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**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2007-2008)**

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

'WORKING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN MTNL'

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS)**

FIFTEENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 2008/Vaisakha, 1930 (Saka)

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(DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 24th APRIL, 2008

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

April, 2008/Vaisakha, 1930 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2007-2008)**

Hon'ble Chairperson - Smt. Krishna Tirath

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LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Priya Dutt
3. Smt. Jayaprada
4. Smt. Preneet Kaur
5. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
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26. Shri Jabir Hussain
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29. Smt. Maya Singh
30. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

* Ceased to be the Member of the Committee w.e.f. 2.4.2008 consequent upon her retirement from the Rajya Sabha.

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- | | | |
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| 1. | Shri Devender Singh | Joint Secretary |
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| 3. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Deputy Secretary-II |
| 4. | Shri Shams Afroz | Senior Executive Assistant |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Committee on Empowerment of Women present the Fifteenth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee, on the subject 'Working Conditions of Women in MTNL'.

2. The Report is based on the inputs received from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) and impressions gained during on-the-spot visit of the Committee to MTNL, Mumbai and Delhi Unit.

3. The Committee on Empowerment of Women took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited on 29th November, 2007 in connection with examination of the subject.

4. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2007-2008) at their sitting held on 4th April, 2008. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited for placing before them material and information in connection with the examination of the subject and for giving evidence before them.

6. The Committee also place on record their appreciation for the valuable assistance rendered to them by the officials of the Lok Sabha Secretariat attached to the Committee.

7. For facility of reference, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI;
April, 2008
Vaisakha, 1930 (Saka)

KRISHNA TIRATH
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

REPORT

WORKING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN MTNL

A INTRODUCTORY

Gender mainstreaming constitutes an important aspect of post-globalization development and planning mechanism. In development planning, focus on gender sensitivity enables the formulation and implementation of programmes and projects that are specifically targeted towards better service conditions for women workforce both in public and private sector. Although the number of women seeking job has increased today, a majority of them get poorly paid jobs in the informal sector without job security or social security. In the present neo-liberal economic era, the job opportunities have increased but at the same time the professional hazards that women face have also increased manifold. Often women are more vulnerable to intense exploitation and are forced to endure more stress both at physical and mental level.

2. Keeping in view the working atmosphere of women employees at their work places, the Committee have taken up the subject 'Working Conditions of Women in MTNL', for detailed examination. In order to have an in-depth understanding of the subject, the Committee visited MTNL Units at Mumbai and Delhi and held interaction with women employees. The Committee also took oral evidence of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) and officials of MTNL in this regard.

B MTNL: AN OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATION

3. MTNL was set up on 1st April, 1986 by the Government of India to upgrade the quality of telecom services and to raise revenue for telecom development needs for India's key metros – Delhi, the political capital of India and Mumbai, the economic capital of India. In the past two decades, the company has taken rapid strides to emerge as India's leading and one of Asia's largest telecom operating companies.

4. Over the past few years, the role of Telecom Industry has evolved from a support function into a strategic necessity for business. During the recent years there has been tremendous increase in the Cellular and Broadband subscriber base. The company has continued to provide a sustained push to Mobile and Internet services through a large range of service to fast expanding customer base.

5. Regarding human resource development, MTNL in their Annual Report for the year 2005-06 has reflected that the company has been laying greater emphasis on Human Resource Development by devoting substantial resources on building skilled workforce that has an innate capability to counter threats posted by ever changing business environment and to take advantages of opportunities presented to serve ever increasing customer base. It has further been stated that the management's view on training is one of development of employees overall personality and enabling them in becoming a vital productive resource.

6. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, in their note furnished to the Committee have stated that MTNL is making conscious efforts to create a conducive climate for men and women to work together in harmony on the basis of equality and equal opportunity. Thus, harnessing and

enhancing their talents and contributions for optimal performance and well being at work.

7. The Ministry have further stated that MTNL has deployed women employees in Top-most managerial roles and even in specialist/advance technological areas like Information Technology, GSM, CDMA, Operations and Administrative duties like In-charge of Administration in Unit/Area Offices. The highest Policy formulation/Decision making body in MTNL, i.e. Board of Directors of MTNL is also represented by woman officials.

C NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

8. The Ministry in their note furnished to the Committee have furnished the following details of the number of employees (male and female) working in MTNL (category-wise).

