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**BHARAT SANCHAR NIGAM LIMITED EXECUTIVES' WELFARE ASSOCIATION
CENTRAL HEAD QUARTERS, NEW DELHI**

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PresidentKishan Singh
Mob.9968270611**General Secretary**Prahlad Rai
Mob.9868278222**Financial Secretary**A K Jain
Mob.9868838466**NO.AIRBSNLEWA/CHQ/2024/CMD/****Dated 20thFebruary, 2024**

To,

Shri P K Purwar ji
CMD BSNL,
New Delhi-110001**Sub: Withholding of retirement benefits of about 200 ST category retired employees of Maharashtra Circle on the pretext of pending Caste Validation - regarding;**Ref : i) DOP&PW OM No. 38/09(02)/2020-P&PW(A)(6721) dated 30-11-2021
ii) DOT No. 40-09/2022-Pen(T) dated 22th March, 2022 clarification regarding caste status verification in BSNL.
iii) BSNL CO Letter No: - BSNLCO-A/11(11)/9/2022-ESTABDated25-07-2022.

Respected Sir,

With reference to above, we would like to draw your kind attention on Govt of India, Ministry of Personnel, PG & Pensions, DOP & Pensioner's Welfare, Director office OM No. 38/09(02)/2020-P&PW(A) (6721) dated 30-11-2021 (under reference (i) above, copy attached herewith for your ready reference) addressed to all departments of Govt of India which clearly says under Para 4 that; "**All the Ministries/ Departments are therefore advised to ensure that the verification of caste certificate of employees is completed expeditiously and in any case well before the date of their superannuation, in accordance with the instructions issued by the department of Personnel & Training, Unless Departmental or Judicial proceedings are pending against a retiring employee, the pensionary /retirement benefits of the retiring employee should not be withheld or delayed on the ground of pendency of verification of caste certificate**".

Sir, despite several letters/reminders and clear cut instructions from DoT & BSNL Corporate Office (under reference ii & iii above)to all circles heads regarding settlement of pending retirement benefits with held by the Circles, in respect of retired employees, majority of which have retired under BSNL VRS-2019 scheme on 31st Jan 2020, still there are about 200 of such cases lying pending in Maharashtra Circle on the pretext of pending ST caste validation.

Sir, time and again Govt of India had clarified that onus of verification of caste certificate lies with the employer/appointing authority, but it looks like in Maharashtra is least bothered about the instructions of Govt. of India, and Maharashtra circle administration with its own draconian orders had instructed to all ST category retirees to validate their caste certificate issued more than 30 years ago on their own and till that time their all retirement benefits which includes payment of Ex-gratia, Commutation of pension, Gratuity, etc are being withheld. Even No EPPO is being issued for them, hence they are not able take the online benefits of Sampann software, can not apply for CGHS card, not getting CCA identity card, cannot upload their investment plans or proofs of investment for getting rebate in Income Tax, etc.

Sir, it is crystal clear that DoT, DPE, Parliamentary Committee on Welfare of SC & ST Employees all have issued clear cut speaking instructions and guidelines on the subject matter to not to withheld retirement benefits of any one on the ground of pending caste certificate verification which could have been verified during the service period of employee, even then Maharashtra circle had been failed to comply with all these orders.

Sir, what is more shocking is that, all of these retirees under Rule 36 has been issued Charge sheet after 3 years of their retirement for not complying with the office instructions. Sir, this is nothing but to drag this issue further for many more years with malafide intension and with an ulterior motive to purposely harass these retired employees.

Sir, before concluding we hereby earnestly request your honor to please give justice to all retired ST category employees of Maharashtra Circle by issuing instructions to all concerned for immediate release of all retirement benefits like Generation of EPPO, regular Pension, payment of Ex gratia, Commutation of pension & payment of Gratuity etc, to about 200 retired employees from Maharashtra circle who have since been deprived from all these benefits for not able to get their caste certificate validated, which otherwise could have been the responsibility of employer (DoT/BSNL) to get it verified from issuing authority during their service period and before issuing vigilance clearance for accepting their VRS applications.

Sir, it is evident from the above that, these ST category employees are being harassed by the Maharashtra Circle administration, despite of clear cut instructions on the subject matter from Govt. of India and we seek your immediate intervention to deliver justice to these ST category employees without any further delay please.

With kind regards,

Yours Faithfully



(Prahlad Rai)
General Secretary

Encl: As above.

Copy to: The Director (HR) BSNL Board, New Delhi. for information & further N/A please