

BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

Press statement

Week long campaign by BSNLEU.

BSNL Employees Union (BSNLEU), the Main Recognised Union in BSNL, has decided to organise a **“week long campaign”** from 22nd March, 2021, among the general public. This campaign is aimed at mobilising people’s support, for the immediate launching of BSNL’s 4G service and also against the disinvestment / privatisation of BSNL.

The Modi government is taking all out efforts to deny 4G technology to BSNL. On 23rd October, 2019, the Cabinet decided to allot 4G spectrum to BSNL. It is almost one and half years since the decision is taken. However, still BSNL is unable to start it’s 4G service. This is only because of the road-blocks being created by the government.

In March, 2020, BSNL floated a tender to procure 50,000 sites, to start it’s 4G service. However, this tender was cancelled as per the direction of the government. Thereafter, the government has told BSNL that, it should procure 4G core equipments only from the Indian manufactures. This is a very big discrimination. All the other telecom companies in India, viz., Airtel, Jio, Vodafone are procuring their equipments only from multinational companies. This is because, no Indian company is having proven 4G technology. Further, no Indian company is also having the capability of installing and maintaining a vast 4G network required by BSNL.

Hence, forcing BSNL alone to procure 4G equipments from Indian manufactures, is only to weaken BSNL, with the ultimate aim of handing over this public sector company to the private. In the meanwhile, a campaign has also been unleashed against BSNL that, the government has already given 4G technology, as well as money, to BSNL, but BSNL is not improving. It may be remembered that, Shri Ananthakumar Hedge, a BJP MP from Karnataka, maligned BSNL in the similar way, a view months ago. Under these circumstances, BSNLEU is demanding that, BSNL should be allowed to procure 4G equipments from international manufactures.

Apart from not allowing BSNL to start it’s 4G service, the government is also taking steps to hand over BSNL’s mobile towers and optic fibre cable, to the private companies. The government has decided to raise Rs.2.5 lakh crore through Asset Monetisation. In this, the government has decided to raise Rs.1.3 lakh crore, by way of selling the assets of Railways and BSNL. As per media reports, the government is taking steps to raise Rs.40,000 crore, by way of selling the mobile towers and optic fibre owned by BSNL and MTNL. (Source: Times of India dated 12th March, 2021). Selling away BSNL’s mobile towers means, the ultimate goal of Modi government is to privatise BSNL. The existence of BSNL, as a Public Sector Company is very much required in the interest of the people of this country.

Further, it is a tragedy that, the Modi government is taking all out efforts to privatise even huge profit earning Public Sector Undertakings such as LIC, BPCL, etc. These steps are being taken by the government only to hand over the massive assets of these Public Sector Undertakings to big corporates. Privatisation of the Public Sector Undertakings, is nothing but allowing the corporates to loot the wealth of the nation.

BSNLEU demands that, the government should not create road-blocks in the launching of 4G service by BSNL. The government should not monetise BSNL’s mobile towers and optic fibre cable. The government should drop it’s proposal to privatise the precious Public Sector Companies of the country.