Group	Male			Female		
	Delhi Unit	Mumbai Unit (31.8.2007)	Corp. Office	Delhi Unit	Mumbai Unit (31.8.2007)	Corp. Office
A	545	577	53	17 (SC-Nil ST-Nil)	18 (SC-Nil ST-2)	6(SC-Nil ST-Nil)
B	2372	2523	74	220(SC-20 ST-3)	356 (SC-36 ST-2)	26 (SC-4 ST-Nil)
C	9580	11199	70	2727 (SC-806 ST-90)	4928 (SC-492 ST-75)	48 (SC-5 ST-5)
D	7407	3786	77	632 (SC-94 ST-1)	782(SC-306 ST-53)	3(SC-Nil ST-Nil)

9. Seeking further clarification about women employees in MTNL, the Committee desired to know about the number of women employees in MTNL and the efforts made to encourage SC/ST women employees to join the organization. In this regard the Committee have been informed that:

“Out of 48000 employees there are around 9000 women employees....we are not having any reservation for women. But for SC/ST category, that is there. We have tried our level best. In fact, we came out with the walk-in-interview for those having the minimum qualification. We said, whosoever comes with the minimum qualification, we would recruit them. We had also gone for ST categories at different places like North-East and Ranchi. In Ranchi, we had sent our team for walk-in-interview. But because we need employees in finance department, like Chartered Accountants or intermediates in the first part or second part, but unfortunately, we are not getting the number, which is required. But again, we are going to make efforts for recruitment.”

10. While noting the low percentage of women in the organization, the Committee desired to know the reason for less number of women in Group ‘A’ and Group ‘B’. Responding to the query the CMD, MTNL, stated that”

“in the years 2003, 2004 and 2005, the percentage of women have increased. The number has increased in JAOs, JTOs, engineering and finance. The percentage is more than 12 percent, which was just 3 percent earlier. This itself is an indication that the intake is on the higher side”.

11. Adding further clarification to the matter, the Ministry have informed that MTNL Corporate Office has made following recruitments of professionals in the Executive category corresponding to Group ‘B’ services. These details given below are inclusive of the manpower figures provided in the table.

Recruitment Year	Cadre	Total Recruitment	Women Employees
2002	JAO	60	10
2003	JAO, JTO, Mgmt. Trainee	250	37
2005	JAO, JTO, Mgmt. Trainee	311	29
Total		621	76
% of women employees recruited		12.2%	

12. In view of the number of employees working with MTNL, the Committee further desired to know about the number of women employees of Group ‘A’ belonging to Indian Telecom Services (ITS), who are presently working in MTNL. The Ministry in this context stated that there are 41 women

employees working in Group 'A' post. The Committee in this regard felt that the representation of women officials in Group 'A' grade is very less as compared to their male counterparts.

D ABSORPTION OF EMPLOYEES IN MTNL

13. As mentioned before, MTNL became a Corporation in 1986, till then MTNL employees were Central Government employees who were posted to MTNL on deputation. The Committee in this regard desired to know about the mechanism adopted by the Ministry to settle the absorption issue of employees in MTNL. Replying to the query, the Ministry have stated that the process of absorption of Group 'A' officers in MTNL commenced in March, 2005. The period of deemed deputation of Group 'A' officers in MTNL as originally sanctioned by the Government was to expire on 30.9.2005 but it was later extended up to 15.10.2005. The Last date for exercising option was also extended up to 10.10.2005. Many officers did not exercise their options. On the expiry of sanctioned term of deemed deputation, the officers were, therefore, ordered to repatriate to their parent Department. In view of the interim orders of Courts for maintaining status quo ante prior to 18.10.2005, the concerned officers were allowed to join back their duties in MTNL.

14. The Ministry have also stated that some ITS officers have taken absorption in MTNL w.e.f. 01.10.2000. However, absorption issue of ITS officers is subjudice. Status of Court case filed by Group 'A' officers in the matter of absorption of Group 'A' officers in MTNL is given in Annexure A.

15. The Ministry have further informed that in 2007, a Committee consisting of senior officers of Department of Telecommunications and representatives of Indian Telecom Service Association (ITSA) was

constituted to deliberate on issues relating to absorption of Group 'A' officers in MTNL in finer details.

16. Seeking further clarification, the Committee desired to know the outcome of the deliberations held between the Committee of Department of Telecommunications and representatives of ITSA on the issue of absorption of Group 'A' officers in MTNL. While deposing before the Committee the Ministry stated as under:

“the matter of absorption has been pending for a long time. We had formed a Committee on which the representatives of officers' Association were also there. This Committee had talked about various problems that they thought would be there in the absorption process and also their demands regarding absorption.....the Committee has given recommendation that is acceptable to both the parties. So the situation today is that we are now in a position to move a Cabinet note and if the Cabinet agrees to our proposal, then the process of absorption would start.”

