



# Sanchar Nigam Pensioners' Welfare Association

Reg. No: SOCIETY/WEST/2021/8902564

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SNPWA/CHQ/ CMD/6/24

Dated 27th Dec, 24.

To

Sh Robert J. Ravi

CMD/ BSNL, ND.

**Subject: Restoration of Rent-Free Residential Service Telephone Connections (RSTCs) for Retired Personnel**

Sir

## 1. Background

Residential Service Telephone Connections (RSTCs) were originally sanctioned exclusively for retired personnel of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) as per Order No. 2-79/94-PHA dated September 25, 1998. These connections were provided rent-free, along with additional free calls ranging from 200 to 1000 per month during a time when a local call cost Re. 1/-.

In 2007, this facility was extended to retired personnel of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) through BSNL Corporate Office Order No. 2-7/2007-PHA dated July 20, 2007, ensuring the continuation of benefits for retired employees.

## 2. Transition to FTTH

With the advent of Fiber to the Home (FTTH) technology and the phasing out of copper cables, many areas were declared technically non-feasible (TNF) for landline services due to the closure of exchanges. As a result, landlines, including RSTCs, were migrated to FTTH connections.

**To facilitate this transition, BSNL Corporate Office issued guidelines via letter No. E-file No. BSNL CO-NPBB/11(33)/2/2020-NWP-BB-BSNL\_CO Part(1) dated December 8, 2023, for provisioning RSTCs via FTTH to both serving and retired personnel**

## 3. Withdrawal of Rent-Free RSTCs for Retirees

Since 1998, retired personnel were entitled to superior benefits compared to serving employees, including free calls under RSTCs. **However, this entitlement was arbitrarily and unilaterally**

**withdrawn, for completely unknown reasons, through BSNL Order No. BSNL CO/ADMN/80-ADMN dated January 10, 2024**

Under the new order:

Serving employees are offered free FTTH connections under the following plans:

₹795 for JAG officers.

₹249 in rural areas and ₹299 in urban areas for officers below the JAG level.

**Retired personnel, however, are completely excluded from free FTTH benefits.** Instead, they are offered FTTH under Plan ₹595 with a 40% concession, requiring a monthly payment of ₹421.

**This policy effectively abolishes the rent-free RSTC facility for retirees, which had been a cornerstone of their entitlements since the DoT era. It disregards the spirit of the 1998 order, which recognized and respected retirees' contributions. Denying retired employees rent-free FTTH connections while providing the same to serving employees is both inequitable and disrespectful.**

Further, all DoT employees, upon absorption into BSNL, were deemed retired from government service as per Rule 37A of the CCS Pension Rules, and their pensions are paid by DoT. The denial of this facility to retired employees residing in FTTH-enabled areas is irrational and discriminatory, particularly when the service is technically feasible and being provided to serving employees.

Adding to this inequity, similarly placed retired DoT employees continue to enjoy these benefits without interruption. Retirees residing in copper-feasible areas also continue to enjoy the pre-January 2024 RSTC facilities, while retirees in TNF areas are forced to pay for RSTCs through no fault of their own. This further aggravates the discrimination and injustice.

#### 4. Concerns Regarding GSM Services

The provision of GSM services without data is both inadequate and irrelevant in today's digital era. BSNL's current postpaid GSM plan at ₹199 (without data) for TNF areas fails to meet the practical needs of retirees.

We propose offering prepaid GSM plans with data and roaming, equivalent to ₹2400 per year or a comparable value. This would better align with retirees' requirements and simultaneously benefit BSNL by encouraging wider adoption of GSM services

#### 5. Proposed Course of Action

We are not requesting new or additional benefits but merely the restoration of parity and recognition that existed prior to January 10, 2024.

Our specific demands are as follows:

**1. Reinstate the rent-free RSTC facility for retirees via FTTH, in line with the intent of the 1998 order**

**2. In areas where FTTH or fixed landline services are technically non-feasible (TNF), provide GSM prepaid services with data and roaming as an alternative.**

**3. Continue charging for services exceeding the sanctioned free limits at prevailing concessional rates.**

**4. Extend the same facilities to retirees residing in non-feasible areas who have already opted for FTTH on payment, to prevent any discrimination.**

6. Conclusion

**The recent discriminatory policies constitute a grave injustice to retired personnel. The recognition of their services, as enshrined in the 1998 order, must be upheld and restored.**

**We strongly urge BSNL Management to immediately restore rent-free RSTCs via FTTH and provide equitable GSM services. This step will ensure fairness and uphold the principles of justice and recognition for retired employees who have dedicated their lives to the organization.**

Warm Regards

Yours sincerely,



G.L. Jogi

General Secretary

Copy to

1. Sh Kalyan Sagar Nippani, Director(HR) for immediate n/ a please.
- 2 . Sh Vivek Banzal, Director(CFA) for n/ a please.
- 3 . Sh Sandeep Govil, Director(CM), for n/ a please.