

**ALL INDIA  
BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED  
EXECUTIVES' ASSOCIATION**

**Central Head Quarters,  
New Delhi**



**Key Note Address delivered by Shri Prahlad Rai, General Secretary  
in the Open Session of 3<sup>rd</sup> CWC meeting of AIBSNLEA held  
at Hebbar Sree Vaishnava Sabha (Sudarshan Kalyan Mantap)  
Ananda Rao Circle, Mejjastic, Bangalore (Karnataka)  
On 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, March, 2008**

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 3<sup>rd</sup> Central Working Committee Meeting in Bangalore city, IT hub of our country.

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 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 in the changed Corporate set up 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.

The Civil, Architect, Electrical and Telecom Factory Engineers are providing basic infrastructure for the new telephone exchanges, towers, 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. 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.

At the time of formation of BSNL from a Govt Department to a corporate entity, faced unique challenges, in which, serious doubts raised about its capability to sustain productivity and profitability. But with true grit determination, dedication and sincerity, BSNL has belied these misconceptions and sustained its position. In less than 7 years, BSNL has a mobile customer base of 30 million and 10.50 lacs Broad band connections have been provided in this period. This year is a very challenging year for us in sustaining its position. We are confident that under the leadership of **Shri Kuldeep Goyal CMD, BSNL**, we will be achieving the targets set by the Govt. Over the past 7 years, Assets of BSNL have grown almost double. with an assets base of about 65,000 crores at the time of its formation, now the asset base has become more than 1,30,000 crores. BSNL present customer base is about 68 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 has decided to invite bids for Cellular capacity by 100 million lines in four Zones 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 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 suggestions of **Hon'ble MoC&IT Thiru A. Raja** that BSNL's vision should be to become the largest telecom service providers in the South East Asia and to provide world class State-of-art telecom service and telecom infrastructure on demand at affordable prices to the country. The objective of BSNL should be to become Leading Telecom Service Provider, build customers confidence through quality and reliable service, including provision of Broad Band on demand. Similarly, **Secretary (Telecom) Shri Siddhartha Behura** stated that BSNL should aspire to become world class company and leader in the field of Telecommunications and there is scope for further growth, while the BSNL has some social objectives, it has the potential to compete with the others.

We also acknowledge the comments of **CMD BSNL Shri Kuldeep Goyal** to treat this year 2008

as “Customer year”, **mentioning the need of “attitudinal changes”** for revamping BSNL, 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. **Director (HRD), BSNL Shri Gopal Das “for improving the work culture and public interface”** to improve our image, **Director (Finance) Shri S. D. Saxena** is also stressing on the need of an attitudinal change for making customers delighted to continue with BSNL .

3. 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/ Organizations 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 still 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.

In the challenging current business scenario with highly competitive market conditions and customer expectations in terms of quality of service, BSNL will have to gear up itself to improve its performance in achieving excellent growth in all spheres. Accordingly, BSNL needs to take immediate steps to motivate its works force, their skills and profile so that it meets the challenges and increases its profitability in future.

4. As a service association we can not remain silent spectator to 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 SDE to Sr. SDE grade:-** (a) 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. A proposal to give relief to the stagnating SDEs for their placement in the Sr. SDEs grade through Cadre Review Concept, on the backdrop of the demand of the Association to reduce the eligibility criteria from 12 years to 5 years (As approved by Telecom Commission in 1994) for placement in the existing scheme, was approved by DoT and discussed in the GoM. This was subsequently remitted to BSNL. It was assured by Hon'ble MoC&IT in the meeting held on 22.10.2001 with the Association that BSNL has agreed to the proposal in principle and a board memo was under preparation. We further understand that the memo was also finalized, but was not placed in the BSNL board meeting. Now the majority of TES Group B officers have been absorbed in BSNL and the BSNL Executives' Promotion Policy is implemented with effect from 01.10.2000, the issue needs to be settled favorably.

**(e) Fixation of AAOs pay scale:-** IDA pay scale 11875-300-17225 against upgraded CDA pay scale of Rs. 7500-11500 should be implemented and Point to Point fixation should be given to AAOs. The benefit of FR 22(1)(a)(i) should also be given on promotion from AAO to AO.

