

1. SUBJECT: ACTION TAKEN TO COPE UP WITH KASHMIR FLOOD CATASTROPHE.

There have been devastating floods in the Kashmir Valley which had swept away hundreds of villages and a large area of Srinagar city. Number of major exchanges/vital installations including GSM MSC/BSCs/BTSs/Broadband/Transmission/All Electrical components including Power Plant, Batteries, Gen sets/ many RSUs/office records/office automation equipment including computers/printers/FAX/Photo-copiers/property, etc. have been damaged partly/completely. A detailed report has already been prepared by the Committee constituted by BSNL Corporate Office, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Executive Director (CN), BSNL Corporate Office, New Delhi. The Committee has already submitted its report on 19.9.2014, recommending various steps to be taken for immediate restoration of telecom services in a phased manner. Side-by-side we have taken up cleaning work of various offices/installations including CTO Exchange Building, GM Office, CSC Building, Secured accommodation, etc. so as to make these habitable/workable. While executing the works various problems were faced. To overcome these problems the following decisions were taken to avoid any kind of delay:-

1. The devastating floods started its merciless journey on 4th September, 2014 from North Kashmir i.e. District Anantang and rested on 10th September, 2014 at Bandipore District swallowing up hundreds of villages/towns/city areas. The Telecom network,/installations were the worst hit during these floods. The communication was totally paralyzed on 7/9/2014 at 1700 hours. The Main Telecom Hub of BSNL pertaining to Mobile Services, Landline Services, CDMA Services, Long Distance Media, Broadband and Administrative Block i.e. CTO Exchange Building/Wideband Building/CSC/Residential Quarters of Officers were submerged beyond imagination.
2. The Camp Office of GM started working at Barzulla Main Exchange with the skeleton staff powered by DGM CFA / TM Mr MG Mufti. Similarly, DGM (CM) established his office at Hariparbat Main Exchange. SMS was flashed to report to nearest BSNL functional offices i.e. Barzulla and Hariparbat. The first BTS was made operational on 8.9.2014 at 1900 hours through Satellite Media at Barzulla.
3. At the same time, the challenging task of rescuing and providing some sort of relief to officers/officials who were held up in Secured Accommodation and other

exchanges/offices was taken up. Officers and staff who got stuck in the secured accommodation at CSC Campus at Lal Chowk Srinagar were rescued by the personal efforts of the DGM CFA / TM Mr Mufti who risking his own life waded through the neck deep water to rescue the officers and staff there. Some of the officers who were rescued from Secured Accommodation left Srinagar. The Officers who left the offices/headquarters were asked to report back to their duties by 22.9.2014.

4. Various free STD PCOs at Airport/Relief Centres were opened to facilitate the people to know welfare of their kith and kin. In addition, 5000 free activated SIMs were distributed to the needy persons for this purpose with the validity of initially 7 days and then extended to 10 days.
5. The war footing action for restoration of the services wherever possible with meager resources especially manpower/vehicle/equipment was done.
6. There was no cash available to spend on this account with the available staff. The officers who-so-ever were available were asked to meet the expenditure from their pockets, which will be reimbursed to them by way of temporary advance to be accounted for later-on.
7. However, the CSC at Barzulla was made functional on 19.9.2014 where some payments were received. Whatever collections are received are being diverted to meet operational expenditure on account of restoration of telecom services, as due to submerging of divisional chest the operation of accounts could not be made. Accounting will be done later-on accordingly.
8. While making purchase of some stores/items the officers faced difficulty in getting printed receipt as the stationary of the shop-keepers have also got damaged and are not able to provide printed receipt. Hand-written receipts were asked to be taken from the shop-keepers, to avoid delay in the execution of works.
9. Secured Accommodation of various officers residing in ground floors are to be adjusted/shifted to IQs. Accordingly, booking of IQs have been stopped for one month including those IQs controlled by Circle.

10. Minor civil works like cleaning CTO Exchange Building, GM Office building, CSC Building and IQ/Residential Accommodation were entrusted to SSA staff/officers instead of asking Civil Wing to act, as the Civil Wing has been asked to execute major works. Similarly in respect of other offices/exchanges the local SSA staff/officers have been instructed to have the cleaning done locally.
11. There were various contracts for execution of different works currently. But the validity period of some contracts are going to expire shortly. Though floating of tenders was already initiated/processed, but the records have got damaged due to scourge floods and there is no alternative but to extend the validity for a further period till normalcy takes place. It may be mentioned that due to heavy devastation of various establishments in the Valley, there are next to no chance of finding any fresh contractor/supplier for execution of works/for supply of any material like printing material, printing, etc.
12. Restoration of outdoor plant has to be taken up in a big way, as the cables both copper as well as fiber have been uprooted and washed away at many places, In addition, Cabinets, Pillars, DP Boxes, drop-wire, etc have been badly damaged. For this purpose, we need massive manpower to rehabilitate the outdoor plant of various areas of different exchanges including Main OCB Srinagar, Barzulla, Hariparbat, Dalgate, Indira Nagar, Nishat, Karan Nagar, NIT, Rainawari, Nowagam, Pampore, Pulwama, Pattan, HMT, Narbal, Magam, Sopore, etc. The additional staff required for this work can be managed by engaging the retired staff, who can manage the rehabilitation work without any difficulty. This arrangement is required to be made for a period of at least 6 months.
13. In addition, persons through outsources are required to be engaged to assist in restoration work of the outdoor plant for a period of 6 months till normalization of telecom services takes place.
14. Two hired vehicles i.e. Ganderbal and Transmission Wing were re-arranged earlier in view of austerity measure taken at SSA level, but due to pressing urgency in requirement of more vehicles for restoration works, both the vehicles were allowed to be hired for both the sub-division.

