

# PENSIONERS' PATRIKA

Bimonthly Journal of AIBSNLPWA (CHQ)  
May - June, 2026

पेंशनर्स  
पत्रिका

Vol. X No.3  
Subn: Life: Rs 1000  
Single: Rs 20



## Don't touch Our DA



## AP CIRCLE CONFERENCE : 18-2-2026



## JHARKHAND CIRCLE CONFERENCE : 5-4-26



## EAST GODAVARI DISTRICT CONFERENCE



# PENSIONERS PATRIKA

BIMONTHLY JOURNAL  
OF AIBSNLPWA (CHQ)

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LIFE SUBSCRIPTION

Rs. 1000 per copy

Editorial

## DEFEAT THE ATTACK

On 5th February 2026, the Honourable Apex Court of India clearly declared that denial/delay in grant of DA would have a direct impact on the right to life and livelihood enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution. On 27th February 2026 the Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises issued an order directing the controlling departments to grant the IDA to staff of individual CPSEs considering the financial capability. The message is clear. Each controlling department can delay or even deny grant of revised rate of IDA. No government secretary shall ever dare to issue such instruction showing utter disrespect to the Supreme Court unless he is asked to do so by his political boss. The order from DPE is yet another salvo after 'Validation Act' fired by the Government against employees and retirees. Revised rates of IDA from January and April 2026 are held up. Even the CDA increase due from January 2026 to central government employees and pensioners is not released. Today the attack is on DA. Tomorrow, the guaranteed pension scheme itself may be the target.

Till mid-2025, BSNL retirees were receiving revised rate of IDA once in three months very promptly, based on orders issued by DPE in the first week of the month. Then Department of Public Enterprises was transferred from Ministry of Heavy Industries to Ministry of Finance for some reasons. There started the history of delay. It cannot be accidental. It is deliberate. Latest order of DPE is the culmination of the process.

DoT asked for some reports from BSNL. It is bosh; it is hogwash.

We are happy to note that leaders of various associations of DoT staff retired from BSNL or MTNL have joined together to fight out this attack jointly. The pensioners should realize the danger that if they keep quiet at this stage they will lose everything in future, that too not much far. The protest action should take place in every city, every town. The anguish and anger of BSNL/MTNL retirees should manifest in the protest action all over India. Every pensioner retired from BSNL and MTNL should come out and participate in it. Their protest should reverberate in the corridors of power.



## GS Writes

### **PENSION REVISION:**

#### **Renewed efforts:**

After attending meeting of SCOVA, our CHQ team consisting of Coms. Vara Prasad, Gangadhara Rao, R.S.N. Murthy, Anupam Kaul and J.S. Dahiya met Shri Amit Agrawal, Secretary Telecom on 11-03-2026. At the outset, the delegation welcomed Shri Amit Agrawal on assuming charge as Secretary, DoT and conveyed best wishes for his successful tenure. During the meeting, the delegation discussed in detail the long pending issue of revision of pension of BSNL absorbed pensioners with effect from 01.01.2017 based on the 7th CPC fitment factor. The Secretary stated that the matter being sub judice it would be examined after the High Court proceedings are finalized. The Delegation met member (F) also and discussed the issue. Thereafter, we met Com. Shiv Gopal Mishra, Secretary Staff Side and discussed our issue as well as other issues like 8th CPC etc.

#### **IDA ORDER**

Our delegation met Shri Sandeep Goud, Joint CGCA, New Delhi, on 12.03.2026 and discussed the issue relating to the IDA due from 01.01.2026, based on the OM from DPE. Shri Goud informed that though the DPE has notified revised IDA rates, DoT Order is required

for its implementation in respect of BSNL pensioners. After DoT issues the necessary orders, the Office of CGCA will incorporate the enhanced IDA in the pension of BSNL pensioners.

#### **Chennai Society issues**

On 13-3-2026, the Delegation met Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies and discussed the long-pending issue of non-settlement of dues to the members of the Government Telecom Employees Cooperative Society Chennai. The CRCS told that since the Govt has no financial stake in the society, it cannot directly intervene in its affairs and the management of the society itself is the competent authority to take appropriate decisions in this regard. He also stated that appointment of a Special Officer is not within the powers of the CRCS.

#### **Defeat the Attack**

In response to the call given by CBMPA, BSNL/MTNL pensioners throughout the country responded well to register their strong protest for not releasing the DR due from 1/1/26. Even in small places there were protests. Despite the difficulties massive demonstration took place in Delhi, Mumbai etc. Hearty congratulations to the leaders who organised and the pensioners who responded. Due to assembly election in Tamilnadu, permission was not given in Chennai. But in other places in Tamilnadu where permission

was given it was conducted well. Pensioners have expressed their anger through the protest demonstration in the first phase against the government's sinister design. This government's every move is anti-pensioner and anti-worker. If the government does not understand the mood of the pensioners and release IDA/DR immediately, then 30th programme of Dharna will be more ferocious. Request to organise for that programme from now onwards. We once again record our high appreciation to BSNL/MTNL pensioners who partook in yesterday's demonstration despite terrible heat. CBMPA has given the call at right time for right cause. Let us keep the unity.

#### **LPD Case: Caveat filed**

In the LPD case Govt is defeated twice in Kerala HC. Anticipating that Government may approach the Supreme Court and try to get an exparte decision, we have filed a caveat petition before SC through senior lawyer Shri Varun Singh.

#### **Accounts for 2025-2026**

Our Treasurer Com. Vittoban very promptly prepared the accounts for financial year ended on 31-3-2026 in first week of April and submitted to the Chartered Accountants for auditing. The audit is completed on 15th April 2026. Same will be published in next issue of this Patrika.

V Vara Prasad, GS

17-4-2026

# **PENSION REVISION**

## **CHQ LETTER TO MINISTER, COMMUNICATIONS**

To  
Shri Jyodiradithya Scindiaji,  
Hon. Minister for Communication,  
Govt. of India, New Delhi

Respected Sir,  
Sub: Pension Revision for absorbed BSNL/MTNL pensioners from 1/1/2017

We are the biggest pensioners' association in Telecom having a membership of more than 80,000 throughout the country. We seek your kind help to settle the above issue, sir.

2. Despite our sincere efforts through discussion at various levels on several occasions the above issue is still hanging.

3. Mainly there are 3 components of retirement benefits viz. Pension, Gratuity and Commutation. Gratuity and Commutation is calculated on par with C.G. employees. Pension calculation is also on par with C.G. employees but pension revision is not on par with C.G. pensioners which is discriminatory.

4. 100 percent liability of paying pension/family pension to these absorbees lies with Government of India as per cabinet decision, communicated vide DoT OM dated 20/7/2026. It is paid from Consolidated Fund of India. Hence pension revision has nothing to do with financial viability of BSNL/MTNL.

5. There is no benchmark/guidelines for pension revision for BSNL/MTNL pensioners who were absorbed from Department of Telecom though there is a statutory guarantee for pension/family pension by Govt. of India from its budgetary allocation on combined service. This is unique because these absorbees are only covered under CCS (Pension) Rules.

6. Six pensioners' associations including our association approached Hon PB, CAT, Delhi which gave its clear order on 20/09/2023 directing DoT to revise the pension in accordance with rules, treating the absorbees as Central Govt employees for all intents and purposes. DoT preferred an appeal before Hon Delhi High Court which is pending

7. Most of the pensioners are in the evening of their life. Hence may we request you, sir, to settle this long-pending issue in the interest of 4 lakh pensioners.

Thanking you

Yours faithfully,

(V Vara Prasad), GS

Date: 11/3/2026

# **Our Note on Pension Revision** **TO TELECOM SECRETARY**

**The justification for pension revision as per 7<sup>th</sup> CPC fitment factor is as follows:**

1. Most of the absorbees have served the Department of Telecommunications for more than 25 years

2. DoT 'Note' to Cabinet dated 25/9/2000 in para 4.4 (i) stated "All employees are entitled to Government's scheme of pension/family pension even after retirement".

3. Pension and family pension is paid in accordance with Rule 37-A of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 (now 2021).

4. The quantum of pension, gratuity (as per Rule 51(5) of CCS (Pension) Rules and commutation is at par with CG employees.

5. Explanation under sub-rule 8 of Rule 37-A of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 states "*The amount of pension or family pension in respect of the absorbed employees on retirement from the Public Sector Undertaking or on death shall be calculated in the same way as calculated in the case of a Central Government servant retiring or dying, on the same day*"

6. Sub-rule 9 of Rule 37-A of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 states "*pension shall be calculated on the basis of IDA pay drawn in PSU*"

7. As per sub-rule 23 of Rule 37-A of CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 BSNL/MTNL paid pension contribution to Govt, at the maximum of the scale and not even on actual pay

8. In accordance with Cabinet decision, DoT issued OM on 20/7/2016 that the entire

liability of paying pension and family pension of absorbed employees lies with Gol.

