

T. P. RAMAKRISHNAN



MINISTER FOR LABOUR, SKILLS & EXCISE
GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Do. No.156 /VIP/M(L&E)/2019

26..09..2019

Dear Shri. Santosh Kumar Gangwarji,

I would like to invite your kind attention to the relevant concern regarding the issues of contract workers in BSNL.

It has been represented before Government that the contract workers are not being paid salary from February 2019 onwards. More over, many of them have been terminated from service since June 2019. As this is the situation the contract workers are on strike from last February.

As you know, the contract workers are engaged in maintenance works, office works and sweeping jobs, on temporary basis under Telecom Department till the formation of BSNL. As a result of the workers' agitation, minimum wages, EPF and ESI benefits were paid to the workers under bill work category and petty contract workers. The workers were changed to contract basis since 2013.

The main reason of the current crisis is that the contractors are not being paid the bill amount from the Government of India. The Assistant Labour Commissioner (Central) have intervened in the matter and the contractors expressed their helplessness to pay the salary arrears before settling the bill amount by the BSNL authorities. BSNL management repeated that no fund is coming from Government of India and hence they cannot give balance amount to the contractors.

Allegation of the trade unions leading the agitation is that the real cause of the crisis is BSNL is the entry of certain private service providers to the telecom industry and the Central Government's excessive financial assistance to them. The trade unions alleges that Government of India is not providing any financial assistance to the BSNL and refuses permission to take soft loans from the banks. This

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exacerbated the crisis in the BSNL. The permanent workers of BSNL were paid their salary for the month of August on the next 18 th of September only.

Denying wage on the basis of so called crisis is inhuman. Workers and their families are in deep distress. It is a situation where even the educational needs of children cannot be met. Many families are forced to move out of their rented houses for not paying their house rent. They are also starving. The prevailing situation is miserable. The layoff have resulted in workers losing their hope to continue working even though they are not paid. Many workers including those having the age over 56, have been laid off regardless of their age. The workers are being fired without paying bonus, gratuity and legitimate benefits. What's more, workers are fired without paying even their wages. The new order insists that the management would reduce the expenditure and the number of workers by 30 percent, and provide work for only three days in a week. Altogether the service provided by the BSNL has also been affected badly.

On behalf of the Government of Kerala, I would like to point out the grave concern of the State in the matter and request your kind intervention in settling the matter by upholding the legitimate demands of the workers and issue necessary directions to disburse the arrear salary to the contract workers and to discontinue the process of retrenchment

With regards,

Yours Sincerely

T .P. RAMAKRISHNAN

Shri. Santosh Kumar Gangwar

Hon'ble Minister of State for Labour &
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