E PROMOTION POLICY

17. Regarding promotion policy the Ministry have stated that MTNL has its own Promotion Policy for non-executive and the same is operational w.e.f. 01.10.2002. Orders governing the promotion policy for Executives has also been issued and the same are being implemented by Delhi and Mumbai Units. The Ministry have further informed that the promotion policy is same for both Male and Female employees and there is no discrimination on the basis of gender.

18. Adding further, the Ministry have stated that the promotion or up-gradation up to a certain level are time bound on the basis of seniority-cum-fitness or the criteria as prescribed. Therefore, all eligible employees are promoted/upgraded to the entitled grade as per relevant rules. Representations received in this regard are dealt with accordingly.

F BACKLOG IN VACANCIES

19. During the Committee's visit to MTNL, Mumbai Unit it was found that there was promotion backlog mostly in the case of SC/ST employees. The Committee, therefore, desired to know the status of backlog both in the case of direct recruitment and promotion quota for Delhi and Mumbai Units of MTNL. Replying to the query raised by the Committee, the MTNL has furnished the following information regarding the backlog in the vacancies:

Statement of backlog in vacancies as on 31.12.2006

Category/Class/ Group of Posts	Mumbai Unit				Delhi Unit			
	Direct Recruitment		Promotional Quota		Direct Recruitment		Promotional Quota	
	SC	ST	SC	ST	SC	ST	SC	ST
Group 'A' or equivalent posts	-	-	-	-				
Group 'B' or equivalent posts					Unit Administration is following the relevant rules on the subject.			
JTO	8	35	61	45				
JAO	21	11	03	07				
Group 'C' or equivalent posts					Unit Administration is following the relevant rules on the subject.			
TTA	Nil	Nil	04	06				
Motor Driver	-	-	-	02				
Stenographers	04	05	08	04				

20. The Committee having noted the backlog in vacancies, desired to know the reasons for the same. The Ministry in this regard have informed that the backlog in vacancies in the cadre of JTOs and JAOs for MTNL, Mumbai Unit pertain to vacancies up to the year 1999, when both these cadres were in Group 'C' and recruitment to these cadres was made at Circle Level.

Department of Telecommunications, subsequently upgraded the post of JTO and JAO from Group 'C' to Group 'B'. In the course of absorption of employees of Department of Telecommunications the recruitment in the respective cadres was effected in MTNL w.e.f. 01.10.2000.

21. Adding further to the clarification the Ministry have stated that backlog in Group 'C' pertains to vacancies up to the year 1999 in Mumbai Unit. Consequent upon the completion of the absorption process of Group C & D, a ban was imposed on all types of recruitment except in key areas where posts have to be manned by professionally qualified personnel in Executive Category. Accordingly there has not been any recruitment in Group C & D posts.

22. The Ministry have further stated that so far as centralized recruitment of Officer Trainees/professionals is concerned, every effort is made to meet the stipulated requirement of SCs/STs as per Government Directives. However, in the category of JAO Trainees there has been backlog in spite of Special Recruitment Drives including walk-in-interviews and All India Written Examination, as the number of professionally qualified persons appears to be limited in these categories. The Ministry have also stated that the relaxation in qualifications has also been given with the approval of the Board but the outcomes have not been very encouraging.

G CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYEES

23. Noting the fact that MTNL has stopped fresh recruitment of employees except for some professional experts, the Committee desired to know whether there is any proposal of contractual employment. The Ministry have

responded to the query by stating that MTNL has not employed any women on contract basis. However, in the Mumbai Unit eight women employees were engaged by the Contractor for a particular job. But the contract employees defaulted and did not meet their contractual obligation. Presently, they are working on daily wages as per interim orders of the Hon'ble Court. The Ministry have further submitted that since the matter is subjudice, the employees are merely engaged on daily wage basis and are not entitled to any service benefits as in the case of regular employees.

H REVIEW OF WORKING CONDITIONS

24. In view of large number of employees in MTNL and the percentage of women employees, the Committee desired to know whether the Ministry have ever reviewed the working conditions of employees in general and women employees in particular. The Ministry in this regard have stated that Ministry reviews the performance of MTNL on regular basis. Grievances of the employees are also examined and appropriate steps are taken for their resolution. The Committee also desired to know whether women employees of the organization ever represented themselves regarding improvement in their working conditions. In this regard the Committee have been given to understand that the Ministry have not received any representation by women employees of MTNL for improvement of their working conditions. Following which there has not been any occasion for issuing directions/instructions to MTNL to improve working conditions of women employees.