9. Pensioners are entitled to CGHS benefits (but not during their service in BSNL), similar to Central Government retirees.

10. Most of the recommendations of 6<sup>th</sup>& 7<sup>th</sup> CPC were implemented to them viz. a) Enhanced family pension b) age-related additional pension etc.

11. During the tenure in BSNL, their pay, perks, promotions were in accordance with BSNL rules and they got the pay from BSNL. But pension does not depend upon BSNL finance.

12. Pension calculation is based on Pay but pension revision is not based on pay.

13. After retirement, their retirement benefits were regulated in accordance with CCS (Pension) Rules and paid from the Consolidated Fund of India. This is unique and no other CPSE retirees are getting their retirement benefits from Consolidated fund of India. That is why DoP&PW permitted DoT to extend various recommendations of VI CPC to absorbed employees of BSNL.

14. There is no guideline/benchmark from the Government for pension revision of BSNL absorbed employees. It is not covered either by PRC or CPC.

15. In OA 1329/2000, PB, CAT, Delhi allowed our OA in September 2023 and directed the respondents to grant pension revision on par with C.G employees.

[Contd in Page 9]

# Committee of BSNL/MTNL Pensioners' Associations

(An umbrella organization of BSNL/MTNL Pensioners)

Joint letter dated 7th April 2026 to Cabinet Secretary, Secretary DPE,  
Joint Secretary DPE, Secretary DOPW, Secretary DOT, Secretary DOE.

We seek your urgent intervention in the matter of non-implementation of the DPE order vide No.W-02/0037/2025-DPE(WC)/FTS-1450 dated 27/2/2026 in view of the following:-

2. As per the established practice, Industrial Dearness Allowance (IDA) is revised every quarter by DPE based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The above-mentioned order clearly notifies the revised IDA rates applicable from 1/1/2026 to CPSE employees under 1997, 2007 and 2017 pay scales.

3. BSNL/MTNL employees who were absorbed from DoT are getting their retirement benefits including Dearness Relief from the budgetary allocation of Govt. of India. Their Dearness Relief is – as applicable to 2007 pay scales and as per para 3 of DPE order cited above they are entitled for 236.7% IDA/DR from 1/1/2026.

4. Para 5 of DPE order states “DA rates are computed and notified by DPE as per the prescribed formula, their extension and implementation in respect of individual CPSEs including financial implications, shall rest with the concerned Administrative Ministry/Department” (This order was sent to DoT under sl.37). Placing the responsibility on the concerned Administrative Ministry/Department for implementation including financial implications, is a deviation from the erstwhile practice of prompt and automatic implementation.

5. It is pertinent to note that required information called for by DoT has been furnished by BSNL corporate office vide F.No.BSNLCO-A/11(18)/1/2024-ESTAB on 23/3/26. Yet no further tangible action by DoT.

6. We are in April 2026 and another instalment of IDA/DR has become due.

7. This inordinate delay has caused widespread concern, anguish and resentment among nearly 4 lakh DoT (IDA) pensioners retired from BSNL/MTNL across the country. Therefore, we strongly urge:

**\* To implement the DPE order dated 27/2/2026 without any further delay and  
\* To ensure prompt, automatic release of IDA/DR in future as was the practice earlier**

8. We earnestly hope that necessary order will be issued by DoT without further loss of time.

9. However if the delay continues, the following Associations have no other option but to launch agitational programmes as follows:-

**a) 16/4/26 - Demonstration in front of CCA/BSNL offices throughout the country.  
b) 30/4/26 - Massive Dharna in front of CCA/BSNL offices**

We hope that the Government shall not earn the wrath of senior/super senior citizens.

**Signed by Genereal Secretaries**

V Vara Prasad (AIBSNLPWA), R Muralidharan Nair (AIBDPA), D D Mistry (BDPA India),  
G L Jogi (SNPWA), Prahalad Rai (AIRBSLEWA), G N Hariharan Nair (DBPA),  
J S Yadav (RTOWA Mumbai), R K Mudgal (MREWA Delhi), Kishore Haldankar (MPWA Mumbai),  
A. K. Kaushik (RTOWA Delhi), V K Gangwar (MREWA Mumbai), H F Chaudhari (AICGPA Pune)

# INCOME TAX on VRS EX GRATIA

## CHQ Letter dated 15-3-2026 to Central Board of Direct Taxes

Kindly refer to our letter dated 20-11-2025 on the above subject.

The BSNL Voluntary Retirement Scheme-2019 (VRS-2019) was introduced as part of the revival package for BSNL and MTNL approved by the Union Cabinet in October 2019. Under the scheme, more than 79,000 employees of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited retired across the country. Income Tax was deducted at source from the ex-gratia payments made under the scheme.

The issue regarding the taxability of the ex-gratia received under BSNL VRS-2019 has been examined by the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (TAT) in certain cases involving BSNL employees. In ITA No. 233/IND/2025, the Tribunal observed that BSNL had been incurring substantial losses for several years and that the scheme was introduced as part of organisational restructuring involving reduction of surplus manpower. The Tribunal held that the compensation paid under the scheme was in the nature of retrenchment compensation and was therefore eligible for exemption under Section 10(10B) of the Income Tax Act.

Similarly, in Shri Harish Kumar vs ITO (ITAT Chandigarh) relating to BSNL VRS-2019, the Tribunal held that the scheme resulted in reduction of workforce and that the compensation received by the employee was eligible for exemption under Section 10(10B) of the Act.

Following these decisions, a number of retirees have filed refund claims for the tax deducted from their ex-gratia payments through petitions under Section 119(2)(b) and through appeals before the Commissioner of Income Tax (Appeals).

However, as these appeals are being processed through the National Faceless Appellate Centre, different Commissioners of Income Tax (Appeals) are passing divergent orders. While some appellate authorities have allowed exemption based on the above ITAT decisions, others have rejected the claims citing delay in filing the claim, non-claim of exemption in the original return of income, or that the decision of another ITAT bench is not binding on them.

As a result, similarly placed retirees are receiving inconsistent decisions across the country.

In view of the above, it is requested that the Central Board of Direct Taxes may kindly consider of issuing a general order allowing the eligibility of exemption under Section 10(10B) of the Income Tax Act in respect of the ex-gratia received under BSNL VRS-2019.

Considering that the issue affects a large number of retirees across the country, the Board may also consider issuing an appropriate order under Section 119 of the Income Tax so as to ensure a uniform treatment of such cases and to avoid avoidable litigation

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### **OUR NOTE ON PENSION REVISION TO SECRETARY, TELECOM**

16. Kerala HC in WP © 16360/2023 delivered a judgement on 6/2/2026 stated clearly in para 12 “ Therefore, when the provisions of sub-rule (4) and sub-rule (8) to Rule 37-A are read together, there cannot be any dispute about the fact, upon their retirement, also requires to be extended pension that will be applicable for a C.G servant”. Further, in para 13 it was stated

*“the petitioners service and retirement have to be taken as a case of retirement from the service of the Central Government”.*

***In view of the facts mentioned above Telecom Secretary is requested to take a positive decision on this long pending issue and we are for proper purposeful negotiation.***

## **OUR ON-LINE SUBMISSION TO 8<sup>th</sup> CPC**

[Sent on 27-2-2026]

**We request the VIII CPC to specifically recommend for pension revision of former DoT employees absorbed in BSNL because**

- ◆ All absorbees have served the Department of Telecommunications at least 25 years;
- ◆ At the time of absorption all opted for government pension on combined service;
- ◆ CCS Pension Rules amended exclusively for them on 30/9/2000;
- ◆ Assured pension payment as per government formula;
- ◆ Pension and Gratuity as per CCS (Pension) Rules;
- ◆ 50% of LPD is pension;
- ◆ 30% of LPD family pension;
- ◆ 100% Liability of paying pension and family pension lies with Gol; BSNL paid pension

contribution to Government, at the maximum of the scale and not even on actual pay;

- ◆ Entitled to CGHS benefits, like Central Government retirees;
- ◆ Most of the recommendations of 6th & 7th CPC were implemented like Enhanced family pension age-related additional pension etc.
- ◆ During their service, pay/allowances paid by BSNL; But after retirement, Pension and family pension is paid from the consolidated fund of India;
- ◆ This is unique only for BSNL absorbees;
- ◆ That is why DoP&PW permitted DoT to extend various recommendations of VI CPC to them;
- ◆ In effect, they are BSNL retirees but Central Government pensioners;
- ◆ There is no guideline/benchmark from the Government for pension revision of BSNL

# OUR ANSWERS TO THE CPC QUESTIONNAIRE

We are the biggest pensioners' association in Telecom, having more than 83,000 direct membership, pan-india, registered, apolitical, ensuring democratic functioning. We submit the following to your questionnaire 11.

