

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



**Key Note Address delivered by Shri Prahlad Rai, General Secretary, AIBSNLEA  
in the Open Session of 2<sup>nd</sup> CWC meeting of AIBSNLEA held at Rajasthan Bhawan,  
Faridabad (HARYANA) on 26<sup>th</sup> July'2007.**

It is a matter of great pride and privilege for me to have such a gathering of distinguished personalities present here on the occasion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Central Working Committee Meeting in this historic city of FARIDABAD (HARYANA).

**1. OUR ASSOCIATION AND OUR CADERS:** - All India Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited Executives' Association was formally launched on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004. We the members of AIBSNLEA belonging to various disciplines of BSNL i.e. Engineering, Finance & Accounts and other wings of Telecom Services numbering more than 35,000 throughout the country are playing the pivotal role in the development, maintenance and operation of Telecom. The Telecom Engineers install, maintain and operate Telecom Systems comprising of latest technologies of their own without any help from Foreign Experts and provide unbreakable services. These are the engineers holding independent charges of Sub divisions/ Divisions, Secondary Switching Areas (SSAs) until they are further upgraded and also Telecom Switching / Transmission Centres. The local network is controlled by these Engineers. Similarly, the long distance telecom network comprising of the digital network comprising of the digital Microwave, Optical Fiber Cables and Satellite Systems, bringing the entire world together and the new services i.e. WLL, GSM (Cellular Mobile), NIB / Broadband service etc. are also installed, maintained and run by them. Quality Auditing for Telecom Performance of the Telecom Installations and Services, Quality Checking and Evaluation of the Telecom Equipments and accessories beforehand to ensure their compatibility are done by these Engineers. They would also be found imparting training in latest technologies to thousands of Telecom Employees in the Telecom Training Institutes run by BSNL to held in enhancing their skill. These Engineers also provide effective planning not only to ensure future growth of telecom but also to augment and upgrade the existing network. Again, these are the engineers who, braving all the odds, face the challenges to take telecom to one and all – even to the most remote and inaccessible areas of the country.

The Accounts & Finance Officers are maintaining the telecom accounts, billing, assets, consolidated trial balance, internal audit and working as internal financial advisors, revenue management and settlement of personal claims of the staff. Thereby they are contributing a lot in the growth and maintenance of telecom services in BSNL.

Civil, Architect and Electrical Engineers are providing basic infrastructure for the new telephone exchanges, administrative buildings, staff quarters and expansion work. The electrical engineers are efficiently maintaining power plant, air-conditioning and day to day maintenance of the BSNL Telephone Exchanges, Staff Quarters etc. These Engineers have saved lot of money in electric conservation. The PAs/PSs. CSS Executives, Official Language Executives and other Executives of General Line Disciplines are also actively involved in very important management activities which has its own unique importance in the office management in the organization.

**2. TELECOM SERVICES :-** Under this background, I certainly feel privileged to use this opportunity to share the views of our Association with this distinguished gathering on the issues pertaining to telecom as well as the matters concerning the members represented by our Association.

The twentieth century has witnessed the transformation of an entire gamut of activities from hitherto manual dependent technology to an entirely chip based digital one. We, the members of this Association, are proud to be associated with the process of transformation in our country in the field of telecom. The telecom sector is at the heart of a much larger industry – information and communication technology. The

convergence of telecom with computer and broadcasting is creating new synergy which is most evident in the exponential growth of the internet. Telecom industry is a large and growing sector and ranks second in market capitalization. We are proud to be in the BSNL associating ourselves in building up the large infrastructure of Telecom – the new sinews of the Nation.