I WELFARE PROGRAMMES

25. The Ministry in their note furnished to the Committee have stated that MTNL Women's Organisations have been carrying welfare activities for the betterment of working conditions of women employees in the organisation.

Telecom Women Central Organisation (TWCO), MTNL Delhi.

26. The Ministry have submitted that, TWCO is an umbrella organisation of women from all PSUs operating under the administrative control of Department of Telecommunications. The organisation carries out welfare activities for women at MTNL, Delhi Unit, which includes running of two crèches one at Atul Grove Road and other at R K Puram, the latter with a Tailoring Centre for welfare of women/children of employees of MTNL. The Committee also desired to know about the facilities being provided at the crèches being run by MTNL. The Ministry in this regard have stated that:

“They take children from 3 months onwards. They take the children of women who are working in the Government sector. They take them till the age of 6 or 8 years. The charges are minimal. They look after the children very well. The parents along with the child bring the food and they make sure that the child is taken care of very well. They maintain a register of the medicines, which need to be given to the child. There is a very senior supervisor there who ensures that it is taken care of. It is very reliable and dedicated system.”

MTNL Women's Organisation, Mumbai Unit.

27. The Committee have been informed that MTNL Women's Organization is functional at Mumbai Unit for carrying out welfare activities for women employees. The Ministry have further stated that women employees of MTNL Mumbai and the wives of male employees and daughters above 18 years of age are eligible to become the members of the organisation. It has nearly 1600 members at present. The tenure of the executive body is 2 years. The

organisation looks after the welfare of the women staff of MTNL Mumbai and functions as an advisory body. They also conduct number of programmes for the welfare of the women employees, which are as under:

- a) Conduct medical camps like cancer check up, dental check up and blood donation camps.
- b) Impart health awareness programmes and conduct seminars and lectures for women employees.
- c) Conduct yoga classes, stress management course, anand-mela to encourage entrepreneurship.

28. Special grants are given to the Women Welfare Organisations for conducting various welfare activities. The amount spent by Units during the last three years is as follows:

Year	Amount spent (Rs.)	
	Delhi Unit	<u>Mumbai Unit</u>
2006-07	In the year 2004, a sum of Rs. 2,00,000/- was sanctioned for TWCO, Delhi. Due to non submission of audited figures and other details by TWCO, funds have not been sanctioned.	47,806/-
2005-06		82,430/-
2004-05		76,694/-

29. The Ministry have further stated that MTNL gives an equal opportunity to all employer and it has been extending facilities to all its employees including women employees in all aspects including recruitment and promotion. Women employees are holding important posts in the organization such as Director (Finance), GM (Admn.), Delhi Unit. The Ministry have further stated that since working women have to perform the dual role, MTNL's policies aim to balance work life and family life of a woman. Special

provisions e.g., Maternity Leave, Extra Ordinary Leave and Special Leave, Child Care Leave have been made in MTNL Leave Rules.

30. The Committee further desired to know about the steps taken by the Ministry and MTNL to enhance the level of awareness among women employees regarding the availability of welfare schemes for them. Responding to the query the Ministry have stated that adequate steps are being taken to create awareness about Welfare Schemes through Welfare Committees, Unions and various Circulars. Unit Administration has informed that the good response/participation in special health check-up organized by welfare organizations reflects upon the degree of awareness prevalent amongst the women employees, particularly.

J TRAINING PROGRAMMES

31. The Ministry have informed the Committee that MTNL has been organising special training programmes for women employees to create better working conditions. The Committee in this regard desired to know about the special initiatives made by MTNL for training of women employees in MTNL. The Ministry in this context have stated that from time to time women employees are sent for Training Programmes on various subjects in India and Abroad such as:

- a) Managing for excellence through Strategic Leadership and Team Synergy.
- b) Meeting and Billing regulation.
- c) Global Corporate Excellence through Competitive Edge Makers.
- d) Role of Trade Unions in Globalised Economy.

- e) Implementation of Reservation Policy for SC/ST/OBC in PSEs, Banks, Government aided Bodies and Government Institutions.
- f) Corporate Success through People.
- g) Disposal of Appeal under RTI Act.
- h) Alcatel Core training for GSM/CDMA Project in France.

32. Elaborating further on the training programmes the Ministry have stated that Training on Ultimate Customer Services (5 Batches) were conducted from January, 2006 onwards exclusively for women employees working in Call Centres in Mumbai Unit, wherein 163 Group 'C' employees participated. Similar programmes were also conducted for women employees of MTNL Delhi Unit, including Programme on Attitude/Behaviour Changes and Customer Care, Familiarization to Computers including Windows 2000 etc. in 2006-07, covering 331 women out of 2165 trainees, as well as an exclusive programme for women employees on Windows and its applications (1 week module) covering 391 women employees.