## Part I

### Pension plays crucial role

Senior citizen population in 2011 was 10 crore. May increase to 23 crore by 2036. The dynamics of family structure in India have undergone significant transformations over the years. The rise of nuclear families and longer lifespans are increasing the cost of care for the elderly. Therefore, elderly are now more likely to be disadvantaged or experience poverty. Longitudinal Aging Study in India (LASI) conducted sample survey of 31,464 elderly people from 2017 to 2019. The study revealed that among the elders, Central and State Government pensioners are 20.65 percent and it reveals that Pension plays a crucial role among the elderly in India.

### Increase in number of pensioners and decrease in employees

As per 6th CPC report there were 38.41 lakhs C.G pensioners. As per 7th CPC report in 2014, Central Government employees were 47 lakhs and 52 lakhs pensioners. As per pension department website as on 30/6/2025 there were 68,72,177 CG pensioners and 36.6 lakh CG employees (Among the CGEs 88.7% belong to Gr 'C' cadre).

## Part 2

In 2012, Central Government employed 8.5% of organized workforce. It was 12.4% in 1994. Between 2006 and 2014, all ministries except

Ministry of Home Affairs witnessed a decrease in employees. The number of MHA employees (including paramilitary forces) increased by 32% during this period. Between 2014-15 and 2021-22 new appointment in Central Govt was 7,22,311. But upto March 2023 the vacancy position was 33.42% in Gr. B and 23.77% in Gr. C sanctioned posts.

### Pension Expenditure and Fiscal deficit

After implementation of the 7th CPC recommendations, pension expenditure in 2016-17 increased to 1,76,300 crore. Out of this, the share of Defence personnel was 44% and for civil pensioners it was 28%. There is a propaganda that non-developmental expenditure, particularly pension expenditure has increased. As per DoE statistics pension expenditure rose to Rs.2,39,612 crore in 2024-25. In fact, both developmental and non-developmental expenditure increased in last ten years. In 2014-15 the developmental expenditure Rs.8,13,813 crore; non-developmental expenditure was Rs.8,81,169 crore. The same has gone to Rs.25,05,891 crore and Rs.25,59,454 crores respectively in 2025-26. Another propaganda is that Gross fiscal deficit has increased. Of course, it is a fact in absolute terms. But GFD receipts and expenditure also increased three times.

## Part 3

Expenditure on loans and advances increased 7 times; Defence expenditure increase one lakh crore. Fiscal Deficit 2023-24 = 5.6%; 2025-26 = 4.4% and expected to come down to 4.3% in 2026-27. Indian economy is fourth big in the world. According to 2025-26 E/S

real GDP growth projection for FY27 6.8 to 7.2%; In 2015 GDP growth was 2.4 trillion dollars which increased to 4.3 trillion dollar in 2025. Pension expenditure in European Union 12.2% of GDP. In India, for Central and State Govt. pensioners only 3.4% of GDP. In view of these facts, we request 8 th CPC not to deny the due pension increase to pensioners quoting the fiscal deficit.

### **Unfunded**

In contrast to 7th CPC ToR, 8th CPC asked to review pension keeping in view unfunded cost of non-contributory pension scheme. The terminology “unfunded” is a myth. Pension, under OPS is a deferred wage; a service condition; not bounty/gratis but a right. Even under NPS, Government pays 14% of Basic+DA; under UPS, pays 18.5% of Basic + DA. The Government has to honour its commitment to its past, dedicated employees. 8th CPC is requested to ensure parity between the existing pensioners and future pensioners to avoid any anomaly.

### **Part 4**

#### **How Pension amount spent and how it helps Indian Economy's Growth**

They spend on Healthcare, Food, Electricity, Tax, Fuel, paying outstanding liabilities like housing/car loan, Supporting children/grandchildren for higher education etc Going on pilgrimage/social tour Invest in Senior Citizen Deposit. RBI, SBI research reveals there were 7.4 crore senior citizen term deposit accounts as on December 2023 with total deposit of 34 lakh crore. Bank deposits fetched interest = 2,57,756crore. For this earned interest, @ 10%, they pay Rs.27,106crore income tax.

Pension amount is spent on the above pattern. It increases the purchasing power, create demand, encourage tourism. All these

helps for the economic growth of the country. Further, senior citizen's bank deposits help the banks to extend loan for various sections of people including industrialists.

In essence, pension expenditure cannot be considered as non-developmental and it should be considered as developmental expenditure. Calling it nondevelopmental expenditure is a misconception.

### **Pension system in our neighbouring countries**

The economy of our neighbouring countries Pakistan, Nepal, Srilanka and Bangladesh is comparatively low to our economy. These countries faced economic crisis in the recent past. But still, the Government employees are getting pension under Defined Pension Scheme.

### **Part 5**

**Pakistan** introduced CPS from 1/7/2024. For those who were appointed prior to 1/7/2024 are covered under Old Pension Scheme. The pension calculation is  $LPD \times \text{No of qualifying service} / 300$ . If 10,000/- (local currency) is LPD (for 30 years' service), then the pension is 7000/- Minimum service for eligibility 10 years.

**Nepal** introduced CPS from 16/7/2019 and both the employee and government contributes @ 6 percent. Minimum service for pension 20 years. Pension calculation is  $\text{No of qualifying service} \times LPD / 50$ . For 30 years' service with LPD of 10,000/- (local currency) pension will be 6000/-

**Srilanka** Government employees get pension under OPS. Minimum service for eligibility 10 years and maximum service 30 years. For 30 years of service the pension is 90% of LPD and for 20 years of service, 80% of LPD.

**Bangladesh**, pension calculation is 90% of LPD divided by 2 plus Medical allowance. With 10,000LPD (local currency) pension amount is 6000/-.

So, in all these four neighbouring countries, pension is more than in India even though their economic growth is comparatively low.

In view of these facts, 8th CPC is requested to recommend pension @ 60% of LPD.

## **Part 6**

### **No Income tax for pension**

In Pakistan, no income tax for pension amount. In 2025-26 budget, 5% tax is imposed for pension amount above one crore of Pakistan currency ( Rs.32 lakhs in Indian currency)

In Srilanka and Bangladesh, no tax for pension.

But in India, pension amount is taxed.

Recently, Gol imposed tax even for “disability pension for veterans”.

So, 8th CPC is requested to recommend for tax exemption for pension.

### **Commutation Restoration**

8 th CPC is requested to restore Commutation amount after 12 years instead of 15 years.

Recovery based on various factors like Mortality, lifespan, interest etc. All these factors have undergone changes. Many State governments restore after 12 years.

Even 5th CPC headed by Justice Rathnavel Pandian recommended (136.12) restoration after 12 years but unfortunately, then Government did not accept that recommendation.

### **Age-related additional pension - Medical Allowance**

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, in its 110th Report (Dec 2021), recommended increasing FMA for Central Government pensioners from 1 1,000 to 1 3,000 per month. It also recommended for additional pension of 5%, 10% and 15% on completion of 65, 70 and 75 years respectively. 8 th CPC requested to positively recommend these demands.

## **Part 7**

Civil servant pension is directly dependent on Government’s employment policy. Hence, assuming that a country that experiences high share of pension payments would reveal same behaviour forever would prove wrong. Huge increase of pension bill was merely not on account of pay revision but was coupled with increased numbers causing significant increase in total pension bill. Analysis pertaining to growth in government employment revealed that the huge intake which happened in the early decades after independence did not reveal the same behaviour later. The analysis revealed that pension liability on account of the employees under OPS would continue for long period i.e. until 2065-66, in addition, the pension bill would increase substantially until 2036-37, however, subsequently the total pension bill would decline. Mainly given the fact that the future liability although may be large in terms of the absolute size is not likely to last very long and does not constitute an alarmingly big share of the GDP, it appears that pursuing the existing Pay As You Go (OPS) to meet the liability would be an ideal solution (*Study report by Centre for economic studies and policy, Institute for social and Economic change, Bengaluru, submitted to 6th CPC*)

**[CPC Office has acknowledged receipt of our submission.]**

# VIRTUAL CWC MEETING

**A brief report on the Central Working Committee Meeting**

**Date: 05-03-2026 Time: 17:00 hrs – 19:30 hrs**

**Members Attended: 34**

A meeting of the Central Working Committee (CWC) of AIBSNLPWA was held virtually on 05 March 2026 from 17:00 hrs to 19:30 hrs. The General Secretary welcomed all and initiated the discussion, explaining the necessity of convening the meeting at short notice and pointing out the restriction imposed in the 8th CPC portal, where each submission of memorandum is limited to 200 words. He requested the President to preside over the meeting and he would explain the salient features of the two draft documents (author of the documents) to be sent to 8th CPC.

