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Government assures BSNL management and representatives of the unions and associations of BSNL to support their reasonable demands

With reference to the call by All India Unions and Associations of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (AIUAB) for a 3-days strike starting tomorrow, the Government (Department of Telecommunications) and BSNL management have been engaged in discussions with representatives of AIUAB on ways to address the various demands raised by the unions and associations. It has been continuously emphasized by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) that Government recognizes the inherent strength and strategic position of BSNL in the Telecom sector in the country. All efforts are being made, and will continue to be made, to make BSNL robust and financially viable.

The main demands of AIUAB include benefits to executives under the 3rd Pay Revision Committee (PRC) with 15% fitment and to non-executives as per the 8th wage negotiations w.e.f. 01.01.2017, allotment of 4G spectrum to BSNL, revision of pension for BSNL retirees w.e.f. 01.01.2017 and delinking of same with pay revision for PRC implementation, and deduction of payment of pension contribution by BSNL on actual basic pay instead of on the highest level of the pay scale.

DoT reiterates that positive steps are being taken by the Department in respect of each of these demands. In fact, for allotment of 4G spectrum, pursuant to decision taken in Digital Communications Commission (DCC) meeting held on 05.02.2019, the issue of spectrum allotment for providing 4G services to BSNL is being referred to TRAI to recommend on the issue of administrative allocation, quantum, price and appropriate frequency band. Further action will be taken on receipt of the said recommendation.

In parallel, a comprehensive proposal for revival of BSNL has been prepared, which will be taken up for consideration by competent authorities very soon.

An institutional mechanism in the form of a Coordination Committee comprising senior officers of the DoT, BSNL management, and representatives of AIUAB is already functional. Representatives of AIUAB have also held meetings with the Additional Secretary (Telecom), DoT, in which they have been duly apprised of the progress being made in relation to their demands. BSNL management has issued appeals to its employees not to resort to an agitational program at this critical juncture – when the organization is engaged in sincere and serious efforts to protect and enhance its market-share, and when any disruption in services can only adversely impact the interests of BSNL and its customers, employees and other stakeholders.

Government wishes to re-emphasize that it will continue to engage with the BSNL management and representatives of the unions and associations of BSNL, to support their reasonable demands, and to guide the organization towards a revival. Government also hopes that BSNL employees and officers will not jeopardize the interests of their organization by going on strike at a time when it is in their own interest to protect their customer-base and revenue by providing uninterrupted, high-quality services.

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