In less than five years, BSNL has a mobile customer base of 30 million. This is a very big achievement for us under the leadership of Sh. AK. Sinha, CMD BSNL. Over the past seven years, assets of BSNL have grown almost double, with an assets base of about 65,000 crore at the time of its formation, now the asset base has become more than 1,30,000 crore. BSNL present customer base is about 67 million is includes mobile & WLL subscribers also. BSNL so far has provided about 38 lakh Internet connections and more than 17 lakh Broad-Band connections. BSNL target for this financial year is to provide about 20 million telephone connections including Rural areas. BSNL had invited bids for Cellular capacity by 60 million lines but in the area of Land Line telephone connection lot of disconnections are taking place which is a matter of serious concern to all of us. BSNL has to achieve excellent rating for the current year also so that become eligible to secure Navratna status. We reassure our best co-operation and support to Hon'ble CMD in achieving the targets set by the government to make BSNL number one company.

We are holding our CWC meeting when big changes in Telecom Sector are in the offing. In the rapidly changing scenario in Telecom, the regulatory regime and competition in Telecom are a fait accompli. We are not afraid of competition. With all the constraints around, our colleagues in BSNL in all major cities and other places are facing competitions with exemplary courage. In a bid to fall in line with the international standards, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has proposed certain standards to be ensured for quality of service alongwith provision of imposing penalties, if the prescribed quality of service is not maintained. Technological innovation, the rise of the customer-driven markets and regulatory actions are dictating new management styles. Now, there is pressure on us not only to perform increasing DELs i.e. number of telephone connections but also to retain the customer base, especially the creamy layer by rendering quality service.

But even after seven years of its inception, the BSNL is yet to get that much talked about autonomy and greater power in decision making. At the time of its formation, the then Communications Minister asserted that BSNL would certainly be given the status of “**Maharatna**” to have greater say in decision making. But till today even “**Navratna**” status has not been given to BSNL. After a long gap, the Government has now conferred BSNL with the “**Miniratna**” status, but the Navratna status still seems to be distant reality. It was also assured that BSNL would be suitably compensated in the form of **Access Deficit Charges** for meeting the obligations in respect of rural telephony or other uneconomic services. But the same is being reduced drastically in phased manner. It seems the Government is heading towards limiting its commitment to a short period.

In the above backdrop, we would like to share our thoughts with this august gathering. We acknowledge the comments of **CMD, BSNL Shri A. K. Sinha “attitudinal changes”** for revamping BSNL and **Director (HRD), BSNL Shri Niranjana Singh “for improve the work culture and public interface”** to improve our image, **Director (Finance) Shri S. D. Saxena** is stressing on the need for an attitudinal change, **Director (Operations) Shri J.R. Gupta** for making customers delighted to continue with BSNL and **Director(Plg. NS) Shri Kuldeep Goyal** for achieving 40% of market share of Telecom Sector of India and showing his concern to make available stores / materials to meet out the customer demands.

**3. DEFICIENCIES IN BSNL:** - Despite having a definite edge over the Private Operators in many areas, the BSNL has many weaknesses too. The main weakness lies in its structure itself i.e. the Management believes and possesses a work culture which does not suit the need of the hour. There is no denial that the dependency on other Departments/ Organisations like Planning Commission, Department of Electronics, Department of Expenditure, Department of Telecommunications and Department of Public Enterprises delays the decision. BSNL has to be given the freedom to decide its own issues. After all, it is the BSNL Management which is responsible and accountable to the Public and others are not. In this background, the BSNL needs to be given the full autonomy in decision making both in functional and financial front.

In the process of decision making, innovative ideas and bold initiatives need not be distrusted and overcome by the age old DoT systems and procedures of ensuring safety and propriety.

In the modern management concept, it is also necessary to decentralize the administrative and financial powers for not only reducing the burden on the top management but also to give adequate freedom to the lower formations. Unfortunately, a typical DoT work culture is continuing in BSNL, which tends to keep the powers centralized and prevents any move in positive direction.

The BSNL again suffers most in the absence of a sense of team spirit. The conviction of team leaders to live in isolation keeps them away from the realities.

