

## ***To Tirupati AIC with added vigour and enthusiasm.***

All India BSNL DOT Pensioners Association was founded on 21st October, 2009 and all our units are going to celebrate the 6th anniversary. Meanwhile, the 2nd triennial conference is also decided to be held at Tirupati on 8 – 9 December, 2015.

During this six years what we have been able to do for the pensioners? First of all, the formation of AIBDPA has brought a new perspective about the pensioners organizations. The style of functioning of AIBDPA has been quite different from other pensioners organisations. Most importantly AIBDPA took the path of agitation for the settlement of genuine demands of BSNL and DoT pensioners. It rightly sought the help of employees organisations for resolving basic issues like pension revision of pre 2007 BSNL pensioners and 78.2% IDA merger. BSNL Employees Union and the Forum of BSNL Unions / Associations took up these issues in right earnest and included in their charter of demands for their phased programme of agitations culminating in strikes. This has helped us to achieve the pension revision for the pre-2007 BSNL pensioners and no doubt we shall achieve the 78.2% IDA merger also.

AIBDPA, during this period have conducted several agitations, important ones to mention being the Sanchar Bhawan March on 20.11.2014 and the two days relay hunger fast on 21, 22 July, 2015. We have supported and associated actively in all the agitations by BSNLEU, Joint Action Committee of Non-Executive Unions of BSNL and the Forum. As part of our declared policy we have been able to associate with the National Strikes and the campaign programmes of Central Trade Unions. In stark contrast to the concerns of certain leaders, the formation and functioning of AIBDPA has certainly helped to strengthen the joint movement of pensioners.

We could also achieve some minor demands, viz., quarters for the BSNL DOT Pensioners and broadband concession to the BSNL pensioners. We are striving to resolve the short comings in these, to reduce the rent applying the same criteria of employees and extension of broadband concession to DoT Pensioners. One of the biggest onslaughts inflicted during this period is stoppage of quarterly medical allowance to the BSNL pensioners and the efforts for the restoration has so far not been succeeded.

Of course, there are bigger challenges ahead. PFRDA Act is hanging over the head and the BJP government's calculated move to amend the existing labour laws to suit the interests of the employers is a major threat. BSNL is passing through a difficult period due to the pro-private policies of the successive central governments. The 7th Pay Commission is expected to submit its report shortly and the recommendations would have its bearings on the DoT pensioners fully and BSNL pensioners partially. The process of pay revision in BSNL has to be started based on which the pension revision could be demanded. More over the evil designs of the ruling class to divide the people on communal basis have to be thwarted.

Let us also focus on the organizational weaknesses too. Still we have to organize circle units in certain circles like Bihar, Odisha & J&K. Also we have to streamline the units at all levels to ensure systematic functioning. So let us move together to strengthen AIBDPA to take up the challenges heroically and to march forward with complete unity to win our genuine demands. These are all the tasks before the Tirupati Conference and let us be the torch bearers.

\*\*\*\*\*