## **CPC QUESTIONNAIRE:**

President explained salient features of the documents and also mentioned about the stipulations imposed by 8th CPC restricting the memorandum within 200 words and that too only 'online'. By and large the CWC not only endorsed the documents but also expressed that the documents are well drafted and appreciated.

The CWC discussed and deliberated on the two documents already circulated, namely:

- **BSNL Pension Revision Issue**
- **Pension Revision Issue for submission to the 8th Central Pay Commission**

Some members suggested two modifications viz. "instead of all absorbees" have served DoT for 25 years may be corrected as "most of the absorbees"; Mention of 'Minimum pension' may be included. These two suggestions were accepted. **(Minimum pension should be 60% of Minimum pay recommended by 8th CPC).**

The Memorandum thus modified will be sent by GS online to 8th CPC. After a gap of a

week other CWC members should send the same memorandum to 8th CPC online.

## **Condolence Resolution**

The CWC expressed its deep sorrow at the demise of **Com. P. K. Gopala Pillai**, former T3-NFPTE Circle Secretary and Circle President of AIBSNLPWA Kerala Circle, who passed away today (5/3/26) at Thiruvananthapuram. The house paid homage to the departed leader and conveyed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

## **Visit to Delhi – SCOVA Meeting**

The CWC noted that the General Secretary will shortly visit Delhi to attend the forthcoming SCOVA meeting. During this visit team led by GS will also meet the Secretary, Staff Side, NCJCM, and pursue inclusion of the **BSNL pension revision issue in the Staff Side memorandum to the 8th CPC**. Efforts will also be made to secure an opportunity for physical presentation before the 8th CPC, if such meetings are permitted.

## **MP Circle Issue**

The CWC discussed the letter received from Com. S. P. Tripathi regarding the MP Circle organisational issue in which he suggested to divide MP circle into two circle units. After discussion, the CWC decided that division of MP Circle into two units cannot be accepted, as it is unconstitutional and not in the organisational interest.

District Units should maintain the membership list and it is not practically possible for CHQ to verify the membership at District level. CHQ can give the membership of each District

based on CHQ quota only. As per constitution, the Districts have to remit equal quota to both Circle and All India. There can't be any deviation on this. It is not possible to go back from what has already been decided. Before the next circle conference, the circle secretary has to circulate the membership of each district. If there is difference in quota for circle and CHQ, the quota remitted to CHQ shall be taken provided the Districts remit the difference to circle without further delay. The General Secretary, accompanied by Com. J. K. Tripathi -Bhubaneswar (CHQ Vice-President-), will interact with the district units and circle leadership in MP accordingly.

#### **Financial Assistance to CS, HP:**

The CWC discussed the request from Com. B. D. Sharma, (Circle Secretary, Himachal Pradesh), seeking financial assistance in connection with the legal case relating to 78.2% IDA merger for retiral benefits pertaining to Commutation and Gratuity for retirees between 01-01-2007 and 09-06-2013. Com B D Sharma, as an individual, along with 19 others filed the case before CAT, Chandigarh and this case, though went upto Supreme Court is still pending. They have spent lot of money in this legal battle. For carrying the legal battle further and to take it to its logical end he sought the financial assistance from CHQ. Some CWC members expressed their opinion. Ultimately it was decided that, this issue can be discussed in physical CWC to be held in Satara and decide.

#### **IDA Order – January 2026**

The CWC noted that the IDA order issued by DPE for January 2026 has not yet been uploaded on the DPE website. Further, the order states that extension of IDA to CPSE employees will hereafter be decided by the concerned administrative ministry considering financial implications. Some members expressed their concern about this order, which may adversely affect employees and

pensioners of BSNL/MTNL, since the decision would rest with DOT as the administrative ministry. The matter will be discussed with DoT authorities by our CHQ during their visit to Delhi next week.

#### **Income Tax: VRS Retirees.**

The CWC discussed the issue of Income Tax on ex-gratia to VRS Retirees where different Income Tax authorities in different regions have issued varying orders in similar cases. CHQ will write again to CBDT requesting uniform application of the law, since the subject matter of the petitions remain the same and the variation arises only in interpretation by different authorities.

#### **Nomination of Legal Advisor**

The CWC unanimously **nominated Com. A.Sukumaran**, Chennai, as a Legal Advisor and Special Invitee to attend the meetings held by CHQ.

#### **Concern on International Conflict**

The CWC unanimously expressed its concern over the ongoing war involving the United States, Israel and Iran. Already thousands of people including the supreme leader of Iran and his family members were killed. This war has already affected the entire Gulf countries. Lakhs of Indians are employed in this region. This war will have cascading effect on global economy including India. Fuel including LPS gas price will increase in the immediate future. The CWC felt that such conflicts threaten global peace and stability and cause suffering to innocent people. The CWC expressed the view that the United Nations should intervene and initiate dialogue among the concerned countries to bring an immediate halt to hostilities and restore peace in the interest of mankind.

The President summed up the decisions taken in the meeting. The General Secretary proposed the vote of thanks, and the meeting concluded.

# VRS LEAVE ENCASHMENT CANNOT BE TAXED

Decision of Kerala High Court in WP © 16360/2023 delivered on 6-2-2026.  
[The case was filed by SNPWA, Kerala Circle]

## Extracts:

This writ petition (civil) having come up for admission on 06.02.2026, the court on the same day delivered the following:

7. The issue arising for consideration, as noticed earlier, is as to whether the respondents are justified in taking the stand that while disbursing the **leave encashment amounts**, they can deduct the tax at source with reference to the provisions of Section 192 of the Act. It is to be noticed that the provisions of Section 192 of the Act provide for the deduction of tax with reference to the payment of salaries. Pension, for the purpose of deduction of tax, is with reference to the mandate under Section 192 of the Act. The provisions of Section 192 of the Act would apply only in a situation where a particular amount paid to an employee is chargeable under the head "salaries". Therefore, ultimately, it is only in a situation where the particular payment is chargeable under the provisions of the Act, the provisions of Section 192 of the Act will apply. It is with reference to the aforementioned position that the issue arising for consideration in this case requires to be analysed

11. The provisions of sub-rule (4) of Rule 37 A of the CCS Rules specifically states that upon absorption of the Government servants as the employees of the PSU, that shall take effect from the date on which their options are accepted by the Government, and from the date of such acceptance, those employees shall cease to be Government servants and they shall be deemed to have

retired from the Government service. The learned Standing Counsel for the Income Tax Department, seeks to rely on the aforementioned provisions to contend that on the date on which the 2nd and 3rd petitioners joined the service of the 6th respondent, they had already retired from the service of the Government.

12. At the first blush, the afore contention raised appears to be attractive. But in my opinion, **the provisions of Rule 37A (4) of the CCS Rules is not to be read in isolation**. It also requires to be noticed that the provisions of subrule (8) of Rule 37A of the CCS Rules, further provides that with respect to cases of the afore nature, when a Government servant, who joins or get absorbed in a PSU, ultimately, retires, the calculation of the pension /family pension under the Rules has to be carried out in the manner prescribed thereunder. It is also to be further noticed that the explanation makes the position clear that in the aforementioned circumstances, **the pension requires to be calculated in the same way as would be applicable in the case of "Central Government Servant retiring or dying, on the same day"**. Therefore, when the provisions of sub-rule (4) and sub-rule (8) to Rule 37A of the CCS Rules are read together, there cannot be any dispute about the fact that the 2nd and 3rd petitioners, upon their retirement, **also requires to be extended pension that will be applicable for a Central Government Servant**. It is also to be further seen that sub-rule (22) of Rule 37A of the CCS Rules provides that the pensionary

benefits, including family pension in the aforementioned circumstances, requires to be paid by the Government. The provisions of sub-rule (23) of Rule 37A of the CCS Rules further make it clear **that the cases of the employees of DoT who joined BSNL are to be seen as a specific class and they are to be extended pension in the manner prescribed under subrule (23).** Furthermore, sub-rule (24) of Rule 37A of the CCS Rules makes the position more clear by providing that in the cases of employees who joined directly with BSNL, they will not be entitled for the afore benefits.