15. In addition, as recommended by the Committee, 100% justified hired vehicles are to be engaged and put in operation for massive restoration work i.e installation/ commissioning/ operation of indoor as well as outdoor plants.
16. The badly affected sections including CAF/Accounts/General/Marketing, etc where Service Books/tendering documents/files/Bills of contractors/Franchisees/ACE-9 Account of officers/Customer Application Forms have been damaged fully or partially and some records are totally irretrievable. This has also been mentioned in the report of the committee. Wherever, there is possibility of reconstruction of the records, action will be taken. Where there is no possibility of reconstruction of such records/bills, what could be the alternate source for settlement of Bills/ACE-9 Account/Pension Papers in respect of officials retiring now onward, promotion cases, etc?
17. Most of the officials have badly suffered in terms of damage to their property and loss to other belongings during these devastating floods. There is every likelihood of the officials/officers to request for GPF withdrawals/advance. Sufficient funds are required to be requisitioned in advance from corporate office, as any delay in releasing the GPF will aggravate the pain of the affected officials.
18. Since the CAF records have been damaged to the extent that these are totally irretrievable, the construction of records will take considerable time. Till the completion of reconstruction of all records, CAF compliance report by TERM Cell may be got exempted in respect of SSA Srinagar for a minimum period of one year.
19. The people of Kashmir Valley have also suffered badly and their belongings have been washed away by the devastating floods. The people of affected areas have shifted to safer places. For obtaining a new Mobile Connection, requirement of POA and POI becomes hardly available with these affected people. Some simple procedure/ requirement of POA/POI may be devised to meet the requirement i.e. whatever document available with the customer as POI/POA other than the listed documents.
20. Sign boards and tariff cards, etc provided to Franchisees/DSAs have also been washed away due to floods. Fresh Sign boards/tariff cards are to be arranged and supplied to the Franchisees/DSAs.

21. The existing customers of all services including Mobile/LL/Broadband/WiMAX/, etc has not utilized the service rather the services were not available in the flood affected areas. Hence, a mechanism is to be devised for providing rent-rebate in respect of such customers till their services are restored.

2. Amarnath Yatra-2015

BSNL provides telecom services at all stations en-route Holy Cave since 1997. Initially the telecom services were provided through Inmarsat sets, V-Sat by way of providing STD Booths at all stations for the facility of Yatries. Telecom services were further augmented in with the increase in the flow of Yatries and need for upgradation and provision telecom services on at higher reaches of North & South route. The introduction of mobiles services was started from 2010 and 8 GSM sites were installed to cover the maximum of Yatra route. Since the every year upgradation and expansion is being carried out in to meet the growing needs of communication facilities. With the introduction of mobile services in the Valley, mobile coverage to all Yatra routes also extended through aerial Optical Fibre Cable with the help of Army etc.

This year BSNL has made concerted arrangements by providing following infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted mobile services during the entire period of yatra. As of now 17 GSM sites are operational and this year 3G services have been started at the base camps and expansion of three sites at higher reaches has also been done.

The following is the status of telecom installation on both the Yatra routes after expansion and upgration work done this year.

This year BSNL has made concerted arrangements by providing following infrastructure to ensure uninterrupted mobile services during the entire period of Yatra

- 17 mobile BTS were provided at various stations including two BTSs at Rangamore, Baltal-I, Baltal-II, Domail, Chandanwari, Sheshnag, Panchtarni, Holy cave and one BTS at Poshpatri;

- First time 3G services are provided at base camps at 5 locations i.e. Rangamore, Baltal-I, Baltal-II Domail and Chandanwari;
- Optical connectivity up to Domail on Northern Route and up to Sheshnag on southern route also extended to ensure reliable connectivity on both the routes. Route has been put in the ring of over 250 Kms containing the motorable part Domail, Baltal, Sonamarg, Srinagar, Anantnag, Pahalgam and Chandanwari and the higher reaches of Sheshnag, Panjtarni, Holy Cave, Sangam, and Domail.
- V-Sat connectivity from Sheshnag-Panchtarni-Holycave-Domail has been provided and additional VSATs at Sheshnag, Panchtarni and Holy Cave; Augmentation and bandwidth at Sheshnag, Panchtarni, Holycave from 2MB to 4MB and at Poshpatri from 1MB to 2MB;
- 8 No. of 10KVA DG sets at 4 locations i.e. (i) Holy Cave,(ii) Panjtarni,(iii) Sheshnag and (iv) Poshpatri in 1+1 mode were installed;
- 4 Satellite phones (DSPTs) each at Holycave, Panchtarni, Sheshnag and Sangam were also made available to SASB;
- About 50 numbers of staff have been deputed from installation and O&M activities of Yatra.
- An Expenditure of Rs. 5 Crore is expected to be incurred in deploying of equipment which is to be reimbursed from USO fund as per guidelines.
- There are some outages caused by the cloud bursts, landslides on day to day basis. However, best efforts are being made to restore the routes with hostile weather conditions and limited resources.