**4. PROBLEMS OF OUR CADRES :-** As a service association we can not remain silent about the problems of our cadres. As already stated, our members are frustrated due to non-settlement of the following pending grievances:

**1. (a) Non implementation of the Promotion Policy which was offered while calling of option for absorption and introduced post based promotions even upto SG JAG level and recruitment of management trainees at the level of STS in violation of the offered promotion policy.**

BSNL vide its letter no. BSNL/II/SR/2003 dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2003, as per the directives of the Principal Bench of CAT in its judgment dated 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2003 *inter-alia* gave details of “**Promotional Avenues**” that was to be followed in BSNL. The promotional avenues which was offered states “ with a view to motivate Executives in BSNL for achieving excellence in performance and higher productivity, resulting into improved quality of service, customer satisfaction and greater revenues for the Company, Executives in BSNL will be allowed upgradation to the next higher IDA pay scale on a time bound basis varying between 4 to 6 years as may be prescribed for each scale and other attendant conditions, upto IDA scale of JAG Selection Grade beyond which it will be depend upon availability of post and their suitability and selection for promotion, which will be uniformly evaluated in the various streams of discipline”.

Now BSNL Management ignoring the above Promotion Policy has gone for post based promotions and even decided to recruit management trainees at the level of STS. BSNL after having got the Group ‘B’ Officers absorbed by offering a settled Promotion Policy while calling of option for absorption has modified the said Promotion Policy unilaterally. BSNL must implement the Promotion Policy as was offered in their letter dated 02.09.2003 without any change i.e. upgradation to the next higher grades upto SG JAG level on time bound basis. Post based promotions comes only thereafter i.e. beyond the grade of SG JAG level.

**(b) Service weightage:** BSNL should provide 100% service weightage of the service rendered in DoT/DTS/DTO including Ad-hoc/In-Situ/ACP/Lateral grades while implementing the promotion policy.

**(c) Date of effect of Implementation of revised IDA Pay Scales for the Executives w.e.f. 1-10-2000:-** Date of effect of Implementation of revised IDA Pay Scales for JTOs/SDEs of Civil/Electrical/Architecture/TFs and Assistants, SOs of CSS, PA/PS (Field Units) and JAOs etc. of finance wing of BSNL, including the proposed revised IDA pay scale of the Official Language officers shall be 01.10.2000 with actual benefit.

**(d) One time placement of the SDEs in the Sr. SDEs grade:-** As per DOT agreement and commitment of BSNL at the time of absorption of Group ‘B’ officers in BSNL on 01.10.2000, the SDEs who completed 5 years of regular service would be provided one time placement in the Sr. SDE grade. Approximately, 6000 SDEs Telecom are to be given one time placement in the grade of Sr. SDEs in BSNL (i.e. 300 against 1990 DPC, 600 from 1993 DPC and about 5100 from 1994 DPCs were promoted). Since the above SDEs had already completed 6 to 10 years of services as on 01.10.2000 and they have crossed the initial pay scale of Sr. SDE i.e. Rs.13000/ on that day. Keeping this in view, the BSNL may provide the benefit of one time placement in the Sr. SDEs grade. Negligible financial implication will cause to BSNL at the time of implementation of the Promotion policy. In this regard we have already provided the data / information to the members of the committee & BSNL Management.

**2. Payment of pension to BSNL Employees:** - The employee of BSNL are frustrated and feeling insecure over the DOT letter Dated 15-06-2006 and concerned about the payment of their pension after their retirement. The DOT letter dated 15-06-2006 creates apprehension about payment of pension to retired employees in case of BSNL suffering loss and thus unable to bear the additional amount as demanded by the DOT. The parameters mentioned in the letter are variable and cannot be linked to pension under any circumstances. In view of the above, the above said letter dated 15-06-2006 should immediately be withdrawn.

