

BSNL CASUAL & CONTRACT WORKERS' FEDERATION

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To,

All Circle Secretaries
& CHQ Office Bearers.

Dear Comrades,

As you are aware that, the contract and casual workers in BSNL are undergoing a very difficult time. BSNL Management has issued several orders against the contract workers like retrenchment, reduction of working days and hours, retrenchment at the age of 55 years etc. At last, they are going to introduce the new outsourcing process. For the past few months, BSNLEU & BSNLCCWF are continuously trying to organize joint struggles for the settlement of problems of contract and casual workers. In the meantime, the whole nation is locked-down due to the outbreak of Covid-19. During this lock down period, the BSNL Management has taken advantage of the situation and has started floating the new outsourcing tenders in different circles. The CHQ has written letters to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Chief Labour Commissioner, ND, CMD BSNL and the Director (HR), BSNL, against the anti-worker attitude of the BSNL Management towards the contract and casual workers.

(1) Against increasing the working hours from 8 hours a day to 12 hours a day.

Comrades, as you are aware, the government is trying to amend the Labour Law for increasing the working hours. In protest, all the Central Trade Unions have sought the intervention of Labour Minister Sri Santosh Gangwar to stop any move to raise the daily working hours from the existing 8 hours. In the meantime, many state governments, including Gujarat, Rajasthan, Odisha have silently increased the working hours from 8 hours a day to 12 hours a day. BSNL Employees Union has called upon the entire employees to protest against the government's anti-workers decision and call for a Lunch Hour Demonstration on 21-05-2020. The BSNLCCWF also calls upon it's members to participate in this programme.

(2) Struggle is continued by the CHQ:-

For the past few months, BSNLEU & BSNLCCWF have been continuously trying to organize joint struggles for the settlement of problems of contract and casual workers. During this lockdown period, the CHQ has submitted letters to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Chief Labour Commissioner (C), New Delhi, CMD BSNL, Director (HR) demanding to pay the pending wage arrears of the contract workers, to stop the new outsourcing process and to stop the retrenchment, reduction of working days and working hours. In this connection, two meetings were held with the CMD BSNL. One on 3rd March, 2020 and the second one on 18th March, 2020. In these meetings, Com. P. Abhimanyu, General Secretary, BSNLEU and Com. Animesh Mitra, Secretary General, BSNLCCWF, urged upon the CMD BSNL for an amicable settlement of the problems, to mitigate the sufferings of the contract worker. But the Management is not changing their adamant attitude in this regard. Due to the lock down situation, it does not permit us to arrange separate meeting. But it is our bitter experience, that the BSNL Management has taken the opportunity of present Covid-19 pandemic situation to implement anti-worker decisions.

(3) Unilateral and unjustified reduction of minimum basic Pay from Rs.6050/- to Rs.5740/- for the Casual Labourers:-

In these hard days, when the casual labourers are eagerly awaiting the implementation of the 7th CPC recommendations, as per which they are entitled to get Rs.18000/- as Basic Pay w.e.f. 01-01-2016, it is observed that on the plea of the introduction of the ERP to the casual laboruers, unilateral and unjustified reduction of minimum basic Pay from Rs.6050 to Rs.5740 has been implemented. In this regard, BSNLCCWF has already raised it's voice before the BSNL Management and demanded to immediately settle the issue.

(4) Future course of action and our responsibility.

Though the situation is against us but still our workers are organizing the trade union action at Circle and District levels during lock down period. We have discussed the matter with the CHQ office bearers over the telephone for taking the further course of action. Now, it has been decided that:-

BSNLCCWF will organize the entire workforce in the Demonstration Programme on 21-05-2020 called on by the BSNL Employees Union on five point charter of demands including the demands of contract –casual labourers.

It has been observed that BSNL Management is ignoring the orders issued by Central Government during the lockdown period to protect the workers. It is unfortunate that the BSNL Management assured us for the allotment of funds to the circles, for the payment of two months' wages for the contract workers. But, at the field level, workers in most circles have not received this payment. In this regard, all Circle Secretaries are requested to send the memorandum through email to the Chief Labour Commissioner (C), New Delhi with copy to CMD, BSNL.

(5) Historic role of the BSNLEU in collection of fund for "Contract Workers Relief Fund":-

It is known to all that the BSNL Employees Union has taken the decision to collect the "Contract Workers' Relief Fund" during this lockdown period. It is observed that in many circles, the regular employees, as well as the pensioners, have liberally donated to the "Contract Workers Relief Fund". Out of this fund, relief to the contract workers, in the form of food materials, is being arranged. To a certain extent, this relief is mitigating the hardship of the contract workers. BSNLCCWF congratulates BSNLEU and heartily thanks the employees and pensioners for extending the helping hand.

With warm greetings,

Comradely yours,



(Animesh Mitra)
Secretary General