



## A QUICK RECAP

# BSNL Pay Revision and Pension Revision At cross Roads

In the BSNL, the employees' unions have been fighting for their pay revision w.e.f. 1-1-2017, and the Pensioners' Associations are fighting for their pension revision w.e.f. 1-1-2017. They **all demanded in one voice** and concurred on a particular issue **'Delinking Pension Revision from Pay revision'**. The unions though demanded pay revision separately did also acknowledge this demand of Pensioners' 'Delinking'.

DOT in their meeting with pensioners' representatives **on Oct 17, 2022**- also expressed their willingness to concur with the demand of **'delinking'** and pronounced its methodology of linking both Pre 2017 and Post 2017 pensioners revision on the basis of 3rd PRC scales with nil fitment on IDA merger. Here the difference between various associations were exhibited, some demanded better fitment by not accepting zero fitment proposal of DOT, and some other negated PRC and demanded fitment on the basis of 7th CPC.

Those accepted the PRC, demanded how DOT can act without NE scales. DOT assured them that NE scales would be obtained from BSNL and it seemed they obtained that from BSNL. Now of course transparently DOT got it, on BSNL's signing the **'Terms of settlement'** with Unions on Oct 8, 2025. The NE scales thus arrived in the 'Terms' become official once DOT gives its approval. DOT, which is having the forwarded Executive scales by BSNL, should issue its presidential order, then only the NE gets their wage revision order.

The Terms signed by the unions for NE and if any PO by DOT for Executives - **then all these are only for Post 2017 pensioners**, that is for the employees on that day 1-1-2017. Here **Pay linked pension** is again in clear terms without any ambiguity, pension as per 3rd PRC scales is in clear terms, once DOT's approval is done. The date of effect is also here in clear terms that is 1-1-2017.

**Fitment is the main issue** here. If DOT takes '5 to 15' percent route, then they have to seek exemption on Affordability clause, which DOT may feel difficult. In the Secretaries meeting for deciding 3rd PRC, 'then DOT secretary' **did not seek any exemption** while Coal Secretary sought the same. So, DOT may take their well thought out **IDA merger route with nil fitment**, as DPE is silent on that. **This may be the crux of the problem in the PRC issue.**

In this case - the issue of Pre 2017 pensioners, needed its analogous settlement on the lines of PRC. We have to wait and see, how DOT is going to act on the above issues.

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**Those who demanded CPC fitment** got their **Judicial - PBCAT Delhi directions on 20-9-2023**. The associations gone to CAT are relying upon that Judgement. The issue is 'Pension Revision to the Pensioners' on the cut-off date. The cut-off date is 1-1-2016 if CPC, 1-1-2017 if PRC.

#### **The direction of PBCAT Delhi is**

**"28. ..The competent authority amongst the respondents is directed to forthwith revise the pension and FP wherever applicable, strictly in accordance with the relevant rules and the entitlement governing pension to various sets of employees of the central govt , maintaining strict parity . It is clarified that the benefits of revision of pension and family pension as notified by the Central Government on the recommendations of the Pay commission, shall stand extended in favour of the applicants, analogous to the revision of such pension in case of central Government pensioners"**

**The applicants here** are both **Pre 2017 and post 2017 pensioners**. The CAT direction is about CPC benefits to be extended to the applicants as notified by the Govt, analogous to the revision of CG pensioners. Here I feel the ambiguity. If benefits as per CPC recommendations and notifications, then 'what is the date' and to 'which scales' and 'what is the merger points'. This is not explicitly found in the direction of CAT judgement. If CPC Applicability then the date is 1-1-2016, if incorporation then the date is 1-1-2017. Applicability of CPC means DOT can

automatically extend the benefits by its order to the BSNL absorbed from the CPC date itself. Incorporation of CPC benefits means, DOT has to go to the cabinet to extend the benefits and to get the approval for pension revision to the pensioners and the date here is 1-1-2017. This was in vogue 'on the applicability' during 6th and 7th CPC, and 'incorporation' during 2011 pension revision w.e.f. 1-1-2007.

**The CAT applicants**, having got their pension fixed on the basis of Pay on second PRC scales, **have to go to some new scales**- If in that case to '**which scales**' and '**from what date**'. If the benefits of pension revision on the basis of pay matrix as per 4-8-2016 and 12-5-2017 OMs, then to what scales 'to the employees still continuing in the PSU 'and from which date - that is post pensioners. So, I strongly feel the ambiguity here.

Associations like **AIBSNLPWA** have all along been telling, even in writing about **the methodology of Pension Revision on the basis of multiplication factor** analogous to CPC. **They felt no need of any pay scales for revision of pension for their delinking demand**. They advocated their simple fitment methodology of 'pension plus IDA 119.5 percent with 32 percent of the existing pension as on 31-12-2016'. When the question of post 2017 cropped up, they preferred to settle the anomaly by changing their pension also as per the above methodology then and there on retirement. Here also they did not feel the necessity of pay scales for post 2017. Their advocacy is nothing but postponing the **benefits of post 2017** to a far-off retirement date of them, instead of seeking from the same 1-1-2017.

I do not know still they are holding this opinion. If not, they have to resolve the question of Pay scales. They have to educate their members, CPC benefits means on which scales - on pay matrix or on PRC scales and from which date from 1-1-2016 or from 1-1-2017. One may expect clarification from them, how CPC benefits as per Govt notification can be linked to employees of PSU on that cut-off date.

**Moreover, DOT is fighting to nullify the PBCAT judgement at Delhi HC.** DOT's main argument here is that **on absorption, they all** become PSU employees and **ceased to be Government servants**. Their Getting

pension from consolidated fund as per Govt pensioners formula does not change their 'nature of employment.' The IDA pensioners are retiring on absorption not as Government servants like CG pensioners, but only as BSNL absorbed PSU employees.

**I do not know what will happen in the Delhi HC.** I do not know whether any one of them-- associations or DOT-- will stop their claim with the HC and **not taking the same to Supreme Court.** This battle may find its long road to get either way of disposal.

So, **BSNL Employees and Pensioners are at the cross roads.** They have to rely upon DOT only for their expected benefits, in today's context --one side CAT judgement connected struggles and the other side Unions' efforts of bringing 'Terms of Settlement.' It may be a difficult situation. Hope DOT may find some solution at the earliest to bring peace to the young minds of employees and aged hearts of pensioners.



**11-10-2025 @ 20 00 hrs**

**--R. Pattabiraman**