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BSNL EMPLOYEES UNION

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Resolution on BSNL's 4G service.

Resolution passed in the Central Executive Committee meeting of BSNL Employees Union, held at Hyderabad on 06th & 07th August, 2021.

This meeting of the Central Executive Committee of BSNLEU notes with serious concern that, the revival of BSNL is getting unduly delayed. The revival plan for BSNL was announced by the government on 23rd October, 2019. 80,000 employees have already been retired under the VRS-2019. Except this, no major step has been taken for the revival of BSNL.

Especially, the launching of 4G service by BSNL is being unduly delayed. Even though the government has already decided to allot 4G spectrum to BSNL free of cost, the Company has not been able to launch its 4G service till date. This is mainly because of the bottlenecks being created by the government.

While the private operators, viz., Reliance Jio, Airtel and Vodafone Idea are procuring their equipments from global vendors, a condition has been imposed on BSNL that, it should procure equipments only from domestic vendors. It is an accepted fact that, no Indian company is having proven 4G technology. Hence, BSNL is unable to procure 4G equipments neither from the global vendors nor from the domestic vendors.

The private telecom service providers launched their 4G service in the year 2015-16. However, BSNL is allotted with the 4G spectrum only in 2020. BSNL is already 5 years behind the private operators in 4G. Under this situation, the condition imposed by the government that, BSNL should procure its 4G equipments only from the domestic vendors, has created great difficulties for the Company. Further, this is nothing but denial of level playing field vis-à-vis the private operators. Hence, this meeting strongly demands that, the government should permit BSNL to procure equipments from global vendors, as is being done by the private operators.

It is important to mention that, the Empowered Technology Group, headed by the Principal Advisor to the Prime Minister on Science and Technology, has recommended that BSNL should be allowed to procure 4G equipments from global vendors. However, the PMO has rejected this proposal of the ETG.

BSNL is already having 49,300 4G compatible BTSs. Through upgradation, these BTSs can be converted into 4G BTSs and BSNL can immediately launch its 4G service. The Management Committee of BSNL approved the upgradation of 18,000 BTSs procured from Nokia. However, when this proposal of the Management Committee went for the approval of the BSNL Board, the government nominees on the Board blocked it. This clearly establishes that, it is none else but the government, which is blocking the launching of 4G service by BSNL. This meeting urges upon the government not to create road-blocks in the upgradation of BSNL's BTSs, for the purpose of providing 4G service.

As has already been mentioned, BSNL is having 49,300 4G compatible BTSs. Upgradation of these BTSs will go a long way in enabling BSNL to launch and sustain its 4G services. However, it is noted that 60% of these 49,300 BTSs have been procured from a Chinese company, as per the then existing procedures. Now, the government has banned Indian companies from procuring equipments from Chinese companies. However, this meeting urges upon the government that, BSNL should be permitted to upgrade its 4G compatible BTSs, procured from Chinese companies. Further, BSNL should also be permitted to procure components and spare parts for the maintenance of the BTSs procured from Chinese companies. Otherwise, the operation and maintenance of these 60% BTSs, procured from the Chinese company, would become difficult in the future.



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- Copy to: (1) The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, New Delhi - 110001
(2) The Hon'ble Minister of Communications, New Delhi – 110001.
(3) The Hon'ble Minister of State for Communications, New Delhi – 110001.
(4) The Cabinet Secretary, Government of India, New Delhi – 110001.
(5) The Secretary, Telecom, Sanchar Bhawan, New Delhi – 110001.
(6) The Chairman and Managing Director, BSNL, New Delhi – 110001.