

Press statement**Dated: 17.11.2020**

We, the eight unions and associations of BSNL, viz., BSNL Employees Union (BSNLEU), National Federation of Telecom Employees BSNL (NFTE BSNL), National Union of BSNL Workers FNTO (NUBSNLW FNTO), BSNL Mazdoor Sangh (BSNL MS), Sanchar Nigam Association of TTAs (SNATTA), BSNL Association of Telecom Mechanics (BSNL ATM), Telecom Employees Progressive Union (TEPU) and BSNL Officers Association (BSNL OA) have decided to join the General Strike on 26.11.2020. We are joining the strike, demanding settlement of our 10 point charter of demands, as well as the 7 point charter of demands of the Central Trade Unions.

The Revival of BSNL still remains a distant dream, since the government is not taking sincere steps for the same. Not only that, the government is also creating roadblocks in BSNL's 4G launching. As all are aware, the government has forced BSNL to cancel its tender, that had been floated to procure 50,000 4G BTSs. The charge levelled against BSNL is that, its tender conditions did not permit indigenous manufacturers to participate in the bidding. However, even five months after the cancellation of the tender, the government is not able to identify and tell, as to which indigenous manufacturer is capable of fulfilling the requirements of BSNL, in rolling out its 4G networks.

On the contrary, the Committee formed by the DoT, has reportedly recommended that, BSNL should launch its 4G network, through a **System Integrator**. The job of the System Integrator will be procuring different components of 4G networks, like hardware and software and assembling them together. It is important to note that, no private telecom service provider in India, has rolled out its networks through a System Integrator. This is because, the System Integrator Model is costly and is susceptible to technical glitches, according to the opinion of experts. That is why, all the private telecom service providers have entered into contracts with a single vendor, for the installation, as well as maintenance of their networks.

More importantly, the 4G technology said to have been developed by the indigenous manufacturers, is not proven. When the private operators are procuring world class equipments from international vendors, it is a billion dollar question, why the government is forcing BSNL alone to procure the unproven equipments from local vendors? This is not only denial of level playing ground to BSNL, but it is a conspiracy to clip its wings.

The private companies, viz., Airtel and Vodafone Idea, which are equipped with 4G and other state-of-the-art technologies, are unable to compete with Reliance Jio and are losing lakhs of their customers every month. Whereas, BSNL, which is running its services only with 2G and 3G technologies, has gained 3.88 lakh new customers even in July, 2020. This goes to prove that, BSNL is a potential threat to Mukesh Ambani's overzealous ambition of monopolising the entire telecom sector and this is exactly why hurdles are being created to delay BSNL's 4G launching. Hence we demand, the government should immediately clear all the roadblocks in the launching of 4G service by BSNL. We also demand that BSNL should be provided with level playing ground in the matter of procurement of equipments, vis-à-vis the private telecom companies. Further, we also demand the settlement of the other demands contained in our 10 point charter of demands.

Undoubtedly, the game plan of the government to weaken BSNL is a part of its over all strategy to wipe out the Indian Public Sector. The government is proceeding fast to privatise the Indian Railways, Defence Ordnance Factories, the BPCL, Public Sector Banks, LIC, Coal mining, etc. We, the above mentioned eight trade unions of BSNL, strongly oppose the government's moves to privatise the PSUs. We also join the hands of the Central Trade Unions in seeking settlement of their 7 point charter of demands, which include

the demands like payment of Rs.7,500/- per month to all the non-income tax paying households, withdrawal of the pro-employer and anti-worker Labour Codes, the pro-corporate Farm Acts, the provision to prematurely retire the government and the Public Sector employees and other demands.

We, the above mentioned 8 trade unions and associations of BSNL, appeal to the entire BSNL employees to join the General Strike on 26.11.2020. We also appeal to the general public and the media to extend their support to this justified struggle.

Demands of BSNL employees.

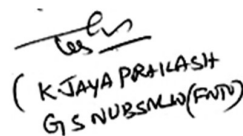
- 1) Immediately launch BSNL's 4G service. Do not discriminate vis-a-vis private operators in procurement of equipments.
- 2) Settle 3rd Wage Revision w.e.f. 01.01.2017.
- 3) Stop retrenching contract workers. Stop indiscriminate outsourcing of works. Re-engage all the retrenched contract workers. Immediately pay their wage arrears.
- 4) Settle pension revision w.e.f. 01.01.2017.
- 5) Implement a New Promotion Policy for the Non-Executives.
- 6) Immediately hold the JTO LICE, JAO LICE, JE LICE and TT LICE.
- 7) Ensure cashless treatment in empanelled hospitals. Provide Rs.10 lakh cash compensation to the employees who die due to COVID-19, at par with the Postal Department.
- 8) Implement Group Term Insurance (GTI) for the Non-Executives.
- 9) Implement 30% superannuation benefits to the Directly Recruited employees.
- 10) Implement revision of casual labourers' wages.

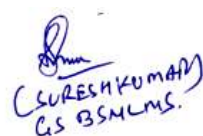
Demands of Central Trade Unions.

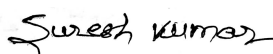
- 1) Cash transfer of Rs 7500 per month for all non-income tax paying families.
- 2) 10 kg free ration per person per month to all needy.
- 3) Expansion of MGNREGA to provide 200 days' work in a year in rural areas, at enhanced wages; extension of employment guarantee to urban areas.
- 4) Withdraw all anti farmer laws and anti-worker Labour Codes.
- 5) Stop privatisation of the Public Sector including the financial sector and stop the corporatisation of Govt. run manufacturing and service entities like Railways, Ordnance Factories, Ports etc.
- 6) Withdraw the draconian circular on forced premature retirement of Government & PSU Employees.
- 7) Provide Pension to all, scrap NPS and restore earlier Pension, improve EPS-95.

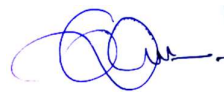

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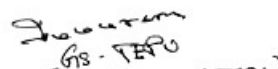

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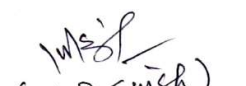

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