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Dated 05.05.2020

To,

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad Ji
Hon'ble Minister of Communication,
Government of India, New Delhi

Subject: 4G Global Tender floated by BSNL facing rough weather – This may cause delay in roll out of 4G services which was part of the BSNL Revival Program of the Govt of India-Reg.

Respected Sir,

We are once again looking towards your good office for early roll out of the 4G services, which is a part of all time best revival package offered to BSNL/MTNL in October, 2019 by the Government of India. As per decision of the cabinet, the government allotted the required spectrum to BSNL for roll out of the much anticipated prime wireless data service i.e. 4G without charging for the spectrum to enable the struggling PSU to regain its lost glory in a time bound manner. Earlier, it was appraised that 4G services will be launched by April, 2020 by limited procurement under existing tender of phase VIII and a full fledge tender will be floated soon under phase IX.

However the 4G services couldn't be launched in April-2020 as scheduled due to non-availability of equipments through anticipated procurement but a Global Tender for 50, 000 sites for four zones and 7000 sites for two metros was floated by BSNL on 23rd March, 2020 for procurement of the equipments under Phase IX. It was a matter of great relief to employees that the new tender for procurement was floated and it was expected that BSNL will be able to start the services soon.

However the joy was short lived as challenges started coming in the new procurement process and it seems that the tendering process may get delayed further, which may adversely affect the launch of the services by BSNL. We have come to know from media reports that some telecom body has raised concerns on terms and condition of the tender and requested for the intervention of the DoT. If media reports are believed, the scheduled opening date of tender i.e. 9th May, 2020 may get delayed due to the objection raised by Telecom Equipment Promotion Council (TPEC).

In this regard, we would like to submit that the BSNL tender is a High Value Global Tender calling for vendors for supply of 4G equipment, stiff guidelines are required to be prescribed in order to sustain the rollout without any hiccups in between and also it is necessary to see that the equipment supplied and installed are supported for a longer period, which can be done only by the companies having vast experience and capabilities to sustain for long periods. But it appears that some lobbies are working against interest of the government owned telecom PSU and doesn't want to succeed the much talked revival of BSNL/MTNL.

Sir, it is unfortunate that such telecom bodies doesn't raises question on procurement process of other telecom operators but tries to scuttle the growth of BSNL on one pretext or other. The same body forgets to enforce clause of Make in India or Security clause in terms and condition in the procurement process by other telecom operators in the country, while making all hue and cry in case of BSNL. If present procurement process of 4G equipment by BSNL is spoiled, launch of the service may not be possible in 2020 and ultimately it will lose its relevance as other operators will be exploring 5G service by that time. So, a considerate decision is required to resolve the issue for ensuring timely completion of tendering process for procurement of new 4G equipments by BSNL.

Therefore in view of the above, your kind intervention is solicited for timely roll out of the BSNL 4G Services without any glitches otherwise the very purpose of revival package provided by the government may get defeated and we will be again at a cross road of our future. We don't want to lose the opportunity provided by government on your initiative and hence once again requesting before your good self for the protection from nasty campaign against BSNL.

With profound regards.

Yours faithfully

(MD. WASI AHMAD)
General Secretary

Copy to:

1. Shri Anshu Prakash Ji, IAS, Secretary (T), DoT Government of India, New Delhi for kind information and necessary action please.
2. Shri P. K. Purwar, CMD, BSNL New Delhi for kind information and necessary action please.
3. Shri S. K. Mishra, Director(CM), BSNL New Delhi for kind information and n/a please.
4. The Sr GM(SR), BSNL CO New Delhi for kind information and n/a please.