

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1985
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23rd DECEMBER, 2022**

LAUNCH OF 4G SERVICES BY BSNL

1985 SMT. PRIYANKA CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that BSNL plans to launch 4G services in 2023;
- (b) if so, the reasons for the delay in technology upgradation;
- (c) whether Government has taken any steps to ensure market competitiveness of BSNL; and
- (d) if so, the progress made as a result of such measures?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) & (b) In line with Atma-nirbhar Bharat initiative of the Government, BSNL was directed to deploy Indian 4G stack. BSNL floated the Expression of Interest (EOI) on 1st Jan, 2021 for the Proof of Concept (PoC). The PoC has been completed with few pending points. BSNL has issued the Purchase Order for 6,000 sites for 4G roll-out on 31-03-2022 and another purchase order of 6,000 sites on 25-07-2022. Thereafter, BSNL has floated the tender in October 2022 for its requirement of 1 lakh 4G sites.

(c) & (d) On 23.10.2019, Government of India approved the revival plan for BSNL and MTNL. It inter-alia approved the reduction in employee costs through Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), debt restructuring by raising of sovereign guarantee bonds, administrative allotment of spectrum for 4G services through capital infusion, monetization of core and non-core assets and in-principle approval of merger of BSNL and MTNL. As a result of these, BSNL has become EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization) positive since the financial year 2020-21.

Further on 27.07.2022, to transform BSNL into a viable Public Sector Undertaking, the Government approved a revival package for BSNL amounting to Rs 1.64 lakhs crores. The revival measures focus on infusing fresh capital for upgrading BSNL services, allocating spectrum, de-stressing its balance sheet and augmenting its fibre network by merging Bharat Broadband Nigam Limited (BBNL) with BSNL.
