

Government of India
Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare

Dated May 5, 2022

Sub: Welcome Address of V.Srinivas, IAS Secretary DoPPW at the All India Pension Adalat dated 5th May, 2022 at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi

Respected Dr. Jitendra Singh ji, Hon'ble Minister of State for Personnel, PG and Pensions, and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office

Shri Rajit Punhani ji, Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor, MHA

Shri Sanjiv Mathur ji, Joint Secretary DoPPW

Senior Officials from Ministries/ Departments,

Pensioners participating in the Pension Adalat,

At the outset, I extend a warm and hearty welcome to Dr. Jitendra Singh ji for his gracious presence at the 7th All India Pension Adalat being held in Delhi and in 225 locations outside Delhi in which nearly 16000 pending cases of Pensioners will be taken up for resolution. In 2017, the Department of Pensions under the leadership of Dr. Jitendra Singh ji started the holding Pension Adalats to resolve chronic grievances of Central Govt Pensioners, within extant policy guidelines. The First Pension Adalat was held on 20.09.2017. So far, the Department has conducted total of 6 Pension Adalats (September 20, 2017, February 9, 2018, September 18, 2018, August 23, 2019, December, 2020 and First week of January, 2021). A Regional Pension Adalat was conducted at Jammu on February 29, 2020.

The conduct of Pension Adalats for timely redressal of long-standing individual Pension cases has received appreciation from the Parliamentary Standing Committee in their 106th and 113th reports.

In 113th Report of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice on “Demand for Grants (2022-23) of the Departments of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Pension & Pensioners’ Welfare it has been observed that:

“As per the data provided by the Department on disposal of pension grievances during Pension Adalats, their resolution rates are significantly high. This perhaps is due to the fact that all stakeholders of a particular grievance are invited on a single table, the grievances are resolved quickly. Considering this performance, as recommended by the Committee in its 106th report, the Committee once again reiterates that such Pension Adalats should be held more regularly and frequently. Further, the experience gained during COVID times, the practice of holding Pension Adalats through video conferencing should be promoted.”

“The Committee commends the overall performance of the Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare and hopes that it will continue with its good work to bring about 'ease of living' for pensioners, especially for super senior citizens and family pensioners.”

The Pension Adalat represents one of the far-reaching Pensioner Welfare Reforms that has been taken up in Pensions Department to simplify a Pensioner’s journey with Government. The Pension Adalat also gives the Department an opportunity to create and operationalize cross-sectoral linkages with Ministries/ Departments as also Attached, Subordinate and Autonomous Bodies. Today’s All India Pension Adalat is being conducted in every Ministry/Department/Field formation. The objective is to de-siloize Pension Processes and create a collective synergy that will ensure Pensioner’s Well-being in a timely manner.

The Department of Pensions has been at the forefront of Digital Reforms in Pension Processes with the Bhavishya Portal which is one of the best managed digital platforms for timely processing of Pensioner benefits and the Jeevan Praman App which enabled

digital life certificates. Further the Digital Life Certificate has been made available with Face Authentication Technology and we have witnessed the number of downloads on the Face Authentication app, has been rising with every day. India's Pensioners have seamlessly adopted technology platforms for interacting with Government. The Department of Pensions efforts for end to end service delivery without human interface has also received appreciation from the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

"The Committee notes that based on an independent third-party comprehensive review of the root cause of the pensioners' grievances the DPPW has initiated key reforms like complete digitalization of pension process and improvement in submission of Life Certificate by pensioners. The Committee appreciates such initiatives being taken up by the Department based on their learning from pensioners' grievances."

The Bhavishya Portal has enabled establishment of a robust system of Pension processing, it is compulsory for all Departments to digitally process cases. The Bhavishya Portal has enabled identification of delayed - Pension Payment Orders by Ministries and resultant delay in commencement of Pension on an electronic platform. All such cases where delays exist are taken up with the concerned Departments/ Ministries for timely resolution. Let me also brief you that CPENGRAMS is a well-established grievance mechanism with appropriate deadlines followed by regular monthly meetings with Ministries in cases of delayed resolution. Yet there exist some complex pension cases which necessitate redressal in Pension Adalats.

The Department of Pensions urges that Ministries should make sustained efforts to ensure that there is no administrative delay in accurate Pension disbursement. All delays carry financial implications in the form of interest on delayed remittances to the Pensioner and Ministries/Departments should ensure timely resolution of grievances in order to limit unnecessary litigation which also causes harassment and a financial cost to the pensioner.

Dr. Jitendra Singh ji has tirelessly pioneered the Government's initiatives for simplification of rules and procedures. He has often stated that India needs lesser laws

and stronger enforcement. The Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules 2021 released on December 25, 2021 represents a seminal effort for collation of all circulars aimed at simplifying a Pensioner's journey.

Dr. Jitendra Singh ji chaired the SCOVA meeting on April 12, 2022, interacting with Pensioner Associations on a range of issues – improved CGHS health care, coordination with banks, door step delivery of DLC's with by Department of Posts, changes in rules for Family Pension Benefits are some of the key issues that were taken up. In one of the specific cases, the CGHS Wellness Center infrastructure development at Jammu was taken up with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Department of Pensions has tried to enhance its outreach to Pensioners by establishing 46 Pensioner Associations with whom regular institutional interactions are held.

I wish to highlight to all Pensioners and Officials of Ministries/ Departments attending today's Pension Adalat that Government is sensitive to the needs of Pensioners and there is adequate outreach for timely interactions. The circulars and directions issued by Government are being reviewed in a timely manner and directions for regular interactions for Ministries/ Departments with Pensioners have been issued.

Once again, I extend a warm welcome to Dr. Jitendra Singh ji, Shri RajitPunhani ji and Shri Sanjiv Mathur ji and all participating Ministries/ Departments, the Pensioners to the 7th All India Pension Adalat. I am sure that by the end of the day, significant number of cases will be resolved by our collective efforts.

Jai Hind.

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