**13. In view of the above position, I am of the opinion that the petitioners' service and the retirement have to be taken as**

**a case of retirement from the service of the Central Government.**

**16. This Court also notices the judgment of the Apex Court in Senior Supdt. of Post Office and Others v. Izhar Hussain [AIR 1989 SC 2262], wherein it has been categorically laid down that executive instructions cannot modify or amend the statutory provisions.** Therefore, I am of the opinion that the petitioners are entitled to succeed. Hence, this writ petition would stand allowed, quashing Ext.P11. **If any amounts have been deducted from the payments, the petitioners are free to claim the benefits of Section 10 (10AA) (i) of the Act with reference to the respective returns filed by them.**

**Above judgement reiterates that we are central government pensioners.**

## A POLICY FOR THE ELDERERS

For the first time in India, Kerala has introduced a dedicated "Elderly Budget" in the 2026-27 fiscal year, allocating Rs.46,236.52 crore (19.07% of the total budget) to support its aging population. Key initiatives include increasing monthly social security pensions to Rs. 2,000, strengthening palliative care, establishing a Senior Citizens Commission, and promoting a "care economy" with volunteer services for seniors living alone. This budget reflects a proactive approach to managing a demographic shift where the elderly population in Kerala is rapidly increasing. It is a Policy Shift moving from simple welfare to a rights-based 'active and healthy living' approach. Key aspects are:

**Senior Citizens Commission:** A specialized body established in March 2025 to protect the rights and welfare of the elderly.

**Financial Security:** The core focus remains on social security, with roughly 68% of the budget

dedicated to pension payments for over 60 lakh individuals.

**Pneumococcal Vaccination:** A new Rs. 50 crore drive for BPL seniors with comorbidities.

**Specialized Care:** Establishment of menopause clinics (Rs. 3 crore) and a Centre for Geriatric

**Support Services:** Enhanced funding for the Ashwasakiranam scheme, providing Rs.1,000/month to caregivers of bedridden elderly.

**Retirement Homes:** Rs.30 crore allocated for subsidizing modern, private, or cooperative retirement homes.

**Elderly-Friendly Cities:** Grants for local bodies to build accessible infrastructure, such as parks and ramps in medical colleges.

**Volunteer Services:** Rs.10 crore to create a digital platform and a volunteer cadre for seniors living alone.

**"New Innings" Scheme:** A Kerala Startup Mission initiative to utilize the experience of retirees for mentoring and entrepreneurship.

**Digital Literacy:** Promoting digital awareness and life-long learning to bridge the generation gap.

## **LPD CASE**

# **WE HAVE WON AGAIN**

BSNL staff retired on or after 1-1-2006 got pension at 50% of their Last Pay Drawn (LPD), on completion of ten years qualifying service, at par with central government staff based on 6th CPC report. Telecom staff retired before 1-10-2000 also got benefit of LPD in the form of 3rd option introduced after 7th CPC. Only those BSNL staff retired between 1-10-2000 and 31-12-2005 did not get the benefit of LPD. They got pension on last ten months' average pay on completion of 33 years' service. Those who retired with less than 33 years of qualifying service got only pro rata pension. As the government did not concede our demand to remove this anomaly, we filed a case before the CAT Ernakulam bench in 2018 (OA 346/18). On 30-10-2019, CAT judge gave a decision rejecting our prayer, on wrong assumptions, that "we did not opt for benefits of the service rendered under government" and also "we tendered technical resignation from government service".

□ **There was no option for us but to opt for BSNL. Else we had to move to the surplus pool and ultimately go home. We were compelled to opt for BSNL.**

□ **Our service under the Government was counted for fixing Pension, GPF, Leave Encashment etc. etc.**

□ **Nobody asked our technical resignation from DoT.**

The judge ignored all these points. We had to file an Appeal in High Court of Kerala. Hearing was delayed due to Covid for some time. Case was adjourned again and again. A new judge, Mr. Amit Rawal, joined Kerala High Court and decided to clear the backlog of cases pending. This changed the situation.

Our case was also taken up and disposed on 7th February 2025. Hon'ble High Court allowed our Appeal, set aside the CAT order and declared that BSNL pensioner retired during the said period is entitled to the benefit of LPD.

DoT approached Supreme Court with a Special Leave Petition. SC took up the SLP on 8-8-25. Sensing that SC would dismiss the SLP, the Government pleader played a game. He informed SC that they wanted to file a Review Petition before Kerala High Court. SC then dismissed the SLP with permission to approach High Court with a Review Petition, as requested by the Govt.pleader. Department of Telecom filed the RP No 60/2020 before Kerala High Court. On 24<sup>th</sup> March 2026, Kerala High Court dismissed the Review Petition.

### **You are a beneficiary,**

1. Only if you retired from BSNL during the period from October 2000 to December 2005.

2. If your average pay and Last Pay Drawn are different. (In PPO, shown as Average Emoluments and Emoluments for Family Pension).

3. If you retired, during the above period, with less than 33 years of qualifying service and draw pro-rata pension, then, you will be benefitted much.

**[Most of the 35000 Casual Labour regularized during 1989 fall in this category.]**

**Anticipating that the DoT will again approach the Supreme Court with an SLP, we have engaged a senior lawyer and filed a Caveat Petition.**

## Supreme Court says

# DA IS A RIGHT, NOT A BOUNTY.

On 5-2-2026, the Supreme Court ordered that DA is a statutory and enforceable right, not a discretionary benefit that a State can withhold. West Bengal State Government did not pay the DA to its employees for the period of 2008-2019 on the plea of financial constraints. Confederation of employees approached the High Court asking for release of DA, and, that too at the rate of CDA being paid to CG employees. High Court gave judgement in favour of employees and State Government approached Supreme Court against HC Order. The Bench of J.Sanjay Karol and J.Prashant Kumar Mishra dismissed the petition and gave significant orders. Some extracts are given in brief:

□ Once DA becomes payable under the governing rules, the State is legally bound to release it. Denial of such dues directly impacts employees' right to life and livelihood under Article 21 of the Constitution.

□ DA is not a bounty but a mechanism to protect employees from erosion of wages due to inflation. DA is not intended to provide complete neutralization of price rise for all employees. Its purpose is to offer partial compensation for increased living costs through a variable and flexible mechanism, usually linked to a cost-of-living index.

□ DA is directly linked to the loss of real wages caused by inflation.

□ There is no legal obligation on State Governments to automatically adopt the rates of DA as fixed by the Central Government.

□ DA by its very nature is non-static, fluid and subject to change. How that change is to be carried out is through AICPI. Any mechanism for determining or revising DA must necessarily reference to All-India Consumer Price Index.

□ Constitutional duties cannot be evaded on the ground of paucity of funds. Once a legal right has been established, irrespective of whether it pertains to salary, pension, gratuity or other statutory benefits, it is not within the realm of permissible actions for the State to refuse payment of the same on account of financial inability/paucity of funds. When it comes to employees' dues, this proposition would be extremely dangerous and stifling since the amounts received thereby are not handouts or acts of charity but are earned compensation/consideration for services given. Denial of such consideration would have a direct impact on the right to life and livelihood enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution.

□ State must set an example for other employers in the country by behaving as a 'model employer'. In embodying the 'model employer' the State not only fulfils its obligation but also instils and maintains public confidence in the rule of law, governance and administration of justice.

□ Employees who retired during the pendency of the litigation will also be entitled to the DA benefits under the judgment. The matter will be heard on 15-04-2026.

□ The Court constituted a high-powered monitoring Committee to ensure phased and accountable compliance consisting of J. Indu Malhotra (Former Judge, SC), J. Tarlok Singh Chauhan (Former Chief Justice of Jharkhand HC), J. Goutam Bhaduri (Former Judge, Chhattisgarh HC) and Comptroller & Auditor General.

[State of West Bengal v. Confederation of State Government Employees, West Bengal, 2026 SCC OnLine SC 155, decided on 05-02-2026]

# NEW IDA ORDER: BEWARE OF THE IMPLICATIONS

Dept of Public Enterprises OM No. W-0037/2025-DPE/(WC)-FB-14505 dt. 27-2-2026

The undersigned is directed to convey the revised rates of Industrial Dearness Allowance (IDA) applicable to executives holding Board level and below Board level posts and Non-Unionized Supervisors of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) following the 1987, 1997, 2007 and 2017 pay scales, effect from 01-01-2026.

2. The quantum of IDA payable from 01-01-21026 at a neutralization rate of Rs 2.00 per point shift for increase of (99) points, may be Rs 198/- and at Average AICPI 9710, DA payable may be Rs. 18010/- to the executives holding Board level post, below Board level posts and non-unionized supervisors following IDA pattern in the CPSEs of 1987 pay scales.

3. The rates of Dearness Allowance payable w.e.f. 01-01-2026 to the executives holding Board level post, below Board level posts and non-unionized supervisors of CPSEs are 468.5% for those following the 1997 pay scale, 236.7% for the 2007 pay scale and 53.4% for the 2017 pay scale.

