

Key note address by the Circle Secretary, West Bengal Circle, Sanchar Nigam Executives' Association in the Joint Open Session of II Circle Conference of West Bengal Circle & Calcutta Telecom Circle at Moulali Yuba Kendra, on 31.08.2018.

Respected Com. Nitish Biswas, Circle President, West Bengal Circle, Respected Com. Nirmal Sarkar, Circle President, Calcutta Telephones Circle, Respected Sri Sunil Kumar Garg, CGM/WBTC, Respected Sri Sitala Prasad Tripathi, CGM/CTD, Respected Sri Anupam Maji, CGM/ETP, Respected Sri Goutam Guha, CGM/ETR, Respected Sri Apurba Kumar Kundu, CGM/TF, Respected Smt. Sajala Garg, CGM/TS, Respected Sri S.K.Sinha, Chief Engineer, Civil/WBTC & CTD, Respected Sri S.K.Biswas, Chief Engineer, Electrical/WBTC & CTD, Respected other senior officers, Com. A.A.Khan, CHQ President, Com. K.Sebastin, GS/SNEA, Com. P. Padmanabha Rao, AGS(HQ)/SNEA, Com. Dilip Saha, Circle Secretary, Calcutta Telephones Circle, SNEA, my colleague Circle Office Bearers, Zonal Secretaries, CWC members, delegates, observers and my dear comrades,

We have taken our firm decision that we should continue to play strategic role independently as well as from the platform of All Unions and Associations of BSNL (AUAB) / Joint Forum(JF) of Executives' Associations on the issues relating to survival of BSNL and its employees and our cadre issues. We are also creating mass awareness to effectively oppose the policies, decisions of the Government which are against the growth & interest of BSNL. We should be sincere enough for strengthening all the said organizational FORUMs at all levels and SNEA to play a dominant and key role. The decision of the Govt. to form separate tower Company was strongly and unequivocally condemned by AUAB and all the employees irrespective of Executives and Non-Executives were urged upon to get fully ready for a very prolonged struggle to defeat formation of tower Company and to implement of fully justified & legitimate 3rd PRC with full 15% fitment w.e.f 01.01.2017, CPSU cadre hierarchy w.e.f 01.07.2018 and settlement of left over issues of 2nd Pay Revision like standard pay scales, 30% superannuation benefit, First TBP after four to five years, the issue of pay disparity of post 2007 JTO/JAO etc. BSNL, during last three financial years, recorded remarkable operational profit under fierce competition and very hostile and adverse market conditions because of Govt's profound desperation to allow R-Jio to capture Telecom market under any circumstances in a spectacular way. Despite all the odds and unprecedented impact on telecom market, BSNL has done a commendable job and is continuing its upward growth which needs to be accelerated. Govt. has just no legitimacy to deny implementation of 3rd Pay Revision in its totality. Struggle has got to be intensified in days to come and taken to its logical end.

By this unity we protected BSNL from disinvestment till today since birth. Copper cable unbundling, struggle against GSM tender cancellation, ADC and USO subsidy, 3G spectrum, BWA spectrum refund, Income Tax refund, conclusion of ITS absorption, Superannuation benefits, 78.2%, Pension revision, revival of BSNL etc are the major achievements of our united struggles. For safeguarding the interest of the officers and the employees and to protect the CPSUs/Depts larger unity among the officers / Executives and the employees in various sectors required. SNEA and NCOA working in this regard and recently All India Public Sector and Central Govt officers Confederation (AIPCOC) formed with the Associations in various sectors like Banking, Telecom, Oil, Power, Insurance, Coal and the Central Govt Gazetted Officers as its constituent. Now the time has come to unite the whole employees of various sectors to fight against the Govt for survival of PSUs as well as other Govt establishments.

