



P. Abhimanyu
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BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

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BSNLEU/102 (Circular No.05)

14th April, 2020

To,

**Circle Secretaries,
Central office-bearers,
and District Secretaries.**

Organise lunch hour demonstrations on 21.05.2020, by maintaining social distance.

Comrades,

The All India Centre of BSNLEU has taken the decision to organise "Lunch Hour Demonstrations" throughout the country on 21.05.2020, in front of BSNL offices. Since, this is the lock-down period, the demonstrations should be organised by maintaining social distance. The issues for which this demonstration is being organised are as follows:-

1. *Against increasing the working hours from 8 hours to 12 hours per day.*

Utilising the lock-down that has been imposed in the country, the working hours is being **increased from 8 hours a day to 12 hours a day**. This is a serious violation of the decision of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In it's convention held in 1919, the ILO took the decision of 8 hours of work in a day and 48 hours of work in a week. The Government of India has ratified this decision of ILO in 1921 and it is being followed ever since then.

However, after coming to power in 2014, the Narendra Modi government has been taking serious efforts to change the Labour Laws in favour of the corporates. It has been seriously trying to change the **Factories Act, 1948** so as to increase the working hours. The Central Trade Unions of the country have been resisting this by organising a series of General Strikes.

Now, utilising the lock-down period prevailing in the country, the state governments of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Odisha have silently increased the working hours from 8 hours a day to 12 hours a day. This is being done with the tacit support of the Narendra Modi government. The 8 hour working day has been achieved by shedding blood and making immense sacrifices. So, the working class of India has to fight against the retrograde decision to increase the working hours from 8 hours to 12 hours a day.

2. *Immediate payment of April, 2020 salary.*

The salary for the month of April, 2020 has not been paid so far. The General Secretary has discussed this issue with the Director (Finance) and Director (HR). However, no one was in a position to tell, as to when the salary will be paid. The BSNL Management has acquired the mind set, as per which payment of salary to the employees has become it's last priority. We cannot allow this. We have to ensure that salary is paid on time every month.

3. *Contract workers issues.*

The contract workers have not been paid wages for the past ten months. Many contract workers have already committed suicide due to this. Apart from this, the Corporate Office has issued letter on 30-09-2019, for the retrenchment of the contract workers, as well as reduction of their working hours. BSNLEU, together with the BSNL Casual Contract Workers' Federation (BSNL CCWF), have organised many agitations. The issue was also raised in the Parliament by many MPs. However, all these have fallen on deaf ears. Now, the Finance Ministry, as well

as the Labour Ministry, have issued instructions that, the contract workers should not be denied of their wages during the period of lock-down. But, the BSNL Management is not implementing these instructions. Further, the BSNL Management is also outsourcing all the works that have so far been carried out by the contract workers. As a result of this, again large scale retrenchment is taking place, apart from violation of the Minimum Wages Act and denial of social security measures.

4. Reduction of the Outdoor Treatment ceiling from 23 to 15 days pay.

Through it's letter issued on 08.05.2020, the BSNL Corporate Office has drastically curtailed the medical facility being availed by the BSNL employees. Accordingly, the ceiling for Outdoor Treatment has been cut down from 23 days pay to 15 days pay. It is a matter of deep concern that, the Management has taken this decision to curtail the existing medical facility when the BSNL employees, together with the people of the nation, are faced with the danger of Corona Virus Disease. While the top officers of the Company avail the luxuries at the cost of the Company, it is highly condemnable that the existing medical facility of the ordinary employees is being cut down, in the guise of cost cutting. The top officers of the Company should first implement austerity measures for themselves, before curtailing the facilities of ordinary employees.

Demands for the demonstration.

In view of the above mentioned conditions, the All India Centre of BSNLEU has decided to give call for demonstrations on 21.05.2020 on the following demands:-

- 1) Honour the ILO decision. Do not increase working hours from 8 hours to 12 hours per day.
- 2) Immediately disburse salary for April, 2020. Ensure on time payment of salary every month.
- 3) Immediately pay the wage arrears of contract workers. Do not retrench contract workers through outsourcing of works.
- 4) Withdraw the decision to reduce Outdoor Treatment ceiling from 23 days to 15 days pay.

Maintain social distance – display placards – arrange media coverage.

In view of the lock-down situation prevailing in the country, the All India Centre has decided that social distancing should be strictly maintained while organising the demonstration. The comrades participating the demonstration should display placards to highlight the demands. Sufficient media coverage for the programme should also be arranged.

All the circle and district secretaries are requested by the All India Centre to take all out efforts to successfully organise this demonstration.

Matters for the placards are being enclosed herewith.

Thanking you,

Yours fraternally,



[P. Abhimanyu]
General Secretary