**2. Transparent Transfer Policy:-** BSNL management vide letter 6-01/2007-Restg dated 6-09-2007 has issued BSNL employees transfer policy unilaterally. The BSNL employees transfer policy has been issued ignoring the instructions of DOP&T as well as DOT in this regard. Govt. of India instructions on transfer policy are logical and based on humanitarian approach. Executives who have completed 55 years of age in new transfer policy are liable to be transferred Inter Circle. Another impracticable provision contained in the policy is that 23000 TES group 'B' officers have to necessarily work at hard tenure station like A&N, NE and J&K where the combined number of unfilled TES Gr B vacancies is hardly 150 to be eligible for Group 'A' promotion. Increasing the circle tenure of ADETs and above from 12 to 15 years and reducing for Gr B from 24 to 15 years.

The worst part contained in the transfer policy is that a JTO on transfer from one circle to another, before completion of five years, stands to lose almost everything financial up gradation, perks, and incentives. In view of the above, It is requested to kindly review and issue modified Transfer Policy considering the views/suggestions given by the Association.

**3. Payment of pension to BSNL Employees:-** The employees 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.

**4. 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.

**5. 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.

6. **Grant of various perks for the Executives in BSNL:** - BSNL has granted perks to executive's w.e.f. 01.01.2005 as demanded by our Association. The Group 'A' officers earlier drawing Rs. 800/- PM as Transport Allowance has been given Rs. 1400/- only instead of 1600/-. This has caused dissatisfaction because transport allowance beyond Rs. 800/- is taxable, hence the increase is about Rs. 400/- only. Our association demanded transport allowance based on petrol charges, which is the most logical criteria. Similarly other Perks suggested 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.
7. **Filling up of the vacant STS Group 'A' posts in BSNL:-** BSNL Management has started the process to fill up about 1500 posts of DEs from giving promotion to eligible TES Group 'B' officers. It is a very less number because more than 3000 DEs posts are lying vacant. Similarly more than 300 CAOs posts, 100 EEs (C/E) Posts are lying vacant. It should be completed on top priority basis as there is already much delay in this matter.
8. **Regular Promotion to SDE (Telecom):** - About 1500 SDEs (Telecom) posts are lying vacant. The DPC process to fill up the vacant SDEs posts should immediately be 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 Adhoc 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.
9. **DPC from AAO to AO:** - The DPC for filling up of about 1400 vacant AOs posts is to be completed on top priority. We request for an early action in the matter.
10. **Removal of FR-35 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 create 3000 JTO posts as ONE TIME MEASURE so that officiating JTOs are given regular promotion.
11. **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).
12. **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 been requesting for granting the benefits as available to other Engineering cadres.
13. **Sanction/creation of new posts of PPS in the field offices:** - With the restructuring, there remain only two grades i.e. PA and PS. In the restructuring order it was specifically clarified that the Private Secretaries who were already promoted as Sr. Private Secretary shall continue to hold the designation in the field units till further orders. It was agreed by the then Director(HRD) that the posts of PPS in CDA pay scale of Rs. 10000-325-15200 will be created and attached with Heads of Circles. We request that all CGMs/PGMs(HAG level) may be provided with PPS.
14. **Withdrawal of ACP benefit of JTOs/ SDEs(C/E) & PAs/PSs irrespective of recruitment rule framed later on :-** Withdrawal of ACP granted after 1.10.2004: We requested that ACP benefit granted before issue of BSNL Promotion Policy in January 2007 (effective from 1.10.2004) should not be withdrawn as the same was granted as per Govt. Scheme. The officers should be allowed to give option to get the benefit of ACP upto 1.10.2006 since in most of the cases; financial up gradation was eligible only from 1.10.06.

**15. GSM handset and Broad Band service connection to all executives:-**

(a) We are thankful to BSNL Management for taking a decision to provide handset to all executives who have been sanctioned GSM service telephone connections, but the amount sanctioned is meager one. We would therefore, request to kindly decide cost of handset at least Rs. 3000/4000/5000 to JTO/SDE/DE level executives in BSNL.

(b) Rent free Broadband service connection to all Executives should be provided.

**16. Viability of BSNL:-**

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

(b) **No unbundling of BSNL's last line copper:** BSNL must not be forced to unbundled 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.

(c) **Non-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.

(f) **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 enhancing of ceiling for Productivity Linked Incentive, providing GSM Telephone connection to all executives, holding of DPCs to fill up the vacant STS Group A & vacant Group B posts and stopping recovery of Income Tax on Account of perquisite for residential quarter occupied by BSNL employees.

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 of our customers and make them delighted through our faultless and customer friendly services. 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)**  
**General Secretary**