Details of MTNL Employees Trained Abroad

	Total Employees	Women
January, 2006 – till date	38	11

Details of MTNL Employees Trained in India

	Corporate Office		Delhi Unit		Mumbai Unit	
	Total Employees	Women	Total Employees	Women	Total Employees	Women
2006-07	28	9	2165	331	254	186
2007-till date	8	2	2038	530	-	-

33. The Ministry have further stated that apart from above-mentioned programmes, all directly recruited Trainee Officers, including women Trainee Officers, undergo Special Training Programme of around 10 weeks at Centre for Excellence in Telecom Technology & Management (CETTM), Powai, Mumbai. Preparatory training for the employees to prepare them for Limited Departmental Competitive Examination is also under consideration.

K SAFETY AND SECURITY OF EMPLOYEES

34. Security of women employees being the primary concerns at the work place, the Committee desired to know about the safety arrangements made for women employees who are deployed during night shifts or work late in office. The Committee in this regard have been informed that adequate safety and security arrangements have been made by the Unit's Administration. For example, the buildings/office premises are guarded by security staff round the clock, adequate security arrangements are available in the Call Centres and other Operational Centres where women employees are deployed during night shifts, the women employees are allowed to lock the doors of the operational rooms from inside and they need not come out of the operational areas as essential facilities are made available there itself.

35. It has been further stated that the duty hours are regulated in such a way that after performing duties women employee leaves the work place during daytime. This arrangement was started after the riots and bomb blasts in Mumbai in 1992-93 for the safety of the women employees. In ITX, the night duty ends at 2.20 hrs (19.00 hrs. to 02.20 hrs.). After the duty hours, the staff takes rest in the dormitory, which is air-conditioned. In the morning, they are transported to the nearest railway stations.

36. The Committee further desired to know why an organisation like MTNL cannot provide pick up and drop facility to women employees during odd hours. The CMD, MTNL while deposing before the Committee have stated that:

“Yes the drop system can be there, but the number was large. So, what we have done is that we have created dormitories where all the facilities are there. They are given allowance for food. In the morning six o’ clock, the bus drops them to the nearest railway station because in Mumbai, the transportation is over a long distance. So, sometimes the economic viability is also taken care of. If the Union is also agreeable, then we do it. They also realise we are now competing with the private sector and we have to be efficient in terms of utilization.....Yes, we will try further to improve upon this, based upon your suggestion. If possible, we can take it to longer distance if they feel it is comfortable and convenient to get dropped in the morning.

L TRANSFER POLICY

37. The Committee regarding transfer policy have been informed that MTNL has been following Rotational Transfer Policy. The Ministry have further stated representations received from women employees regarding transfers are considered on medical grounds, change in rail route and other personal problems based on the merits of such individual cases. Seeking clarification in the matter the Committee desired to know whether any special preference is given to women employees who seek transfer to join their spouses. The Ministry in this regard have stated that:

“If a lady wants to come from elsewhere in the country to Delhi or Mumbai, then there is no difficulty because if MTNL has vacancy, they can always accept the lady. But if the lady is an MTNL employee and she wants to go to another part of the country, then that sometimes causes problem.”

38. The Committee further desired to know whether it is possible to transfer women employees from MTNL to Department of Telecommunications

and vice versa, so that they can serve alongwith their spouses. The CMD, MTNL replied to the query as under:

“No it is not there. MTNL is a company and DoT is an organisation....In a very special case, where expertise is involved, we allow it. If you want to post somebody from outside Delhi and Mumbai, then it becomes very difficult. Everybody will start pressurising that he or she wants to get posted outside Delhi and Mumbai and it would be difficult.”

M COMMITTEE AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT

39. In pursuance of the Supreme Court's judgement in the Vishakha vs State of Rajasthan, it is mandatory for the Central and State Governments, Private and Public Sector Undertakings to set up Complaint Cell headed by a lady officer to investigate complaints against sexual harassment at work place. In this regard, the Committee desired to know whether such a Complaint Cell has been set up in the organisation. The Committee were informed that Committees for dealing with the complaints of sexual harassment at work place have been constituted by Units and the Corporate Office under the Chairmanship of a Lady Officer of the rank of Deputy General Manager. The Committees on the subject are functioning as per details given below:-

Corporate Office w.e.f. 22.01.2001

Delhi Unit w.e.f 26.02.2001

Mumbai Unit w.e.f. 15.12.2000

(The complaints are disposed of expeditiously and to the satisfaction of aggrieved women.)

