



P. Abhimanyu
General Secretary

BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

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BSNLEU/ 604 (DEV)

04.05.2024

To,

**Shri Ashwini Vaishnav ji,
Hon'ble Minister for Communications,
Sanchar Bhawan,
20, Ashoka Road,
New Delhi - 110 001.**

Respected sir,

Sub: - **BSNL slipping into an irretrievable crisis due to massive exodus of customers - requesting for your kind and immediate intervention – req.**

Ref: - **(1) BSNLEU letter no.BSNLEU/604 (DEV) dated 17.01.2024.
(2) BSNLEU letter no.BSNLEU/604 (DEV) dated 13.02.2024.
(3) BSNLEU letter no.BSNLEU/604 (DEV) dated 10.04.2024.**

With reference to our earlier letters cited under reference on the subject, we wish to draw your kind attention emergently to the following, for favour of your kind and immediate intervention.

For the past several months, BSNLEU has been trying to sincerely attract the attention of the Government over the massive exodus of customers from BSNL, due to the non-availability of high speed data service. The TCS, to whom BSNL has placed the purchase order for the supply and commissioning of 4G equipments, is taking abnormally long time for commissioning BSNL's 4G network. It is understood that, the TCS has not even completed the field trial of its 4G equipments.

It clearly seems that, the TCS is faced with serious technical problems in the commissioning and operationalising of BSNL's 4G networks. This is confirmed by a report published in The Economic Times Telecom (ET Telecom) dated 05th April, 2024, wherein it is stated that the TCS had approached Nokia and ZTE for resolving the technical problems of it's indigenously designed 4G equipments. (copy of the media report is enclosed for your kind perusal). The media report confirms our apprehension that the commissioning of BSNL's 4G network, by the TCS, going to be delayed inordinately.

In the meanwhile, customers have started leaving BSNL massively, due to the non-availability of 4G / 5G services. This has already been brought to your kind notice through our earlier letters cited under reference. Reliance Jio and Airtel, which have already rolled out their 5G service throughout the country, are getting benefitted through the massive customer exodus taking place in BSNL. The Indian Express dated 04th May, 2024 has reported that BSNL has lost a whopping 18 million customers in the financial year ended March, 2024 (a copy of the newspaper reporting is enclosed). Further, the same report states that 2.3 million customers have left BSNL in the month of March, 2024 alone. This is really alarming and it is needless for us to state that, BSNL is slipping into an irretrievable crisis.

To contain the massive exodus of customers from BSNL, our Union had already suggested that BSNL may be facilitated to utilise the network of Vodafone Idea temporarily, for providing it's 4G service. Being the biggest shareholder of Vodafone Idea, we hope that the Government of India can very well ensure that this sharing of network is made possible. In the present circumstance, wherein BSNL has lost 2.3 million customers in a single month, we once again insist upon the Government to take the needful measures immediately to help BSNL to contain the massive exodus of customers.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,



(John Verghese)
Acting General Secretary

Encl: As above.

- Copy to: (1) Dr. P. K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister of India, Prime Minister's Office, 49, South Block, New Delhi – 110011
- 2) Dr. Neeraj Mittal, Secretary, Telecom, Sanchar Bhawan, 20, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001
 - 3) Shri P.K.Purwar, CMD BSNL, Bharat Sanchar Bhawan, H.C.Mathur Lane, Janpath, New Delhi-110001
 - 4) Shri J.P. Chowdhary, Director (CM), BSNL, Bharat Sanchar Bhawan, H.C.Mathur Lane, Janpath, New Delhi-110001

BSNL dials Nokia, ZTE to integrate legacy networks with 4G.

Updated On Apr 5, 2024 at 01:16 PM IST

Currently, services are being offered from a testbed or PoC core network, and once regular core is ready by May-June timeframe, it will bring redundancies to the system, and would be able to handle more than 1 lakh sites, a C-DoT official said.



NEW DELHI: State run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has sought the intervention of gear makers - Finland's Nokia and China's ZTE - to integrate its legacy 2G and 3G network with its new 4G network which has been developed domestically by Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT).

