BSNLEU

BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

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BSNLEU/604(DEV) **25.11.2026**

To,

Shri Narendra Modi ji,
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India,
Prime Minister's Office,
Seva Teerth,
New Delhi – 110011

Sub: - ***Strong opposition of BSNLEU to the appointment of a person from the private sector as the Chairman and Managing Director of BSNL – reg.***

Respected Sir,

Most respectfully, BSNL Employees Union (BSNLEU), the Main Recognised Trade Union in BSNL, wishes to bring the following issues to your kind notice for your favourable consideration.

It has been reported in the media that a person from the private sector is likely to be appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of BSNL. According to these reports, the five-member Search-cum-Selection Committee has recommended the name of a person from the private sector for the post of CMD, BSNL, and the final decision in this regard is to be taken by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). If these media reports are true, we wish to submit the following points for your kind consideration.

At the outset, BSNLEU wishes to place on record its strong opposition to the appointment of a person from the private sector as the CMD of BSNL. Our opposition is primarily based on the fact that BSNL has several highly talented and experienced senior officers who are fully capable of heading the organisation and who deserve due consideration for this prestigious position.

BSNL is not merely a commercial business entity; it is a public sector telecommunications service provider with a responsibility to serve the people of the country. The intricacies of BSNL's network, its human resources, operational challenges and legacy issues are best understood by its senior executives, who have gained extensive experience working within the organisation. A person from the private sector would naturally be unfamiliar with many of these internal realities. Therefore, appointing the CMD from among the senior executives of BSNL is essential to ensure effective leadership and to steer the Company towards financial revival.

As is well known, the primary objective of private sector companies is profit maximisation, whereas BSNL, as a Public Sector Undertaking, has the larger responsibility of providing affordable telecommunications services to the people, including those in rural, remote and commercially unviable areas. In view of this fundamental difference in objectives, a person from the private sector may not be ideally suited to head BSNL.

The news regarding the possible appointment of a private sector person as CMD, BSNL, has further strengthened the apprehensions among employees that the ultimate objective of the government may be to privatise BSNL. This development has created considerable anxiety and panic among the employees. Such apprehensions will inevitably demoralise the workforce and adversely affect employee morale, commitment and productivity.

It is also important to point out that telecommunications is a highly technology-oriented industry, in which continuous technological upgradation is essential for survival and growth. At present, private telecom service providers such as Reliance Jio and Airtel are far ahead of BSNL in deploying state-of-the-art technologies. Both companies have already rolled out their pan-India 5G networks, whereas BSNL is still struggling to establish and expand its 4G network on a pan-India basis.

Despite the provision of three revival packages by the Government, BSNL has not yet been able to achieve a sustained financial turnaround. This is primarily because the Company has not been provided with a level playing field to compete with private telecom operators. While private telecom service providers are free to procure their

equipment from global vendors possessing proven 4G and 5G technologies, BSNL has been compelled to depend on indigenous equipment manufacturers. This restriction has seriously affected the Company's ability to compete effectively in the highly competitive telecommunications market.

The substantial migration of customers from BSNL to private telecom operators, even after the rollout of BSNL's 4G services, raises serious questions about the quality, performance and reliability of the equipment supplied by the indigenous manufacturer, as well as the level of customer satisfaction. This issue needs to be examined seriously, as the quality of network infrastructure and customer experience are crucial for retaining and attracting subscribers.

Further, the implementation of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) in 2020 resulted in a reduction of nearly 50% in BSNL's workforce, thereby substantially reducing the employee cost. However, this drastic reduction in manpower has not enabled BSNL to achieve profitability. This clearly demonstrates that the Company's financial difficulties cannot simply be attributed to its employee strength.

It is pertinent to recall that BSNL earned a total income of Rs.36,000 crore during 2004-05 and registered a net profit of Rs.10,183 crore. Similarly, during 2005-06, its income increased to Rs.40,177 crore, while its net profit stood at Rs.8,940 crore. These remarkable financial achievements were recorded at a time when BSNL had at least two lakh more employees than it has today.

The above facts clearly establish that the decline of BSNL cannot be attributed merely to its workforce strength or the alleged inefficiency of its management. Rather, the Company's decline has been largely due to the denial of a level playing field and the failure to provide it with the necessary equipment and technology in a timely manner. Since around 2008, BSNL has repeatedly been denied a fair opportunity to procure the requisite equipment and adopt the technologies required to compete with private telecom operators. It is regrettable that these fundamental problems continue to persist and remain to be addressed by the Government.

In these circumstances, we strongly believe that the appointment of a person from the private sector as CMD, BSNL, would neither address the fundamental problems confronting the Company nor provide the leadership required for its revival. What BSNL needs today is a capable and experienced leader who understands the organisation, is committed to strengthening the public sector telecommunications network and is determined to resolve the long-pending issues affecting its growth and development.

In view of the foregoing, BSNLEU once again earnestly urges upon you to kindly reconsider any proposal or decision to appoint a person from the private sector as the CMD of BSNL. We further request that due consideration be given to the highly experienced and talented senior officers of BSNL itself while selecting the next CMD. Such a decision would not only uphold the interests of BSNL but also instill confidence among its employees and strengthen their commitment towards the revival and development of the Company.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,



[Animesh Chandra Mitra]
General Secretary

Copy to: (1) Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Hon'ble Minister of Communications, Sanchar Bhawan, 20 Ashoka Road, New Delhi – 110001
(2) Dr. P. K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Seva Teerth, New Delhi – 110011.
(3) Shri Amit Agrawal, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Sanchar Bhawan, 20 Ashoka Road, New Delhi – 110001.