

BSNL to launch 4G services across India in August; to use indigenous technology

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: State-owned BSNL will start rolling out 4G services across the country from August, using completely indigenous technology in line with the government's "Atmanirbhar" policy, according to official sources.

BSNL officials claimed to have recorded peak speed of 40-45 megabit per second on the 4G network which has been rolled out in the premium spectrum band of 700 megahertz (MHz) as well as in 2,100 MHz band during the pilot phase.

The company has rolled out 4G services in Punjab using indigenously developed technology by IT company TCS and state-run telecom research organisation C-DoT-led consortium

and onboarded around 8 lakh subscribers.

"The 4G core developed by C-DoT is performing very well in the BSNL network in Punjab. It was installed in July last year. It takes 12 month to prove the success of such complex technology but the C-DoT core has stabilised within 10 months. BSNL will launch atmanirbhar 4G technology across the country in August," a senior government official, who did not wish to be named, told PTI.

The core network is a collection of network hardware, devices, and software that provides fundamental services in a telecommunication network. Telecom regulator Trai in a recent paper explained core as part of a network that



offers the functionality of aggregation, call control, switching, authentication, charging, gateway functionality, etc.

TCS, Tejas Networks and government-owned ITI have bagged orders worth about Rs 19,000 crore from BSNL for deploying 4G network which is upgradable to 5G.

In a recent earnings call, Tejas Networks Executive

Director and chief operating officer Arnob Roy said BSNL's mobile network is getting deployed across zones.

He said that wherever the C-DOT core is not available on the BSNL network, the equipment is getting integrated to the existing core.

"When the C-DOT core gets deployed in those circles, in those zones, they

will get parented to the C-DOT core as well. Tejas Networks Limited. This is just a temporary situation where the RAN (radio access network) is deployed and in that zone, the core is not available," Roy said.

BSNL is in the process of deploying 1.12 lakh towers for 4G and 5G services across India.

"The company has installed over 9,000 towers for 4G service across the country, out of which more than 6,000 are active in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, UP West and Haryana circle. BSNL has been selling 4G capable SIM only for the last 4-5 years. Only those customers who have older SIM will need to get new SIM to experience the service," a BSNL official said.

INDIA bloc leaders echoing voice of Pakistan: BJP



STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The BJP on Monday highlighted a series of statements made by INDIA bloc leaders that it said were against the nation's interest, as the ruling party accused the opposition of echoing the voice of Pakistan and asked people to be wary of such "traitors".

BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi cited Maharashtra Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar's allegation that an RSS-affiliated police officer and not terrorist Ajmal Kasab killed the then anti-terrorism squad chief Hemant Karkare and former Punjab chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi's claim that the attack on IAF personnel in Jammu and Kashmir was a poll stunt to slam the party.

He cited five other instances, including Pakistani leader Chaudhry Fawad Hussain's criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and praise of Rahul Gandhi, and Farooq Abdullah's reference to Pakistan having nuclear weapons, to allege that these INDIA bloc leaders are echoing the neighbouring country's stand. What the National Conference leader has said is very "astounding, revealing and shocking" as so far only a few Pakistani leaders considered reckless or radicalised religious leaders have made such comments, he claimed.

Replying to a question related to Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, the former J-K chief minister had said that Pakistan is not wearing bangles and has nuclear weapons. Such remarks are also an insult to women, the BJP leader said.

Noting that Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has written a column in a Bangladeshi newspaper analysing Modi while slamming the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, Rajya Sabha MP Trivedi said while elections are being in India he is building public opinion in another country.

The Congress leader has also referred to the Valley as India-administered-Kashmir, he alleged.

One INDIA bloc leader is giving "cover fire" to Pakistan on Mumbai terror attack, another is speaking about its nuclear weapon while somebody is describing the martyrdom of a soldier as a poll stunt, he said.

Modi had said that the Congress manifesto carried Muslim League's imprints, he noted, adding that every

work spoken by its leaders echoed Pakistan's stand. The Left parties want the country's nuclear stockpiles removed, he said.

All these development are not merely a coincidence but a deliberate and dangerous experiment, Trivedi said.

"In whose hands these leaders are playing," he asked, telling people to be wary of "traitors" hiding within the country.

Various kinds of powers outside are attempting to halt the rise of a proud and confident India, he said.