40. The Ministry have further stated that Women Welfare Committees take steps for counselling the female staff, who face difficulties like family problems, martial discord etc.

41. The Committee also desired to know about the complaints received and disposed of during the last three years. Replying to the query the Ministry have given the following details:

- a) Corporate Office: 1 complaint was received and the same has been disposed of.
- b) Delhi Unit: 4 complaints were received out of which 3 have been disposed of.
- c) Mumbai Unit: 8 complaints were received and the same have been disposed of.

42. Regarding the pending case with MTNL Delhi Unit, the Committee desired to know the reasons causing delay in its settlement. The Committee in this regard have been informed that the case is pending due to death of on of the investigating officers of the Committee on Prevention of Sexual Harassment. The said Committee was reconstituted and the Report of the Committee is awaited.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

43. In the post Globalization era there has been substantial increase in the employment opportunities but at the same time it has multiplied the professional hazards that women face at their work place. Although the working conditions of women employees engaged in the organised sector has improved when compared with those engaged in the unorganised sector, the Committee feel that the problem lies in the structural inhibition in the policy formulation that affects the conceptualization of gender sensitive work environment.

The Committee are constrained to note the low percentage of women employed in MTNL. The Committee also note that majority of women employed in MTNL are mostly in Group 'C' and 'D' posts. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) should conduct a study and find out the reasons for such a low percentage of women employees in MTNL and take appropriate measures to enhance their representation in the organisation. The Committee further desire that efforts should be made to increase the number of women employees in Group 'A' so that the management of the organization becomes more gender sensitive.

44. The Committee are distressed to note there are just 2 Scheduled Tribe women in Group 'A' services of MTNL without any intake of Scheduled Caste women. The Committee are further constrained to note that between the year 2002-2005, 621 recruitments were made in

Group 'B' services. However, women employees comprise only 12.2% of it. The Committee feel that merely organising walk-in-interviews does not absolve the Ministry and MTNL of their responsibility to encourage SC/ST candidates to avail employment opportunities. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should give directions to MTNL to organize regular Recruitment Drives in SC/ST majority areas and encourage SC/ST candidates specially women candidates to come forward and join the organisation. The Committee do not accept the plea of 'non-availability of candidates' for less number of SC/ST categories for group 'A' posts in MTNL. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the ministry should ask MTNL to devise courses and training modules for such candidates to help them compete with the mainstream candidates.

45. The Committee are surprised to note that absorption issues of MTNL Group 'A' officers commenced in March 2005, almost 20 years after MTNL was set up in April 1986. The Committee take serious note of the delay on the part of the Ministry to address the issue of absorption. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry in coordination with MTNL should take earnest steps to settle the issue of absorption of MTNL Group 'A' officers and furnish a report to this committee at the earliest.

46. The Committee are constrained to find the backlog in SC/ST recruitment and promotional quota in the MTNL Mumbai Unit. The Committee found that in the Direct Recruitment there was a backlog of

29 vacancies (Group 'B') for SC category and 46 vacancies (Group 'B') for ST category in Mumbai Unit as on 31.12.2006. In the Promotional Quota there was a backlog of 63 vacancies (Group 'B') for SC category and 52 vacancies (Group 'B') for ST category in the Mumbai Unit as on 31.12.2006. The Committee feel that despite codification of promotion policy and launch of regular recruitment drives, the issue of backlog in vacancies in the case of SC/ST category remains a matter of serious anxiety and concern. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry should conduct early scrutiny of the reasons for such backlog and take measures to rectify the same. The Committee also feel that such persistent backlogs not only hamper the functioning of the organisation but also acts as disincentive for the candidates seeking employment and halts the process of empowerment.

47. The Committee note that welfare organizations namely, Telecom Women Central Organisation (TWCO) at Delhi and MTNL Women's Organisation at Mumbai are engaged in various welfare programmes for women employees. These organisations have been carrying various programmes such as running crèches, tailoring centres, health camps, etc. However, the Committee are constrained to note that TWCO, Delhi, has not been able to submit the audit figures for the year 2004, due to which special grants for welfare programmes for 2005-06 and 2006-07 could not be sanctioned. The Committee also note that the amount sanctioned for Mumbai Women Organisation has decreased from Rs 76,694/- in 2004-05 to Rs 47,806/- in 2006-07. The Committee feel concerned to find delay in submission of audited figures and decrease

in the grants for welfare activities is a matter of great concern. The Committee feel that welfare activities in any organisation are an essential component of the entire system, which not only lead to optimum output but also create healthy work environment. The Committee, therefore, recommend that TWCO, Delhi Unit should be instructed to submit the audited figures at the earliest and streamline their accounting procedures. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) should conduct annual review of welfare programmes being carried out by the welfare organisations so that realistic grants are made annually for welfare programmes.