- 3. Absorption of Group 'A' Officers:** The absorption issue of Group 'A' officers in BSNL/MTNL is yet to be resolved. It seems that ITS officers Association opposition will continue as the demands of ITSA remains unsettled. We have been requesting to the DOT administration to settle the issue at the earliest so that viability of BSNL is not affected adversely. Presently the ITS officers are not concentrating towards developmental and maintenance work. As a result, a serious stalemate has been created which needs to be sorted out immediately since it is affecting BSNL / MTNL and its employees.
- 4. Regularization of STS Group A officers promoted on ad-hoc basis and absorbed in BSNL:** - Secretary, DoT in the formal meeting with AIBSNLEA on 10.01.2007 directed BSNL management to regularize all STS Group A officers promoted on ad-hoc basis & absorbed in BSNL in all disciplines except in Telecom Engineering Wing where the Group A officers absorption process is yet to be completed. He also advised BSNL management that in Telecom Engineering wing, to regularize absorbed Group A officers case may be processed separately to DoT for approval. Till date BSNL management has not taken any action in the matter. This has caused serious frustration.
- 5. Grant of various perks for the Executives in BSNL:** - BSNL has granted perks to executives w.e.f. 01.01.2005 as demanded by our Association. The Group 'A' officers earlier drawing Rs. 800/- PM as Transport Allowance is increased upto Rs. 1400/- only instead of 1600/- has caused dissatisfaction because transport allowance beyond Rs. 800/- is taxable, hence the increase is about Rs. 400/- only. Whereas, our association has demanded based on petrol charges. Similarly other Perks suggest by the Association i.e. entertainment allowance, winter/ summer dress, journals etc has also not been incorporated. The BSNL management should intervene and grant reasonable perks to its executives.
- 6. Promotion from TES Group 'B' to DEs on ad-hoc basis:** BSNL Management has not started the process to fill up 2315 posts of DEs from giving promotion to eligible TES Group 'B' officers on the pretext of Hon'ble court judgments. In fact, there is no such Court judgment or interim order which prevents holding of DPC. It should be completed on top priority basis as there is already much delay in this matter.
- 7. Regular Promotion to SDE (Telecom):** - About 1000 SDE (Telecom) posts are lying vacant. The DPC process to fill up the vacant SDEs posts should immediately started. Similarly, the posts of executives in the equivalent grades of SDE (T) viz. Section Officer of CSS should also be filled up by regularizing the Ad-hoc SOs manning these posts. It is understood that the BSNL authorities are delaying the regularization process on the plea that the sanction particulars of individual posts are not given by DoT. As a matter of fact, the posts of SOs are sanctioned by DoT as a result of cadre restructuring of the CSS in the ministries. The process should immediately be started to reach a conclusive decision.
- 8. DPC from AAO to AO :-** The DPC for filling up of vacant AOs is to be completed on top priority. We request for an early action in the matter.
- 9. Fixation of AAOs pay scale under FR (22):-** That Point to point fixation should be given to AAOs and the benefit of FR (22) should be given on promotion from AAO to A.O.
- 10. Removal of FR35 for officiating JTOs and one time conversion of JTO post from Outside quota to 35% quota :-** As per the Recruitment Rules, officiating JTOs have fulfilled all the eligible conditions for JTO posts i.e. service condition, educational qualification, qualifying in the examination and JTO Phase-I Training. Invoking of FR35 for them is not correct. If completion of Phase-II Training is essential to get the JTO Pay scale, the candidates are ready to undergo the same. We would, therefore, request BSNL authorities to kindly remove FR35 and divert 4,500 Outside JTO posts to 35% quota on ONE TIME MEASURE so that officiating JTOs are given regular promotion.
- 11. Recruitment of JTO / JAO:** - The Direct recruitment of the feeder cadre is JTO / JAO should be done annually as a matter of course, on the basis of vacant posts as on 31st March each year.
- 12. Revision of pay scale for Official Language Officers, AD (OL):-** The case of the revision of pay scale of the Assistant Director (OL) in BSNL is pending. We have been pursuing the revision of the pay

scale as some departments of Government of India have revised their pay scales to Rs. 7500-250-12000/- with effect from 1.1.96 notionally and with actual benefit with effect from 11.2.2003 after a decision to this effect was taken by the Government in respect of Official Language Officers (Hindi Translators and Assistant Directors).

