of women employees at working place under BSNL conduct rules maternity leave/ child care leave, posting of husband and wife at same station etc.

However, as part of revival measures for BSNL and to right size it's human resource, VRS was approved by government of India where a large number of work Force (which included women employees) opted for VRS w.e.f. 31.01. 2020.

Presently, outside recruitment has been stopped after VRS-2019. Further, BSNL adheres to the reservation policies as provided under DoP&T guidelines from time-to-time. The extant reservation policies of the Govt. of India do not provide for reservation in promotion for women employees.

As such, no such distinction is made between female and male employees in BSNL in the matter of promotion. With regard to the working conditions for women employees, DOPT guidelines are being followed in the matters of maternity leaves and Child Care leaves.

The issue of mentorship programs, leadership training to attract and retain more women in higher positions, pertains to Training branch.

As per DPE guidelines, the contributions towards Superannuation benefits – Pension and Post Retirement Medical benefits are dependent upon affordability, sustainability and capacity to pay of the CPSE.

The total contribution of BSNL towards superannuation benefits is 25.1% [(12% - EPF, 4.8% - GPF, 3.3% - Post Retirement Medical Benefit (as per actuarial evaluation) and 5% -SPS] within the 30% ceiling prescribed by DPE.

BSNL has been making losses for the last several years. The present financial condition is not conducive for any further increase the contribution towards superannuation benefits."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Pay Structure and Allowances
Recommendation (Sl. No. 12.2)

19. In view of the above Committee would like to suggest the Company to address the disparities between ITS and BSNL employees. BSNL should focus on harmonizing pay structures by aligning them with the 7th Pay Commission standards or as per the pay structures of the other similarly placed CPSUs. The Committee feel that enhancing 78 superannuation benefits and pushing for the implementation of the 3rd Pay Revision Committee recommendations would help improve retirement security for BSNL employees. Regular promotions and clear career development pathways are essential to address stagnation, while expanding medical coverage and post-retirement benefits would improve overall employee welfare. Reviewing and adjusting allowances to remain competitive, seeking government support for financial assistance, and maintaining transparent communication with employees are also crucial for fostering equity and satisfaction within the organization, therefore the Company should reconsider their policy toward pay structure and allowances to address the disparity amongst BSNL employees.

Reply of the Government

"BSNL does not fall under the category for 2017 pay revision under affordability clause as per Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) guidelines dated 03.08.2017 on pay revision in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) w.e.f. 01.01.2017. BSNL has been incurring losses since 2009-10 and continues to incur loss despite many employees opting for Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), due to which the pay revision has not been considered.

As per DPE guidelines, the contributions towards Superannuation benefits- Pension and Post Retirement Medical benefits are dependent upon affordability, sustainability and capacity to pay of the CPSE.

The total contribution of BSNL towards superannuation benefits is 25.1% [12%- EPF, 4.8%- GPF, 3.3%- Post Retirement Medical Benefit (as per actuarial evaluation) and 5%-SPS] within the 30% ceiling prescribed by DPE.

BSNL has been making losses for the last several years and therefore it could not consider increase in SAB contribution. Moreover, these benefits are to be reviewed every year. Accordingly, a review will be carried out in FY 2025-26 considering the affordability and financial performance of BSNL.

Revision of allowances can be examined after revision of pay under 3rd PRC based on affordability thereafter."

[Ministry of Communications]
(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Comments of the Committee
(Please see para 13 of Chapter I of the Report)

CHAPTER V

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS TO WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAS FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES AND REPLIES ARE STILL AWAITED

Customer Centric Challenges

Recommendation (Sl. No. 15.1)

