



BSNL executives spend own money to keep telco afloat: Official

The workforce of state-controlled Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has been spending its own money to make the telecom carrier's operations seamless, and in the challenging situation, the telco should not continue to whip employees, a senior official told the top management.

Muntazir Abbas | ET Telecom | Updated: September 16, 2019, 13:21 IST

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NEW DELHI: The workforce of state-controlled Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has been spending its own money to make the telecom carrier's operations

seamless, and in the challenging situation, the telco should not continue to whip employees, a senior official told the top management.

In a letter dated September 7, 2019, to the BSNL Board, a Principal General Manager (PGM) of Tamil Nadu circle, expressing displeasure over the staff deployed for SIM sales said

that the initiative was flawed and would affect operational parameters and further push the company into the red, and management creating panic among employees was unwarranted.

“The executives and non-executives employees are spending their own money in trying to keeping this company afloat and your letter at this juncture is most unfortunate and has done more damage to the morale of the staff and officers than any good intention you wanted to convey,” he said in a letter.

BSNL that has a high revenue-to-wage ratio, employs a total of 1.63 lakh headcount, including 46,597 executive and 1,17,305 non-executive, as on March 31, 2019.

The letter has come on the backdrop of aggressive targets assigned by telco’s consumer business division to circle heads, following increasing revenue slump.

In a similar letter last week, a senior official of the operator’s Haryana circle said that the BSNL Board must realise ground realities before issues diktats of salary deduction and the staffers should be encouraged in the ongoing critical situation.

In the absence of competitive fourth-generation or 4G airwaves which is also key to the fourth-largest telco’s falling revenue, the executive also suggested that the top officials should look at forging intra-circle roaming (ICR) agreements with private sector operators.

“I would request you to seriously consider having intra-circle roaming agreements with other operators for 4G and perhaps an Expression of Interest (EOI) on this should be sent out to other telcos. This will be a better option for us rather than now investing in 4G and having no money for 5G roll out,” he added.

The [Narendra Modi](#) government, over the last several months, has been aggressively considering a revival package to cash-strapped BSNL and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) that would include allocation of 4G spectrum, Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) and real estate assets and telecom infrastructure monetization, but no decision has been taken yet by the Cabinet.

Telco’s employee unions have though blamed the incumbent government of favouring the billionaire Mukesh Ambani-owned [Reliance Jio](#), a pure-play 4G service provider, by not allowing it to run much-needed high-speed data services.

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The official further said that BSNL’s rural network was facing

is pegged at Rs 14,000 crore and Rs 6,000 crore for MTNL.

Following a high-level meeting at the Prime Minister Office (PMO) headed by then Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Nripendra Misra in August this year, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) was asked to bring out a note incorporating the action plan for the approval by the Cabinet.

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