The entry of Jio, demonetization and GST created huge ripples in the Telecom Industry and for BSNL too. The tariffs have come down to level which is not even sufficient to meet day to day operational costs. In the present situation, BSNL's strategy is to maintain the market share which we are able to achieve and sustain. Despite naked violations of guidelines of TRAI or policy provisions of DOT that R-Jio was permitted to its illegitimate market capturing through acknowledged predatory pricing and crippled the entire telecom industry. The asset value of BSNL increased from 44,000 Crores to 1.15 lakh Crores after revaluation of the land assets in the new accounting system. BSNL has negligible market liability in comparison to the so called heavy weights in telecom sector who owe thousands of Crores of rupees to financial institutions as liability. This in itself is greatest of great strengths of BSNL. However, now it is the time for BSNL to go for massive investments on first priority to launch 4G services on pan India basis so as to capture the most potential business opportunity in telecom. At any cost BSNL has to get the 4G spectrum allotted and start the services without any delay. The Core equipments are 4G compatible and the BTSs in the new Phase VIII tender are also 4G compatible. Only shortcoming is the non availability of 4G spectrum. BSNL cannot compete with the private operators in the highly competitive market without even having 4G services- just impossible. We have to force MOC to allocate us 4G spectrum and management to take very quick decisions regarding all round expansion of FTTH. There are Acute shortage of OLTs

and ONTs in the field units to provide FTTH connections. So, proactive steps are the need of the hour to procure equipments on war footing or empanelment of vendors to provide FTTH connections before the competitor, R-Jio enter the market. Our BB connections will be under serious threat once R-Jio starts providing FTTH connections, then our BB customers will be their first target. In the mobile sector, other operators are affected more than BSNL as they are having more market share than BSNL but in FTTH business, BSNL will be the most affected operator. So, before that happens, BSNL has to shift its focus from ADSL, BB business to FTTH business by converting maximum BB connections to FTTH connections, ensuring fixed speed which suits the customer demands. Our Association requested CMD to authorise SSA heads to purchase OLT for providing the FTTH connections.

During last three financial years, although BSNL recorded remarkable operational profit, but WBTC recorded a huge loss - revenue and expenditure details for the said period covering the 1st quarter of the current financial year follows -

Revenue	2018-19 (Q1)	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Total Revenue	1,37,68,20,760	5,04,65,19,009	8,86,03,19,305	5,36,15,21,647
Total Expenditure	2,18,63,26,937	9,80,29,39,532	11,63,29,37,594	10,37,38,27,484
Profit/(Loss) before tax	80,95,06,177	4,75,64,20,522	2,77,26,18,289	4,66,56,00,869

So, it is not necessary to mention that West Bengal Telecom Circle is passing through a critical situation and Revenue earning is declining day by day for want of satisfactory service to the customers. Now for the survival of WBTC the following measures to be taken :-

A . Instead of few CSCs in WBTC all the main Exchanges including RLUs/ RSUs (ie total nos of Exchanges about 1360 + in West Bengal & Sikim) should be utilised as outlet (POS) for selling BSNL products with complete visibility by providing all the necessary accessories to the working staff of the Said Exchanges. All the Employees irrespective of Executives, Non-Executives and others of WBTC should come forward to take the responsibility of selling BSNL products in a periodic manner throughout the year in addition to their assigned regular duties and side by side administration at circle and SSA level should develop a strong franchisee and retailer chain. In this context, it is very relevant to mention that GM (EB & Mktg), WBTC issued on 14.08.2018 to organize “ BSNL MEGA MELA “ on every Friday in different prominent Locations of SSAs in WBTC where camps to be organized by ALL UNITS of SSAs to boost the sale of all CM & CFA products along with outstanding collection through “ Project AISHWARYA “. It is also instructed to suspend all the official works on that day and fully devote everyone’s valuable time in these activities only to make the event successful and minimum technical staff/officials are required to maintain our equipments/ network uninterrupted. **Day to day keen observation and monitoring from the Apex level of WBTC is very much needed.**

B . Exclusive BTS maintenance team to be formed with all the necessary accessories and vehicle for each and every SSA. Out of 14 SSAs in WBTC, a good no of SSAs are comprising of more than one Civil District. **Therefore more than one Exclusive BTS maintenance team may be formed for better maintenance of BTSs specially for CAL SSA, KGP SSA, ASL SSA, RNJ SSA, SLG SSA, JPG SSA.**

C . RF Drive test to be done in a regular manner by Exclusive team in each & every SSA and that to be monitored by CM vertical at the Circle Level .

