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No. SNEA/KRL/CGM/2015-16/15 Dated 13-4-2016

To

Sri. L Anantharam,
Chief General Manager Telecom
BSNL Kerala Circle, Trivandrum.

Sir,

Sub: - Tower infrastructure sharing in BSNL Kerala circle- Constraints, Reg:

Tower infra sharing is a declared corporate policy of BSNL intended for additional revenue generation by way of business diversification in which BSNL passive tower infrastructure is leased out to other prospective Telecom Service Providers in the country. Also, BSNL would share passive tower infrastructure of other TSPs/Infra Providers to expand its wireless network to uncovered regions among the potential areas identified by the field units to improve network coverage, quality and customer satisfaction. Sharing of tower from other infra providers can not only save much capital investment but also would facilitate field units to overcome hurdles like public protest against new tower construction for new service rollout. Master Sharing Agreements (MSA) are in force to enable smooth transactions in this regard.

Sharing of tower infrastructure from other Infra providers for BSNL network expansion

As BSNL Kerala is in the process of a major expansion of its mobile network by adding more than 2000 Node Bs as part of the Phase 7+ project, we require consent from major Infra Providers like M/s. Indus & M/s. VIOM for the successful completion of the project as planned. Around 40% of the proposed new 3G sites are planned as IP sharing sites in this project. Among the total IP sites planned, more than 50% belongs to M/s. Indus & M/s. VIOM. BSNL is yet to finalize site sharing agreement with both IPs for 3G service addition. Any delay in finalizing the sharing plan would affect the 3G service roll out in the circle very badly, as these planned sites are located at very high potential areas in the State with zero 3G coverage. Also, as we all know, in the Kerala scenario where public protests are most common against new tower constructions, sharing of towers from other infra providers is the only option for the fast roll out of high quality new technology wireless services to the prospective customers in the State. But BSNL has not been able to finalize the demands like consumable charges, rent etc from the Infra providers and the same has badly affected 3G service rollout in Kerala as planned.

Leasing out BSNL tower infrastructure to other TSPs for additional revenue generation

Right from the inception of the tower infra sharing policy, despite several constraints and hurdles, our circle had been strenuously trying to achieve the targets assigned by corporate office from time to time. It is a well known fact that our circle is struggling hard to achieve the corporate office targets due to various reasons. Our handicapped infra, space constraints at BTS sites, unwillingness of owners, stiff resistance from neighboring public, high rent demand from owners etc. are a few among them. Out of these, many hurdles are being sorted out by our field units itself, but still there are many to be resolved to meet the targets assigned. In order to resolve high rent demand from owners, BSNL Corporate Office entrusted Circles to constitute High Power Committees to carryout reasonable rent negotiation with the land owners for arriving at mutually acceptable rent and execution of lease agreement addendums.

To a great extent, Kerala Circle could march far ahead among other Circles in achieving targets as this initiative was whole heartedly accepted by the staff community and they worked unanimously and enthusiastically for achieving additional revenue to Kerala Circle. But for the last two years, tower sharing proposals are not being implemented as promptly as done previously to achieve targets. This has resulted in poor revenue generation from this new business vertical. As we all know, a flexible and mutually negotiable approach in rent finalization only can facilitate infra sharing business to flourish in any circle, like Kerala. But, to our dismay, **some sections in BSNL** fail to understand the field realities in smooth implementation of the lease addendum execution procedures in SSAs thereby bringing serious threat to the ongoing infra sharing business in Kerala circle. It is understood that many proposal from other operators for sharing BSNL infra are pending for the only reason of additional rent finalization demanded by the land lords.

Under these circumstances, it is our humble request to kindly look into the matter urgently, as it retards the tower sharing business as well as network expansion projects, affects customer satisfaction, network quality and revenue generation in Kerala Circle. It is also requested that **clear cut guidelines may be issued to the concerned field units** regarding the thresholds, if any, in fair rent assessment and fixed/energy charge finalization activities so as to facilitate them to discharge their duties judiciously, fearlessly and favorably for the BEST interests of BSNL without giving way to unwarranted interruptions from any corners.

Finally Sir, though we were submitting many proposals for the improvement of service efficiency, we are sorry to note that no serious attention is paid to our suggestions with any further discussions and follow up actions. We hope that our suggestions will be further discussed for its implementations in true spirit.

Thanking you,

Yours Sincerely,



(T.Santhosh Kumar)
Circle Secretary,SNEA,
Kerala Circle.

Copy to :- GM (Mobile Planning),GM (Mobile Operations)