4. Further, as per the information available on the PE Survey Portal, no CPSE is presently to be under 1992 pay scale and, accordingly, DA orders for the said pay scale are not being issued. However, in the event any CPSE subsequently furnishes verifiable data establishing coverage under the 1992 pay scale, the admissible DA shall be computed strictly in accordance with the applicable norms and conveyed to the concerned administrative Ministry/ Department for necessary action.

5. All concerned Ministries/Departments shall verify the applicability of relevant pay scales and corresponding IDA OMs before extending DA, ensure that undated pay revision status is furnished on the PE Survey Portal, and note that while DA rate computed and notified by DPEs per the prescribed formula, their extension and implementation in respect of individual CPSEs, including financial implications, shall rest with the concerned Administrative Ministry/Department.

6. This issues with the approval of the Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises.

**NOTE:** Earlier, the Department of Public Enterprises was under Ministry of Heavy Industries. We were getting orders on IDA revision in the first week of the concerned month - January, April, July or October. The orders were simple and clear to everyone. Then DPE was brought to Ministry of Finance. Thereafter, the IDA orders are delayed. Everytime when order for IDA to serving staff is issued it is automatically extended to Pensioners.

Now, the format of the order is changed. And, note the direction in Para 5 of the above order. **Financial implication is a new condition.** In other words, Dept. of Telecom can deny or delay IDA increase to serving staff of BSNL and MTNL on the plea of financial condition of the two CPSEs. If no order is issued for serving staff, there is nothing to be extended. IDR is paid by Government to the BSNL/MTNL pensioners. The financial condition of PSEs should not affect our IDR. Anyway, **DON'T BE COMPLACENT.**

News in various Newspapers appeared on 6-4-2026

## **SUPREME COURT FINES THE GOVERNMENT**

The Supreme Court on 1-4-2026, slammed the Union government for being one of the “biggest litigants” and imposed a fine of Rs.25,000 for challenging the directions of Punjab and Haryana High Court to reinstate a CISF trooper. A bench of Justices B.V. Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan dismissed the Centre’s appeal challenging the high court judgment, as the top court felt that the dismissal of CISF trooper Sukhwinder was rightly held by the high court to be disproportionate.

The government had dismissed the employee over allegations of unauthorised leave and his involvement in the alleged elopement of a colleague’s daughter who married Sukhwinder’s brother. A single-judge bench of the high court quashed the dismissal order and directed his reinstatement.

The Centre’s appeal against the single judge’s order was dismissed by a division bench. Aggrieved by it, the government had filed the appeal. On 1-4-2026, while refusing to entertain the Centre’s appeal, Justice Nagarathna asked the government what was the need to file appeals in such matters when the high court had taken a considered view and rightly directed Sukhwinder’s reinstatement. The top court added that contrary to the allegations, the CISF constable was on medical leave.

“This is a case for imposing cost with dismissal. We have been shouting. Pendency, pendency... Who is the biggest litigant? His dismissal is disproportionate. The high court granted him relief. Instead of giving the opinion that you will not go to the Supreme Court, you still proceed against him,” Justice Nagarathna told the government law officer.

“...We fail to understand why the Union of India and others have approached this court. We dismiss this SLP with a cost of Rs. 25,000.”

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*We do hope that Honourable Supreme Court will take similar stand in the unnecessary Appeal cases filed by Department of Telecom in our Pension Revision case, in our LPD Case etc. etc. The legal officers of DoT should be taught a proper lesson. Only Supreme Court can do it.*

## NEWS

# NEW PENSION SCHEME FOR KERALA STATE EMPLOYEES

ORDER Dt.28-2-2026

Government vide order read above have made National Pension System (NPS) mandatory to all appointments made on or after 01.04.2013. As per para 746 of budget speech 2026, the Hon'ble Minister (Finance) has announced a new pension scheme, namely the Assured Pension Scheme for the employees of the State Government instead of National Pension System.

Government are now pleased to accord in principle sanction to implement Assured Pension Scheme with effect from 01.04.2026.

(i) Employees appointed on or after 01.04.2026 are eligible to opt either NPS or Assured Pension Scheme.

(ii) Existing State Government Employees covered under NPS are eligible to exercise option for changing from the existing NPS to the Assured Pension Scheme.

(iii) The Maximum assured pension will be fifty percent of basic pay at the time of retirement, subject to 50% of the maximum of the highest scale of pay under State Government provided that the employees have completed 30 years of qualifying service.

(iv) Dearness Relief will be allowed on the assured pension.

Detailed orders for implementing different aspects of Assured Pension Scheme will be issued separately.

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## WIFE IS A LIFE PARTNER, NOT A MAID

**New Delhi:** A woman not performing household chores, like cooking, do not amount to cruelty, the Supreme Court orally observed on 20-3-2026 in a divorce case hearing.

*"You're not marrying a maid, you're marrying a life partner",* remarked Justice Sandeep Mehta. *"You have to contribute in this cooking, washing, etc. Today's times are different,"* Justice Vikram Nath said.

The top court emphasised that the times have changed and the husband as well must contribute to such affairs. Earlier, the top court had referred the parties for mediation, but the same failed. The parties got married in 2017 and have an 8 year-old boy.

The man, the petitioner in the case, initiated divorce proceedings, alleging that only a week after marriage, the woman's attitude changed and she started mistreating him.

As per his claims, she used filthy language against him and his parents, refused to cook food for them and gave birth to their child but did not invite him for the cradle ceremony.

The wife, on the other hand, claimed that she went to her parents' house for the birth of the child with the petitioner and his family's consent, however they did not attend the cradle ceremony and demanded cash and gold from her parents.

# TELECOM INDUSTRY IS IN TROUBLE.

**BSNL is in loss. MTNL is in loss. ITI is in loss. As also a private Telecom company owned by Mr. Anil Ambani. Why? Some people wonder. There is nothing to wonder. Just go through few news items appeared in media recently.**

## News in ND TV on 26-2-2026



Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani's Mumbai house, 'Abode', worth Rs 3,716 crore, was attached by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday under the anti-money laundering law. The 66-year-old is being questioned by the federal probe agency in a case linked to the alleged bank loan fraud involving Reliance Communications (RCOM). A part of this property, worth Rs 473.17 crore, was attached by the ED in November last year. Anil Ambani's house is a 66-metre-high building with 17 floors. It is located in Pali Hill, one of the posh areas of Mumbai with a helipad, a swimming pool, a gym, and a large parking area.

## News Item in ND TV on 25-2-2026:

### **ROYAL BSNL BATH**

Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has ordered action against BSNL Director Vivek Banzal amid a huge row over the protocol assigned to him for his visit to Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, sources in the government told NDTV on Wednesday. The minister said the matter was brought to his notice and termed the episode "improper, unacceptable, and shocking", sources said.

According to an official order, Banzal, director (CFA) of the BSNL Board, was scheduled to visit Prayagraj from February 25-26. As per the order, around 20 tasks were assigned to nearly 50 officials. On arrival in Prayagraj, Banzal was scheduled to bathe at Sangam, take a boat ride, and visit Bade Hanuman Mandir, Akshayavat and Patalpuri temples. The 'snan' kits of the officials consisted of a towel, undergarment, slippers (mentioned as 'sleeper' in the office order), comb, mirror, and an oil bottle. An instruction was also issued to

arrange one bed sheet for general use at the ghat. At the hotel and Circuit House, a dry fruit bowl, a fruit bowl, a shaving kit, a towel, toothpaste, a brush, soap, shampoo, a comb, and oil were to be arranged, according to the order.

**BSNL reacts:** "Appropriate action has been taken against the concerned. Further, instructions have been issued reiterating strict adherence to extant instructions. BSNL employees are reminded to strictly adhere to prescribed conduct rules and instructions in this regard," it added.

Banzal is an Indian telecommunication service officer of the 1987 batch. He has a Bachelor of Engineering degree in electronics, a Master of Engineering in computer science, and an MBA. He has more than 34 years of experience handling telecom networks in India, according to data available on the BSNL website.

## 35th SCOVA MEETING



The 35th meeting of the Standing Committee of Voluntary Agencies (SCOVA) was chaired by Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State, on 10th March 2026. Ms. Rachna Shah, Secretary, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW), briefed

the members about various initiatives taken by the Government for bringing ease in the life of pensioners. Senior officers including Shri Dhruba Jyoti Sen Gupta, Joint Secretary (DoPPW) and Ms. Roshni Sohni, Sr. DDG, Department of Telecommunications were present along with representatives from various Ministries/Departments. SCOVA consists of 15 non-official members representing Pensioners' Welfare Associations and official members from different Ministries/Departments of Government of India. It provides an institutional forum for Pensioners' Associations to raise issues concerning pensioners directly before the concerned Ministries/Departments through constructive deliberations. From AIBSNLPWA, Com. V. Vara Prasad (GS), Com. P. Gangadhara Rao (VP), Com. R. S. N. Murty (VP) and JS Dahiya (AGS) participated. During the meeting, issues relating to CGHS, Railways, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Civil Defence and Telecom were discussed.