D . Utilisation of man-power in Transmission maintenance to be reviewed. It is the hard reality that majority man-power is being utilised till date for LL out door maintenance. Now the time has come to rethink where the man-power will be utilised as because only stable media is our life line. All the Land Line and Broad Band switching equipments including BSCs & BTSs to be connected to transmission Hubs in ring. **In this regards it is requested to the competent authority that transmission & CFA wing to be merged at the level of SDE in each & every SSA for optimum utilisation of existing man power in Sub-Divn level.**

E . For better maintenance and monitoring of Lease Circuits, Exclusive Executive to be deployed in each and every SSA for the growth of EB business.

F . All most all the Exchanges in WBTC are being maintained with improper earthing and with poor battery back up. Necessary actions in this regard to be taken.

G . We all feel that prior to entry in market by Reliance JIO, we have to start discussion with local cable operators for their assistance for smooth maintenance of our BB /LL/FTTH customers and also to provide new customers on revenue sharing basis followed by the agreement, done at Kolkata by CTD and at Calcutta SSA of WBTC. This is only the way to sustain our BB/LL/FTTH customers in coming days. There is a huge opportunity to earn revenue by providing satisfactory service to our beloved customers.

H. It is also to be mentioned that no card repairing tender exists in WBTC since long and many exchanges are down due to cards for months together. Also our in-house repair centre at CTTC, salt lake is practically defunct due to non availability of spare inventories where as CTTC training centre is earning satisfactory revenue by conducting vocational and other training programme with their limited resources and manpower.

Now the need of the hour is to work together in close unison to accomplish the single goal of survival as well as growth of West Bengal Telecom Circle.

Today both Enterprise and Retail services became data orientated with rapid growth in Internet traffic. This has resulted the evolution of the telecommunications transport architecture: from megabit/s to terabit/s. Digitally encoded voice and data traffic signals were initially deployed over copper and radio bearers but, over the past 15-20 years, these have been almost entirely replaced by optical fibre systems. To meet up the challenges OTN systems with Terabyte bandwidth capacity are being deployed in ETR Network.

In O&M also, a lot of change was experienced during the last few years in this high competitive market. At one hand, ETR had to maintain the network against all odds like frequent & rampant OFC cut due to road expansion etc, & in other hand shortage of experienced manpower in OFC route mtce. Jobs imposed a great challenge to ETR administration. To minimise the link outage duration, SLA based outsourcing of route mtce. Jobs are introduced in line with other regions. The PROs & CONs of this method may be debatable but during the crisis period it seemed to be inevitable. In near future with the completion of new fiber network laying with multiple paths, the outsourcing decisions might be reviewed.

Similarly deployment of OTN mesh network with sufficient bandwidth switching facility may empower ETR to surrender hired bandwidth gradually & thus help to increase BSNL revenue. Recently KOLKATA to KHARAGPUR hired bandwidth of M/s RAILTEL surrendered after introduction of OTN network. In the overlay & access network, recently introduced CPAN equipments are another milestone towards building up of BSNL all IP network.

During the last Two Financial Years a PROJECT REVOLUTION from long distance communication point of view took place in ETP. After a long time gap the underground OFC Laying in the state of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, Sikkim and even in Andaman Nicobar Islands occupied prestigious position. During the last Two years about 10,000 KM U/G OFC have been Commissioned till 31.07.2018 and ETP occupied 1ST POSITION amongst all project circles!!!! Besides OFC Laying various sophisticated and latest technology supporting Transmission Systems have been Commissioned. Finally, the most popular OTN PROJECTS created an excellent example for ETP and ETR. It is a unique project that allows the BSNL to bridge up Kolkata to Chennai, KOLKATA to Guwahati, KOLKATA to Delhi, KOLKATA to Mumbai and many other Routes. Actually, 50 different Routes in Three Phases have been Commissioned and loaded with live Traffic and for this successful achievement, the entire credit goes jointly to the CGM ETP KOLKATA & CGM ETR KOLKATA and their Team Members. So we have proved - We can -

Despite of all the odds & difficulties, Telecom Factory Kolkata Circle could reverse the balance sheet characteristics to make a profit of Rs. 8.16 Crore in the fiscal 2017-18 through increased productivity & reducing expenditures since last 3 years. Besides supplying SSDW, Jointing Kits & other conventional products, Telecom Factory Kolkata Circle including all other Factory Circles have been supplying PLB HDPE Duct & accessories for NOFN/Bharat Net project of BSNL as the main resource for the last couple of years & making significant contribution & hard work towards implementation of the prestigious Govt. project .