**13. Lateral advancement of JTOs (TFs) after 12 years of service/ ACP scheme after completion of 12 to JTOs in telecom factories:** - BSNL has not granted ACP Lateral Advancement to the JTOs of Telecom Factories after 12 years of service. We have taken up the case for granting the benefits as available to other Engineering cadres.

**14. Up-gradation of steno Gr. III to Personnel Assistant as one time measure:** - BSNL has declared Stenographer Grade III as wasting cadre. We are pursuing for granting upgradation of Steno Grade III to the level of Personnel Assistant as one time measure as all the Stenographers Grade III has completed the qualifying service in that grade.

**15. Non-grant of stagnation increment on annual basis:** - BSNL decided to grant one stagnation increment in every two years to those who has reached the maximum of the pay scale in which they are placed. This brings undue hardship to the Executives who have put in long years of service, It may be recalled that the group 'A' officers are also of the view that their should be one stagnation increment every year for them. There shall not be different yardsticks for the different DETs of the executives within the same organization.

**16. Transparent Transfer Policy:-**

BSNL has constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Shri S.B. Khare, DDG (Restructuring) BSNL to submit the recommendation on the issue. We have already given our views / suggestions to the chairman committee on the issue i.e.

(a) We request that a comprehensive tenure transfer policy must be framed for tenure circle like Assam, NE, Andaman etc. so that the officers coming from out side should not suffer beyond scheduled stay.

(b) The transfer should be made for neighboring Circle only before start of academic session with the option of the officer so that their children's education will not be effected and their family life is not disturbed. Those who are transferred to tenure places should be transferred back to their choice strictly after the completion of the fixed period.

(c) No transfer should be done after completion of 55 years of age. Option should be asked before transfer to any place.

(d) Those having less than 2 years of service in superannuation their request transfer should be considered.

(e) The stay period should be counted from all India Service Cadre only excluding the service rendered in Circle / Division cadres.

The Committee is yet to submit its recommendations to BSNL Management for approval.

**17. Improvement in the revised policy for service GSM, RSTC & Broadband to Executives:-**

(a) It is understood that the memo for consideration by the Management Committee of BSNL has already been prepared and the MC is likely to take a positive decision on the issues e.g. allowing National Roaming & STD on GSM, enhancement of 200 free calls limit per month on RSTC, STD facility on RSTC to all STS level officers compulsorily & rent free Broadband service connection to all Executives.

(b) We have taken up the issue for proving Handsets to all the executives who has been sanctioned GSM service Telephone connection as the JAG and above officers has been provided.

**18. Review of policy guidelines for extension of concessional Telephone facility to retire/retiring employees of BSNL:** - In this connection we explained that the financial implications calculated at the time of initial extension of the facility in the year 1994 remains same and as such there will be no additional financial burden.

**19. SE Category Telephone Transfer:** - That in case of transfer to other Circle / Station, Residential service connection holding by the officers may be converted to the SE – Category with a minimum 550 free calls per month, without rental charge.

