

### BSNL pensioners demand industrial DA

P. V. V. Murthi



P. Abhimanyu, All India General Secretary of the BSNL Employees Union addresses the 3rd State Conference of the All India BSNL DOT Pensioners' association in Vellore on Tuesday. Photo: C. Venkatachalapathy

#### ***Petition submitted to Seventh Pay Commission to fix minimum pension as 67 % of last drawn pay***

The All India BSNL DoT Pensioners' Association (AIBDPA) has demanded the extension of the 78.2 per cent industrial dearness allowance (IDA) currently given to the employees of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited to the pensioners as well. It has submitted a petition to the Seventh Pay Commission to fix the minimum pension payable to the pensioners of BSNL and the Department of Telecommunications as 67 per cent of the last drawn pay, according to K.G. Jayaraj, All India General Secretary of the AIBDPA.

Talking to newsmen on the sidelines of the third state conference of AIBDPA, Tamil Nadu here on Tuesday, Mr. Jayaraj said that the association has been conducting a series of struggles in support of its demands. The association has been concerned at the implementation of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Act enacted during the last session of the Parliament in the previous United Progressive Alliance regime. "A major challenge to the pensioners' community in the country is that the PFDR Act does not guarantee the minimum pension". The PFDR Act contains a provision that any existing pension scheme in the country can be brought into the ambit of the PFDR Act through an executive order. Therefore, those pensioners who are now covered by the existing Defined Benefit Pension Scheme are also in danger of losing their pension under the PFDR Act, he said.

The AIBDPA general secretary said that the association proposed to collect one crore signatures from the people and submit a memorandum to the MPs to represent their demands in Parliament during its session in February 2015. The demands included the revival of BSNL, which would be the main demand during the indefinite strike proposed to be launched by the Forum of BSNL Unions and Associations from March 17, 2015. The other demands included revision of pension once in five years, parity in pension between the present BSNL pensioners and the past pensioners (those who retired prior to January 1, 2007), fixing of family pension as 50 per cent of the last drawn pay, and immediate restoration of the medical allowance hitherto paid to the BSNL pensioners.

Speaking at the conference, P. Abhimanyu, All India General Secretary of BSNL Employees Union wanted a mechanism to be created under which pension of the retired employees would be revised even if the serving employees do not get wage revision.

G. Sukumaran, Tamil Nadu State General Secretary of the Centre for Trade Unions (CITU) inaugurated the conference. S. Mohandas, state secretary of AIBDPA presided.

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