**V Vara Prasad GS**

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## VALIDATION ISSUE IN SUPREME COURT

“The matter was listed ON 10-3-2026 as Item No. 45 before Court No. 6 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. Prior to the matter being taken up post lunch, the Bench indicated that it would be rising early. Nevertheless, when the matter was called out, Sr. Adv. Mr. Vikas Singh appeared and apprised the Court that the Petitioners' Association largely comprises pensioners above the age of 80 years and that, by virtue of the impugned legislation, the settled position in 'D.S. Nakara' stands effectively diluted. In view of the urgency involved and the advanced age of the pensioners forming part of the Petitioners' Association, Mr. Singh requested that the matter be taken up. However, on account of the unavailability of the Attorney General and the Bench rising early, the matter was directed to be listed on a short date on behalf of Mr Singh, as would be reflected in the order.”

The matter was taken up by the Supreme Court NO 6 on 10-4-2026. Upon the matter being called out, Mr. Vikas Singh informed the Court that the Petitioners' Association predominantly consists of pensioners above 80 years of age and that the impugned legislation has the effect of diluting the settled legal position laid down in D.S. Nakara and subsequent judgments. Emphasising the urgency on account of the advanced age of the pensioners, Mr. Singh requested that the matter be taken up for hearing. However, owing to the absence of the learned Attorney General, the Hon'ble Court directed that the matter be listed in the second week of May, at the top of the board, at the request of Mr. Vikas Singh.

Now, the case is posted to 12-5-2026.

# DONOT DISCRIMINATE THE PENSIONERS

**PTI News on 10-4-2026**

State can't differentiate between serving employees and pensioners on DA said the **Supreme Court**.

Referring to Article 14 (right to equality) of the Constitution, the verdict said it forbids class legislation but permits reasonable classification which must satisfy twin tests. The Supreme Court on Friday held that the State cannot differentiate between serving employees and pensioners when enhancing allowances meant to counter inflation. In a significant judgment upholding the right to equality for retirees, a bench comprising Justice Manoj Misra and Justice Prasanna B Varale dismissed appeals filed by the State of Kerala and the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) and affirmed that inflation hits both serving and retired employees with "equal force".

"Equality is a dynamic concept with many aspects and dimensions, and it cannot be cribbed, cabined and confined within traditional and doctrinaire limits. From a positivistic point of view, equality is antithetic to arbitrariness. In fact, equality and arbitrariness are sworn enemies; one belongs to the rule of law in a republic while the other, to the whim and caprice of an absolute monarch," Justice Mishra, who authored the judgement, said.

Referring to Article 14 (right to equality) of the Constitution, the verdict said it forbids class legislation but permits reasonable classification which must satisfy twin tests.

As per the twin tests, the classification must be founded on an intelligible differentia that

distinguishes those that are grouped together from others, and second "that differentia must have rational nexus with the object sought to be achieved by the Act", it added. The bench said the judgments cited by KSRTC do not deal with a situation where there is no dispute as regards entitlement to the benefit in question.

"Here, the retired employees are not only entitled to pension but also dearness relief, which is revisable from time to time, based on inflation. Thus, the issue is not of entitlement to the benefit but of differential rates at which those benefits are provided, dependent on whether the recipient is a serving or a retired employee," it said.

"When those benefits serve a common purpose and are linked to inflation, and inflationary pressures do not discriminate between a serving employee and a pensioner, fixing different rates of enhancement of dearness allowance and dearness relief have no rational nexus to the object sought to be achieved and is clearly discriminatory as well as arbitrary," the bench said.

It said no doubt, financial crunch might be a guiding factor to defer disbursement of certain benefits or may justify separate dates for implementation of beneficial schemes.

**"But once a decision is taken to provide certain allowances as also to increase them, based on inflation, fixing a higher rate of increase for the ones who are serving than the ones who have retired, would be arbitrary and violative of Article 14..."** it said.



# THE SICKNESS

*Paltering, the art of presenting false as truth; involves manipulating, exaggerating, or selectively sharing*

*accurate information to lead someone to a wrong conclusion.*

On 29-3-2026, the Finance Minister, Madam Nirmala Sitaraman, stated in Parliament that “BSNL was inherently sick, it needed ICU level intervention”. She was squarely blaming UPA government for the illness of BSNL. The FM claims that her Government only took BSNL out of the ICU. The statement constitutes a grave distortion of historical and policy realities.

1. In 1990s when mobile service was introduced in India under a new Telecom Policy, it was termed as ‘Value added Service’ and DoT was denied entry into it. Only in 2002 BSNL was permitted to enter mobile business after private operators monopolized the market. This dangerous policy of the then Minister Mr. Sukhram is the root cause for all the problems of BSNL.

2. The situation was worsened by Mr. A Raja, marked as 2G spectrum scam. The extra efficient officers in Sanchar Bhavan issued licence to 247 companies within just 45 minutes.

3. Under Mr. Kapil Sibal, Private operators were allowed to offer 3G services in circles without licence or spectrum, through the illegal intra-circle roaming arrangements.

4. Then the erroneous policy during auction of 4G spectrum caused further damage.

5. ‘The Sukhram Policy’ is being assiduously pursued by the present government under ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ slogan. While private operators are allowed to use any technology imported from any country and improve their mobile services BSNL is asked to use indigenous technology. Private companies have already given 5G services while BSNL is struggling to expand its 4G service. The customers opt for the best; no matter it is provided by Government Company or private company. Such preferential treatment amounts to arbitrary State action, regulatory forbearance, and policy-enabled market distortion, conferring a decisive, undue competitive advantage upon a select private entity at the cost of a PSU. ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ is a great slogan. Then why it is not made applicable to private operators?

6. BSNL with 4 lakh staff earned profit; it fails to earn profit with 40000 staff. So, Salary Bill can never be the cause.

## **BSNL was**

- ◆ **Denied entry when the market was created**
- ◆ **Denied expansion when the market grew**
- ◆ **Denied technology when the market evolved**
- ◆ **Denied fairness when competition intensified**

**The ailment is not inherent. It was inflicted—systematically, deliberately, and over decades. The Government - UPA or NDA - is responsible for sickness of BSNL. The Finance Minister of present regime cannot escape from the responsibility.**

## **TEAMWORK WITH TIRELESS TENACITY BRINGS TRIUMPH**

During the historical AIC of AIBSNLPWA architected and captained by our beloved Chief Advisor P S Ramankutty, with steadfast support of deeply motivated Reception Committee, held at Kochi on 8/9<sup>th</sup> November 2025 with roaring success, I recall the thunderous narration by President DG, about the hidden intricacies of our present burning issues Finance Act 2025, long pending pension revision as per 7<sup>th</sup> CPC, status of 8<sup>th</sup> CPC and its ToR and many other issues. President DG eloquently reiterated the prevailing status of these issues, during the AP circle conference held at Vijayawada also on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2026. To mull the present scenario, while the Price Indexation time to time being manoeuvred to the disadvantage of the wage earners, the quarterly IDA calculation and release which was hitherto a simple and routine exercise, is now tinkered as a complex derivative of the draconian Validation Act. Hats off to the executive brains under the shadow of political dispensation. Be it pending and future pension revisions, implementation of court judgments pronounced in favour of retirees, CGHS facilities; while the rhetoric of government hierarchy is pro senior citizens of the country, but the reality is, bringing policies detrimental to the welfare of senior citizen pensioners. Creating trust deficit by not honouring the earlier commitments, not following the constitutional provisions, over riding judiciary, bulldozing the working and retired fraternity from all sides is the order of the day. Drastic reduction in monthly pension of many low paid Gr D retirees by the sanctioning authority is the classic example of utmost adamancy of a field unit. Despite, personal submissions of affected poor retirees and fervent appeals of association, the sanctioning authority is

refusing to honour neither statutory provisions in the manuals nor government orders issued by DOT/BSNL.