20. The Committee observe that the BSNL has implemented an efficient, customer centric grievance redressal system, achieving a 96% complaint resolution rate with an average resolution time of 8 days. BSNL operates 24/7 call centers in multiple languages and uses platforms like the Teerva App and Twitter for network monitoring and customer interaction. However, despite these efforts, BSNL continues to face a high volume of complaints, particularly regarding network connectivity, which has shown a declining trend in recent years. The implementation of service level agreements (SLAs) with external partners, supported by digital monitoring tools, has improved network maintenance, but 80 BSNL still face many challenges. The Committee desire that BSNL should focus on further reducing the average complaint resolution time, potentially aiming for a benchmark closer to three hours, as they have set internally. The Committee further desire that while ongoing efforts to minimize human interaction through app-based solutions should be accelerated to enhance customer experience, BSNL, should also continue improving its network infrastructure and expand the successful elements of its SLA models to further incentivize performance and accountability among its partners. The Committee would like to suggest BSNL should prioritize the resolution of network complaints, especially in areas with persistent issues, by increasing proactive measures. The Committee may be apprised of the steps taken in these directions.

Reply of the Government

"Regarding the efforts made for fast redressal of subscriber complaints and reducing the average complaint resolution time, it is submitted that:

I. For the redressal of complaints, SLA based outsourcing contract is in place in all the circles.
II. Monitoring of network has been strengthened to ensure performance as per quality-of-service parameters prescribed by TRAI.
III. Timely availability of store items like cable etc to field units of BSNL to maintain and improve the network.
IV. Monsoon control room is set up in the circles during monsoon season to monitor the functioning of landline and broadband service.

Round the clock toll free complaint booking mechanism. A stringent monitoring procedure is being adopted for prompt and timely clearance of customer complaints through exclusive section at all level of organization."

[Ministry of Communications]

(F.No. 59-12/2023-SU-IV dated 22.05.2025)

Comments of the Committee
(Please see para 16 of Chapter I of the Report)

New Delhi;
08 August, 2025
17 Shravana, 1947(S)

Baijayant Panda
Chairperson
Committee on Public Undertakings

APPENDIX I

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS
(2025-26)

MINUTES OF THE SECOND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee sat on Thursday, 26th June, 2025 from 1500 hrs. onwards to 1640 hrs. in Committee Room No. '1', Ground Floor, Extension to Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Baijayant Panda - Chairperson

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Tariq Anwar
3. Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi
4. Shri B.Y. Raghavendra
5. Shri Mukesh Rajput
6. Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi
7. Shri Kodikunnil Suresh
8. Shri Prabhakar Reddy Vemireddy
9. Shri Lalji Verma

Rajya Sabha

10. Shri Neeraj Dangi
11. Dr. Bhagwat Karad
12. Shri Arun Singh

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Anjani Kumar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Dhruv - Under Secretary

REPRESENTATIVES FROM NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED

1. Shri B.C. Pathak - CMD
2. Shri V. Rajesh - Director
3. Shri B.V.S. Sekhar - Executive Director
4. Shri K.N. Babooraj - Executive Director

PART-A

2. The Hon'ble Chairperson briefly apprised the Members on the three draft Reports. The Committee then considered and adopted the following three draft reports, without any changes/modifications, on the following two selected subjects: -

(i) XXX XXX XXX;

(ii) XXX XXX XXX; and

(iii) Action Taken Report on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the 6th Report (18th Lok Sabha) on the subject "Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)".

3. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Reports on the basis of factual verification as suggested by C&AG; concerned CPSUs and Ministries/ Departments and presenting the Reports during the upcoming session of Parliament. **Then, the Committee took up another agenda of the day.**

APPENDIX-II

(Vide para 4 of the Introduction)

Analysis of the Action Taken by Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (18th LS) on "Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)"

I	Total number of recommendations	21
II	Observations/Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government [*vide* Recommendations at Sl. Nos. 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 10.1, 12.1, 13.1, 14.1, and 16.1]	Total - 17 Percentage-80.95%
III	Observations/Recommendation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies. [*vide* Recommendation at Sl. Nos. 3.2]	Total - 01 Percentage–4.76%
IV	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and need reiteration. [*vide* Recommendation at Sl. Nos. 11.1 and 12.2]	Total - 02 Percentage–9.52%
V	Observations/Recommendations to which the Government has furnished interim replies. [*vide* Recommendation at Sl. Nos. 15.1]	Total - 01 Percentage–4.76%