

BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

Recognised Union in BSNL

(Registered Under Indian Trade Union Act 1926. Regn.No.4896)

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V.A.N. Namboodiri
General Secretary

BSNLEU/102(CIRCULAR NO.20)

20th November, 2009

Towards Wage Settlement

Dear Comrades,

At last, after sustained struggles and hard bargaining, an opening is made towards wage settlement for the two and half lakh non-executive employees of BSNL.

BSNL management was dilly dallying in acceding to the reasonable demands of the workers. The BSNL Workers Alliance after its grand alliance was defeated was desperate and wanted that wage settlement is delayed so that the resentment of workers can be used to target BSNLEU with an eye on the next membership verification in 2011. In fact, collaborating with management, they started filling up formats from employees to the effect that they are prepared to accept whatever is recommended for non-executives by the II Pay Review Committee. These unions did not even find out the fact that II Pay Review Committee has not recommended any thing including payscales for non-executives. Anyway the workers out rightly rejected this move. BSNLWA could not get these forms filled up even from 1 – 2 % of non-executive employees.

The management was taking a complete negative stand which compelled the United Forum of BSNL Employees to call for a two day strike on 19 – 20th May, 2009 demanding early wage settlement. Though sufficient notice was given, the management waited till last minute for discussion. Further just before the discussion on 18th May with the recognised union, management held a meeting with NFTE-FNTO which was unwarranted. This was utilized by NFTE-FNTO alliance to spread wrong information and to create confusion amongst the workers. They told that 4 months pay is agreed as interim relief / advance.

In the meeting on 18th May, 2009 after much hard bargaining, we were able to clinch new HRA with effect from February 2009 retrospectively and an advance of 6 months pay, two months more than what management has offered. Except in A1 Cities where 30% HRA is granted already, in all other places the HRA was either increased from 5% & 7½% with 10% or from 15% to 20% benefiting the majority of employees throughout the country. 6 months advance coming to about Rs.30,000 to 60,000 was also paid. In fact it was almost more than what executives got with arrears of 40% at that time. The strike was deferred in this context, since two major issues were sorted out. Usually HRA is granted with prospective effect but we were able to get HRA with retrospective effect from February, 2009, even before wage settlement is reached.

The adamant attitude of the management resulted in the 48 hours strike of BSNL employees on 19-20 August which was participated by more than 2 lakh workers.

After the strike, the management took a more adamant stand and did not hold meetings. It was after much effort that it started further discussion. The NFTE-FNTO alliance was putting much pressure on the management to delay a settlement so that they can take undue advantage out of it.

Discussion on 17th November, 2009:- The meeting of the Wage Negotiation Committee was held on 17th November, 2009 and after detailed discussion, the following understanding has been reached.

1. 30% fitment on pay + 68.8% IDA
2. No periodicity will be mentioned. Next wage revision for non-executives will be along with executives.
3. Increase of fitment on 68.8% to 78.2% IDA both for non-executives and executives simultaneously.
4. 3% annual increment

Discussion on 19th November, 2009:- The committee started discussion about the payscales. Discussions were held on how the revised scales can be constructed. Various suggestions on conversion factor, span of scales, stagnation increments etc. were discussed. Discussions are inconclusive. Further meetings may take place in next week so that the agreement could be reached early.

NFTE-FNTO Meeting: - NFTE-FNTO alliance was propagating that the wage negotiation committee has fixed a meeting with them on 16th November and agreement will be reached and signed with them. But now what happened is known to all. Meeting was held, but the management heard what they said and did not give any reply. It was pointed out by the management that any agreement will only be with the recognised union. Our strong protest against meeting with unrecognized union just before the meeting with recognised union had its result and the NFTE-FNTO could not take advantage of the meeting.

An early settlement required: - BSNLEU and United Forum are trying for continued discussion with management for early settlement.

Anti-Disinvestment Day on 25.11.2009: - You might have seen from newspapers that the UPA government is moving fast to disinvest all the profitable PSUs to mop up funds to make up the financial deficit. BSNL is also in the list. BSNL Board has already decided IPO for BSNL and forwarded the recommendations to the DoT.

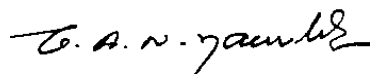
In these circumstances, we have to strongly protest and resort to agitational programmes as was done earlier. The Joint Forum will be meeting shortly to discuss the issue.

In the meanwhile CITU has decided to observe 25.11.2009 as "Anti-Disinvestment Day" through organizing massive demonstrations / dharnas before all Central Public Sector undertakings and their offices. All our SSA / Circle unions are directed to jointly organize demonstrations in front of offices / exchanges protesting against the disinvestment policy of government and preparing workers for agitational programmes. Reports of observation of programme be sent to CHQ.

All India BSNL – DoT Pensioners' Association: - Com. K.G. Jayaraj, General Secretary, AIBDPA has already reached Delhi and has started functioning. You are requested to take initiative for holding Circle / District Conventions and help forming the Circle / District Branches.

With Warm Greetings,

Yours Fraternaly,



**[V.A.N.Namboodiri]
General Secretary**