It has been publicized that BSNL inks MoU with Fibre Home on 11th November 2017 to jointly start manufacturing telecom equipment and optical fibre cable in BSNL factories. BSNL has seven telecom factories with manpower of around 1,500 employees, which make several customer end equipment and testing tools like Joint Closure & Fibre Distribution Frame & Pig tail / Patch Cord Connectors for internal consumption of BSNL. According to released official statement it is reported that Fibre Home India has decided to heavily invest in India with BSNL. So, we demand that this MoU agreement with M/s Fibre Home needs to mature in reality and to explore business opportunities with the latest technology partner M/s Fibre Home.

Since formation of BSNL and also introduction of new technologies, apart from construction of towers, other construction works have declined. This has created a notion that the Civil Wing has no work and Civil wing executives should be engaged with external projects to earn some revenue. With dwindling staff strength, it is becoming impossible to maintain the existing assets of the department, leave aside the external projects. Since implementation of ERP, it has been discussed for integration of all wings SSA wise/ Business area wise for facilitating the execution of work and for accounting purpose. It has also been observed that integration/merger of higher level posts is taking place and officers of levels of Chief Engineers are being posted in GM ranks of Telecom wings. It is reiterated to affect the integration/ merger at the bottom level of executives, compensating the lack of staff in Civil wing and for smooth functioning of works and Civil wing personnel may also be merged with the Telecom wing under respective GM of business area (B.A.) to entrust with Assets management of the concerned B.A.

With minimum infrastructure, our electrical wing have achieved remarkable savings of Rs 13.21 lakhs in CTD and 8.17 lakhs in WBTC i.e total Rs 21.38 Lakhs on account of energy saving measure for the last financial year and the entire credit goes jointly to the Chief Engineer Electrical and his Team Members . The chief Engineer (E) has also committed another 10 Lakhs rupees more savings on account of energy saving measure in the next financial year..

The electrical wing is maintaining 2919 nos of BTSs in WBTC and 872 nos BTSs in CTD .Remarkable improvement in regard of maintenance of all electromechanical services in BTSs in CTD have been achieved by the electrical wing with continuous efforts and monitoring which is also expected from Electrical wing for WBTC.

In 469 telephone exchanges in CTD and 1352 TE in West Bengal circle electrical maintenance on requisition basis are being carried out by the electrical wing. Moreover maintenance of all electromechanical services in all large telephone exchanges throughout West Bengal are being carried out with minimum breakdown by the electrical wing . Electrical wing activity should be on war footing basis during any kind of electrical fault.

Here it is most important to mention that electrical wing have been achieving remarkable success without any vehicle and with skeleton structure of field units. We can expect more achievement from them if vehicle is provided to field units. This wing is running short of 27 nos JTO (E) which is to be addressed to the concerned authorities to resolve.

Now it is time to convert challenges into opportunities and failures into successes. Real self – assessment and analysis to find out & implement corrective actions for the growth of WBTC are very much needed today. Each individual, each Sub-Division, Each Division, Each SSA and over all the Entire Circle should work together with a single purpose of survival of WBTC and should workout progressive actions instead of so many constraints prevailing. We will not get opportunity after opportunity to tide over the worsening situation for a long time in coming days. It is high time to recognise and locate our strengths and build up on those strengths. The great challenges in respect of existence of our beloved company before us today has to be met with a very positive frame of mind and extraordinary resolution to take accountability by each and every individual irrespective of Executives and non Executives at all levels. It is the commitment of our Forums of unions & associations of BSNL that not to loose crucial battle of survival of WBTC and as a whole BSNL for it is not only our bread but also also Country's most prestigious telecom company to serve even the remotest parts of the country by providing subsidies to services where underprivileged class of society lives.

So, Let us discover ourselves, discover SNEA and discover the WBTC & BSNL.

With regards,

Sincerely

(Tapas Ghosh)

Circle Secretary

SNEA, West Bengal Circle

SNEA ZINDABAD

WB CIRCLE ZINDABAD

BSNL ZINDABAD

EXECUTIVES UNITY ZINDABAD EMPLOYEES UNITY ZINDABAD