We, as disciplined senior citizen pensioners, not having much bargaining power, compelled to seek legal recourse in many cases resulting in long drawn process. We nevertheless have our strength in membership, but unable to effectively showcase. Just to recall a quote from the legendary and renowned President of India Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, "A door is much smaller compared to the house. A lock is much smaller compared to the door and a key is the smallest of all, but a key can open entire house. Here our key is grass root member, whom we have to educate and ignite. Virtual CWC held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 noted with anguish, about the continued wrangling among MP comrades, despite persistent reconciliatory efforts of CHQ. Warring factions should understand that opinions collide, but facts remain. Honest discussions with 'organization first' outlook and little give and take will bring consensus. Let us appreciate the efforts of our conscientious and service minded delegation, led by dynamic GS com Varaprasad, for their whirlwind schedule at Delhi during second week of March 2026 braving hot weather, and meeting Telecom Secretary and many other top officers, to represent wide range of our pending issues. In these times of unpredictable happenings, message of absolute unity and unanimity, will considerably lessen the cynicism and obstinacy of rulers. Let us awake, be aware of the uncertainties, alert the masses in aiding the efforts of our able and astute leadership to achieve our genuine demands.

**M R PATNAIK, Vice President.**

## OUR TRIBUTES



**Com. P K Gopala Pillai (83)**, former AGS of T3 Union and former Kerala Circle President and Patron of AIBSNLPWA expired on 5-3-2026. He was a fighter for justice throughout his life. In 1968, he was Quilon branch secretary of Ministerial Union (FNPTO). Protesting against the attitude of its national leadership towards the strike, Com. Gopala Pillai and his friends disbanded the branch, joined NFPTTE and made the strike on 19-9-1968 a 100 per cent success in Telegraph Office Quilon. Thereafter he became Branch Secretary of T 3 Union in Trivandrum and later Circle Secretary. For some time he was Assistant General Secretary also. Pleasant, soft-spoken but firm on issues, the gentle Com. Pillai was a popular trade union leader in Trivandrum city for many years as Convener of P&T Unions (NFPTTE) and leader of Confederation of Central Govt Employees. After formation of BSNL he became leader of BSNLEU in Kerala, worked as its Circle Treasurer for many years. He was active in AIBSNLPWA as one of its founders in 2009. He worked with dedication as Circle President and Patron for many years till his health failed. Even in sick bed he mobilized funds for the Kochi AIC. His only regret was that he could not attend the Kochi AIC.



### **Com. B P S CHOUHAN**

Com B. P. S. Chauhan (77), Circle Secretary, Chhattisgarh passed away at 1 AM on 21st March 2026 due to a heart attack. During service he was active in NFTE and SNEA. Joined the Telecom Service as Telephone Operator, Com. Chouhan rose in ranks as Telephone Inspector, JTO and finally retired as SDE in 2009. On Retirement from the service in 2009, he became Circle Secretary of AIBSNLPWA and built up the organization with strenuous efforts.

Large number of comrades from various organizations attended his funeral held at Madhuben Ghat, Bilaspur.



**COM. P  
VITTALMOORTHY,**  
The former Circle Secretary of E III (NFPTTE) of AP Circle expired at the age of 93 on 26th January 2026. He devoted his

life for the working class with devotion, dedication and determination.

**Our heartfelt condolences on demise of the veterans.**

# AIC FUND

Details of donations received by CHQ from branches for the last AIC held at Kochi on 8th & 9th November 2025 are given in the Table below.

<b>ANDHRA</b>		Poonamalle	3500	Rohtak	20000
Cuddappah	15000	Madhavram	10000	Gurgaon	23400
Srikakulam	22800	Kalmandapam	5000		
Tirupati	31200	Tiruttani	14000	<b>HIMACHAL</b>	
Kurnool	30000	Kanchipuram	18700	Mandy	4500
Nellore	25000	Kalmandapam	10000	Dharmasala	20500
Vijayanagaram	55000	Amabttur	20000	Shimla	7700
Ongole	30000	Saidapet	10000	Solan	11800
Anantapur	100000	Velachery	26700	Hamirpur dist	13000
Vijayawada	132800	Mylapore	15000		
Guntur	87900	Tiruninravoor	20000	<b>JHARKHAND</b>	
Vishakaptnam	150000	Annanagar	10000	Daltonganj	2000
East Godavari	115000	Chengalpattu	53300	Hazaribagh	9000
W.Godavari	130000	Kodambakkam	50000	Jamshedpur	22000
Y Anantham	5000	Chromepet	77300		
		Villiwakkam	60000	<b>KARNATAKA</b>	
<b>ASSAM</b>				Bangalore	275000
Silchar	10000			Belgaum	7600
Sri Shyamalendu,	5000	<b>DELHI CIRCLE</b>		Bellary	35000
Assam Circle	5000	NTR Br.,	2800	Bijapur	20000
		Hq Br.,	3800	Chickmagalore	20000
<b>BIHAR</b>				Davangere	40000
Ara	10000	<b>GUJARAT</b>		Gulbarga	10000
Chapra	10000	K R Rana	2000	Hassan	7000
Gaya	5000	Surendranagar Dist	7800	Hubli	75000
Katihar	10000	Valsad	6500	Karwar	4000
Motiharl	5000	Bahvnagar Dist	25000	Kolar	52100
Patna	20000	Ahmedabad Dist	40000	Mangalore	100000
Samastipur	2500			Mysore	20000
Sasaram	7000			Raichur	20000
		<b>HARYANA</b>		Shimoga	20000
<b>CHATTIGARH</b>	5000	Faridabad	2000	Tumkur	48100
		Hissar	3300		
<b>CHENNAI TD</b>		Rewari	6000	<b>MP</b>	
Thiruvallur	11400	Ambala	5000	Balaghat	18200

Bhopal	37200	Samraha	1000	Ballia	8000
Jabalpur	62500	<b>RAJASTAN</b>		Barabanki	1500
Ujjain	15000	Ajmer	10000	Farukkabad	2000
		Jaipur	500	Gonda(new Br)	1000
<b>MAHARSHTRA</b>				Gorakhpur	7500
Individual	100	<b>TAMILNADU</b>		HAMIRPUR	1000
Mumbai Dist	20000	Chennai Tfc	70000	Jhansi	2500
Nagpur	10000	Coimbatore	150000	Kanpur	2900
		Coonor	10000	Lakimpur	2500
<b>ODISHA</b>		Cuddalore	100000	CGM office	3100
Balasore	2500	Dharmapuri	30000	Lucknow District	2700
Baripada	7000	Erode	5500	Mahatama Pathak	1100
Berhampur	20000	Karaikudi	30000	Prayagraj	3000
Bhubaneswar	20000	Kumbakonam	25000	Shajahanapur	1000
Cuttack	25000	Madurai	60000	Sitapur	3000
Rourkela	2500	Nagercoil	10000	Varanasi	4000
Sambalpur	25000	Pondyicherry	39600		
		Salem east	73800	<b>UPWEST</b>	
<b>PUNJAB</b>		Salem West	80000	Agra	22000
Abohar	4500	STR, Chennai	90000	Aligarh	39100
AMRITSAR-I	3100	Thanjavur	40000	Badaun	4500
Batinda	5000	Tiruchi	75000	Bareilly	5500
Chandigarh	5000	Tirunelveli	45000	Bijnor	5000
Dhuri	10000	Tuticorin	25000	Ettawa	500
Faridkot	3000	Virudunagar	45000	Ghaziabad	21000
Ferozepur	2500			Kasganj	3500
Hoshiarpur	2000	<b>TELANGANA</b>		Mathura	5300
Jalandahr	14000	Adilabad	13000	Meerut	61000
Khanna	5000	Hyderabad Dist	311801	Meerut C.O	14300
Koktपुरa	3500	Kamreddy	5000	Moradabad	3000
Malout	3500	Khammam	29000	Noida	4800
Mansa	1600	Mehboobnagar	5500	Pilibhith	3500
Mukatsar	3000	Nalgonda	17700	Rampur	2000
Nabha	1000	Nizamabad	5000	Sambhal	1000
Nawanshar	8900	Sangareddy	24600	<b>UTTARAKHAND</b>	3000
Pathankot	2000	Warrangal	62500		
Patiala	10000			<b>WEST BENGAL</b>	
Phagwra	11400	<b>UP EAST</b>		Civil Wing	5600
Rajपुरa	3000	Ayodhya	1000	Siliguri	10000
Ropar	3500	Azamgarh	2500	Suri	2500
				WB-Purlia	1000

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MAY - JUNE, 2026

RNI Regn No.TNBIL/2017/70652

Published  
bimonthly

Posted in first week  
of alternate month

## TELANGANA CIRCLE CONFERENCE 07-01-2026



## KRISHNA DISTRICT CONFERENCE

32

Published and edited by T S Vittoban, Block-A, Flat No D-4, Air View Apartments, M G Road, Mugalivakkam, Chennai 600125 and Printed at Vasan Print Mfg Co, No. 29, Dr . Besant Road, Ice House, Chennai 600014.