## 20. Viability of BSNL:-

**(a) Delay in procurement of 45.5 million GSM lines equipment:** - AIBSNLEA actively participated in the trade union actions call given by the Joint Forum of BSNL/MTNL non-executives/executives Unions/Associations to protest against delay in procurement of 45.5 million GSM lines equipment. The BSNL floated tender for procurement of 45.5 million GSM lines equipment in April, 2006. M/s Ericsson and M/s Nokia were found technically qualified and their financial bid was opened on 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2006. On the same day the disqualified vendor M/s Motorola challenged his disqualification in Delhi High Court. The case continued up to 16th April, 2007 when M/s Motorola withdrew the case unconditionally. We persuaded CMD, BSNL and concerned Board of Directors for issuing APO for procurement of GSM equipment. The APO was approved by BSNL Board on 22 May, 2007. Meanwhile on 18th May, 2007 Hon'ble MoC intervened in the matter and called the concerned tender file instructing not to issue the APO till the matter is examined as Motorola complained. Joint forum observing the situation took a decision to protest strongly against delay in procurement of 45.5 Million GSM lines equipment and gave a call of direct action i.e. one day strike on 11th July 2007 which was successfully implemented. On the written assurance given by Secretary DoT and the assurances given by Hon'ble MoC during discussions, Joint Forum postponed indefinite strike for 15 days. Joint Forum leaders are vigilant to the developments of tender process and will see that required GSM equipment (2G+3G) is procured by BSNL to meet out the customers demand. BSNL management should also ensure that the estimated GSM lines equipment is procured in phased manner. So, that Unions/Associations are not compelled to resort the trade union actions programme.

**(b) Disinvestment/privatization of BSNL:** We are opposing disinvestment in BSNL, since it will ultimately lead to privatization.

**(c) No increase in FDI beyond 49% in Telecom:** We strongly oppose the decision allowing FDI beyond 49% in Telecom. This will help the Foreign Companies to dictate terms and finally have a firm control on Indian Telecom. Its control either directly or indirectly in the hands of Foreign Companies will be against National interest.

**(d) No unbundling of BSNL's last line copper:** BSNL must not be forced to unbundle its last line copper to benefit the Private Operators. BSNL cannot allow use of its last mile copper and maintain the same to help its competitors to run their business.

**(e) No sharing of BSNL's infrastructure with Private Operators:** We understand that DoT is drafting another National Telecom Policy in which BSNL is being asked to permit Private Operators to share its own infrastructure. We are opposed to this decision.

**(f) Not-expansion of BSNL's GSM, Broad Band and ILD Services:** BSNL should expand its GSM and Broad Band Services looking into tremendous public support and demand.

**(g) Stopping AMC and outsourcing:** BSNL Management's decision to out source CDR billing and for Annual Maintenance Contracts for the New Technology Switches has become the source for drainage of hard earned revenue. All these days, BSNL's own employees were successfully carrying out these jobs.

The increase in the number of total connections provided by BSNL is phenomenal, though the total market share has decreased because of overall growth in the total number of connections provided by all the operators. The Group B officers and officers promoted therefrom are playing crucial role in such a phenomenal growth by BSNL. But the Officers need motivation to perform tirelessly for the growth of the company because only a contended workforce can deliver upto the desired level of customer satisfaction. It is therefore imperative that the Management settle the HR issues concerning all the executives as enumerated above.

We shall fail in our duty if we do not recognize the initiative of the BSNL Corporate Office for grant of perks to the executives with effect from 1.1.2005, enhancing of ceiling for Productivity Linked Incentive, providing GSM Telephone connection to all executives and holding of DPCs to fill up the vacant STS Group A and vacant Group B posts.

Hon'ble Sirs, our intention is definitely not to burden you with our cadre problems. What precisely we want to convey to our esteemed audience and the dignitaries sitting on the dais, is that gears of telecom and as all of you appreciate, that telecom is moving towards faster growth and more and more customer friendly services. In the days to come we shall have to earn more and

more confidence and make up for our customers delighted. We assure all of our members will strive hard for this. We all together devote ourselves to the service. Let BSNL implement promotion policy assured before absorption to Group B officers in BSNL.

Now, while concluding, I thank you all for giving me a patient hearing and at the same time we reaffirm our resolve that we shall not be found wanting in discharging our responsibilities even in the new environment and will move forward alongwith all of you to make India of our dreams, a reality. We also reassure our esteemed customers that this Association will do every thing at its disposal to ensure the best possible telecom services in terms of "affordability, quality and transparency".

Thank you all,



**(Prahlad Rai)**  
**Circle Secretary**