"BSNL has asked Nokia and ZTE to provide support in stabilising the outdoor 4G services by leveraging their core networks, and is also increasing IP Multimedia Subsystem (IMS) capacity for network traffic augmentation," a source privy to the matter told ET Telecom, adding that the 'core parenting' is being undertaken in telco's northern and western zones with a select number of network sites.

Nokia and ZTE were the network suppliers for BSNL's 2G and 3G network, which need to be integrated with the 4G network that the telco is now deploying. The core, or brain, of the 4G network has been developed indigenously by C-DoT with radio equipment being supplied by Tata group company Tejas Networks and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), also a unit of the Tata Group, acting as the system integrator.

C-DoT has previously said it has undertaken "successful trials of the indigenous 4G core in BSNL commercial network" at Chandigarh and Ambala.

Currently, services are being offered from a testbed or PoC core network, and once regular core is ready by May-June timeframe, it will bring redundancies to the system, and would be able to handle more than 1 lakh sites, a C-DoT official said.

Network's core or backbone is critical to mobile telephony, and it establishes connectivity, authentication and authorisation for subscribers.

"But one has to take into account that what C-DoT is trying to do in 2 years, overseas equipment suppliers have done in 5-6 years, so initial challenges will come up," said a government official.

"New data centres for regular production cores are under installation and once these are up in all four zones, all RAN sites will be parented to these. From PoC test bed core, currently 1,500 sites are working with 2 lakh concurrent users and 5 lakh unique customers," RK Bhatnagar, director general, Voice of Indian Communication Technology Enterprises (VoICE) told ETTelecom.

Regular core issues are "being resolved" within a week or two, and commercial services in multiple circles will follow soon," he said, adding that customers are transacting about 40 TB data per day through the indigenous core network.

The Delhi-based group represents domestic telecom companies including state-driven C-DoT. Queries to BSNL, C-DoT, TCS, Nokia and ZTE did not elicit any response.

Last year, TCS, a Tata group company, bagged around Rs.15,000-crore order from BSNL under phase IX.2 program, on the back of proof-of-concept (PoC) in Ambala and Chandigarh, and is deploying radio network (RAN) through its Bengaluru-based subsidiary Tejas Networks.

After initial supply chain disruptions, BSNL's radio gear supply has now normalised with TCS expecting aggressive 4G network rollout during the current fiscal, according to a person aware of the developments.

Under the phase IX.2 expansion, TCS has commercially deployed 4,667 sites in northern and western zones encompassing 12 states, while only site surveys were undertaken in telco's eastern and southern zones as of March 2024, according to BSNL's installation and commissioning (I&C) report.

State-run BSNL loses 18 mn customers in FY24

RAKESH KUMAR @ New Delhi

BSNL CUSTOMER LOSS SINCE APR 2023

Telecom service provider loses 2.3 million subscribers in March 2024 alone



[The New Indian Express dated 04.05.2024]

STATE-owned telecom service provider Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) lost 18 million customers in the last financial year (FY24), bringing its customer base to 88.06 million.

According to the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), BSNL lost 2.3 million customers in March 2024 alone. With this loss, the state-owned telecom service provider becomes the second telecom operator in the country after Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL), which has not been able to arrest its subscriber depletion. Industry experts attribute this decline to a lack of investment in network upgrades, as BSNL is yet to roll out its high-speed 4G and 5G networks for its customers.

BSNL lost 2.3 million customers in March 2024, followed by Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL), which lost 0.68 million in the

same month. On the other hand, both Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel gained customers, with 2.14 million and 1.76 million new customers, respectively.

The market share of BSNL has also come down to 7.57% as of March 2024, while its competitors, private telecom service providers, are cementing its position. According to TRAI, Reliance Jio becomes the largest telecom service provider with a 40.30% in the country, followed by Bharti Airtel with a 33.10% and Vodafone Idea with an 18.86% of the telecom market share.

Throughout the year, the state-owned telecom service provider was not able to stop its subscriber loss.

TRAI data reveals that in April 2023, BSNL experienced its highest-ever customer loss, with 2.99 million subscribers leaving its network, followed by 2.81 million in May 2023.