48. The Committee also feel that apart from devising welfare programmes for women employees, extensive efforts need to be made by the Ministry and MTNL to build awareness so that maximum number of women employees benefit from the programmes. The Committee recommend that specific amount should be fixed for disseminating information about the welfare schemes carried out by the welfare organisations of MTNL at Mumbai and Delhi.

49. The Committee appreciate the efforts made by the Ministry and MTNL for organising various training programmes for the employees of MTNL such as customer care service, programme on attitude /behaviour changes, disposal of appeal under RTI Act, corporate success through people, etc. The Committee, however, note that there is uneven representation of women in the above stated training modules. The

Committee are surprised to note that since 2007, no women employee of Mumbai Unit has been nominated for any of the training programmes in India. The Committee, therefore, recommend that there should be more consistency in nominating women employees for such training modules. The Committee also desire that the training modules should be further diversified as per the changing needs of the organisation.

50. The Committee find that the MTNL has made some security arrangements for the women employees who work during the night shift by having the buildings guarded round the clock, having the facility of dormitories wherein women can stay after their shift duty etc. However, the Committee are disturbed to point out the inability of the MTNL to provide pickup and drop facility especially for women employees who work during night shifts. The Committee feel that to have a balance between the personal and professional life of women employees, it is important that they are able to reach their homes after they get over with their duties. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) to take up the matter with MTNL on priority basis and take urgent steps to have suitable arrangement of pickup and drop facility for employees who serve during odd hours.

51. The Committee note that MTNL has been following the directives of the Government of India regarding transfers in the organization, which has been termed as Rational Transfer Policy. However, the Committee is constrained to point out that women employees have to

face hardships because of erratic transfers in the organization, which often compels them to leave their jobs or go on leave without pay. Having regard to the fact that working women have to shoulder dual responsibilities both at the family and professional level, the Committee, would like the Ministry to give directions to MTNL to be sympathetic towards the transfer requests made by women employees on genuine grounds. The Committee further recommend that the Ministry should devise a mechanism whereby MTNL employees could be transferred from MTNL to BSNL and vice versa, since both the organizations are under the same Ministry.

52. The Committee take serious note of the fact that the Committee on Sexual Harassment at work place was constituted as late as in 2001 in MTNL, Corporate Office and Delhi Unit and in 2000 in Mumbai Unit, whereas the directions of the Supreme Court for the constitution of such a Committee at work place came into force in 1997. The Committee, feel that the management of MTNL has taken the matter rather lightly leading to delay in the constitution of Committee against Sexual Harassment. The Committee also find that there has been delay on the part of the management to settle complaints. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecommunications) should periodically monitor cases which are pending with the management so that justice is neither delayed nor denied. The Committee also feel that the awareness level among the women employees regarding their rights and prerogatives has to be heightened. The Committee, therefore, desire that

the Ministry in consultation with the MTNL should take appropriate measures to increase the awareness level among the women employees and make them more conscious towards their rights and additional incentives and facilities provided to them.

NEW DELHI;

April, 2008

Vaisakha, 1930 (Saka)

KRISHNA TIRATH

CHAIRPERSON

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Status of Court Cases filed by Group `A' officers in the matter of absorption of Group `A' officers in BSNL/MTNL.

The Group A officers individually as well as through their Associations filed a series of court cases before different judicial authorities like Central Administrative Tribunals (ACT)/High Courts at different places and the Supreme Court of India against the option letter dated 24.03.2005.

2. The Principal Bench of CAT, New Delhi ordered transfer of cases filed before various CAT Benches to New Delhi and heard a cluster of 17 Applications and vide their order dated 31.10.2005 delved into the issues raised in the petitions in quite some details and held that the terms and conditions for absorption issued by DoT are comprehensive enough which combined with the assurances provided on behalf of the Government would enable the concerned employees to exercise an informed option for absorption in BSNL/MTNL. The Tribunal did not grant any relief to the applicants except for extending the date of submission of options upto 30.11.2005. The Tribunal also observed that "In majority of OAs under consideration here the ITS Association or its members have filed serious of petitions/applications before various High Courts and different Benches of this Tribunal on the same cause of action. This indeed is a flagrant abuse of the process of law and casts a serious doubt on intellectual integrity of the concerned Association or its members. We cannot approve such a tendency on their part.....".

3. Principal Bench of Central Administrative Tribunal New Delhi vide their earlier order dated 28.02.2006 disposed of in terms of their earlier order dated 31.10.200 another bunch of 27 Applications transferred from other Benches including the ones transferred from Allahabad and Bombay Bench of CAT. The Tribunal vacated the interim orders passed by the Allahabad and Bombay Benches of CAT.

4. Appeals challenging order dated 31.10.2005 and 28.2.2006 of the Principal Bench of CAT, New Delhi are pending adjudication in the High Courts of Delhi, Kerala (Ernakulam) and Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad).

5. High Court of Delhi did not grant any stay but allowed the petitioners time to exercise option by 09.12.2005. High Court of Kerala (Ernakulam) also did not grant any stay but allowed the petitioners time to exercise option by 10.12.2005.

6. High Court of Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad) passed the interim order temporarily suspending operation of letter dated 24.3.2005 calling for options read with clarification dated 4.10.2005 and order dated 31.10.2005 of

Principal Bench of CAT, New Delhi and all subsequent proceedings thereto including repatriation of the officers to the their parent department.

7. Over all position of court cases disposed of/pending and the number of officer involved in stay orders, is given here under: -

No. of Court cases dismissed/disposed of	Supreme court	04
	High Courts	22
	Central Administrative Tribunals	54
	Total	80
No. of cases pending	High Courts	18
	Central Administrative Tribunals	01
	Total	19
No. of officers involved in the stay granted by the courts (all ITS officers)	Hyderabad High Court (3 Cases)	109

PART-II

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2007-2008)**

**THIRD SITTING
(29.11.2007)**

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 29th November, 2007 from 1530 hrs. to 1630 hours in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Krishna Tirath - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Preneet Kaur
3. Smt. Manorama Madhawraj
4. Smt. K. Rani
5. Smt. Karuna Shukla
6. Shri P.C. Thomas

RAJYA SABHA

7. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
8. Smt. Brinda Karat
9. Smt. Maya Singh
10. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

WITNESSES

**REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DEPARTMENT OF TELECOM)**

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. | Shri. D.S. Mathur | Secretary (Telecom) |
| 2. | Smt. Manju Madhavan | Member (Finance) |
| 3. | Shri R. Bandhopadhyay | Additional Secretary (Telecom) |

REPRESENTATIVES OF MTNL

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | Shri R.S. P. Sinha | CMD |
| 2. | Ms. Anita Soni | Director (Finance) |
| 3. | Shri Kuldeep Singh | Director (Technology) |

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Shri S.K. Sharma | - | Additional Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. Veena Sharma | - | Deputy Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting. X X X
 X X X X

3. Thereafter, the representatives of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (Department of Telecom) and representatives of MTNL were invited to the sitting to tender oral evidence on the subject 'Working Conditions of Women in MTNL'. The main issues which came up for discussion during the course of evidence included absorption of Central Government employees in MTNL; provision for fresh recruitment in the organization; review of working conditions of women employees; welfare activities of Telecom Womens' Central Organisation (TWCO); promotion and transfer policy, etc. The queries of the Members were also replied to by the representatives of the Ministry/MTNL. The Chairperson, then requested the Ministry to furnish notes on the points raised by the Members to which replies were not readily available with them during the discussion.

4. The Committee also decided to undertake local visit to have first hand information about the welfare activities of TWCO including the working of crèches being run by MTNL in Delhi.

5. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2007-2008)

FIFTH SITTING (04.04.2008)

The Committee sat on Friday, the 4th April, 2008 from 1130 hours to 1300 hours in Committee Room 'E', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Krishna Tirath - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Preneet Kaur
3. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
4. Smt. Manorama Madhvaraj
5. Shri Rajesh Kumar Manjhi
6. Smt. Neeta Pateriya
7. Prof. M. Ramadass
8. Smt. Minati Sen
9. Smt. Karuna Shukla
10. Smt. C. S. Sujatha
11. Smt. B. Jayaben Thakkar
12. Shri P.C. Thomas

RAJYA SABHA

13. Smt. Prema Cariappa
14. Smt. N.P. Durga
15. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri C. S. Joon Director
2. Smt. Mamta Kemwal Deputy Secretary-II

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting. The Committee then took up for consideration the draft Report on the subject 'Working Conditions of Women in MTNL'. After

some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Report without any change and authorized the Chairperson to finalise the Report and present the same to Parliament.

3.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

6. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.