At the press conference, the BJP leader also took a swipe at Rahul Gandhi over the recovery of a huge amount of cash from the house of a domestic help allegedly linked to the secretary of Jharkhand minister and Congress leader Alamgir Alam.

He said Gandhi speaks about doing an economic survey and dividing the country's wealth and the Enforcement Directorate's raid has shown the way assets are being divided in Jharkhand when so much of money, between Rs 20 crore and 30 crore, is with the help of a minister's PA.

After looking at so much amount of money, nothing is left to explain, he added.

Bomb explosion kills teenager in Bengal; BJP MP blocks road demanding NIA probe

STATE TIMES NEWS
KOLKATA: A teenage boy was killed and two others were injured in a bomb explosion in West Bengal's Hooghly district on Monday, prompting the local BJP MP Locket Chatterjee to block the arterial for over two hours demanding NIA probe into the incident.



The incident occurred at Pandua in Hooghly district near a pond where a group of boys were playing.

Police said the boy succumbed to his injuries in a hospital in Pandua while two other injured persons were transferred to a healthcare facility in Chinsurah for better treatment.

An investigation into the explosion that occurred at around 8.30 am has started, police said.

The BJP MP, accompanied by hundreds of party

workers, blocked GT Road alleging that TMC goons were involved in the blast in their bid to create an air of panic ahead of its national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's campaign in the area later in the day.

"Along with the people of Pandua, I demand justice for the families of the innocent boys. The state police are incapable of conducting a thorough, impartial probe into the incident. We want an NIA probe," she told PTI.

Chatterjee had an altercation with the police officers who requested her to lift the blockade.

TMC spokesperson Trinankur Bhattacharya said it was an unfortunate incident having no relation with politics and police were conducting investigations.

"She (Chatterjee) wants to play politics over the dead body of a child. The BJP seeks NIA probe into each and every bomb blast incident in West Bengal," Bhattacharya said.

Police destroy nine IEDs, explosive materials dumped by Naxalites in Gadchiroli

STATE TIMES NEWS
GADCHIROLI: The police on Monday destroyed nine IEDs and other explosives dumped by Naxalites in a hilly area in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, a senior official said.

The police received intel about the presence of explosives in the Tipagad area, following which two bomb detection and disposal squads (BDDS), a quick action team and C60 of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were dispatched to look for the explosives and destroy them in situ if needed, Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police Neelotpal said.

There was credible intel that Maoists planned to carry out IED blasts during the Lok Sabha elections. However, since the intel did not specify the location, area domination exercises were carried out,

and there was heavy deployment of security forces to avert attacks, he said.

On Sunday, the police received information that explosives were dumped in Tipagad, and a team of BDDS and CRPF personnel was dispatched to search the area, the official said. The team found nine IEDs, three claymore pipes, six pressure cookers filled with explosives and detonators and three more claymore pipes filled with explosives and shrapnel, he said.

A plastic bag filled with gunpowder and some medicines and blankets were also recovered from the spot, the official said.

The BDDS destroyed nine IEDs and three claymore pipes in situ, he said, adding that the remaining materials were burnt on the spot.

CISCE results: Pass percentage in Class 10, 12 board exams rises; merit lists discontinued

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Girls outshone boys yet again in Class 10 and 12 board exams conducted by the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), while the pass percentage for both the classes recorded an increase.

The results were announced Monday morning. The board also discontinued the practice of issuing merit lists from this year to avoid unhealthy competition among students.

The pass percentage for Class 10 is 99.47, while it is 98.19 for Class 12. Last year, the respective pass percentage was 98.94 and 96.93.

"In Class 10, the pass percentage of boys is 99.31 per cent while that of girls is 99.65 per cent. Similarly, boys have achieved a pass percentage of 97.53 per cent in class 12 exams while the pass percentage of girls stood at 98.92 per cent," CISCE Chief Executive and Secretary Joseph Emmanuel said.

"We have discontinued the practice of issuing merit lists for board exams from this year. The move is aimed at avoiding unhealthy competition among students," he



added.

The CBSE had last year stopped the practice of announcing merit lists for the both these board classes.

During the pandemic, when board exams were not conducted due to closure of schools and students were marked using alternative evaluation methods, both CBSE and CISCE had not issued any merit list. However, the practice was resumed after the schools reopened.

In Class 10, the best-performing schools abroad are from Singapore and Dubai.

The ICSE examination (Class 10) was conducted in 60 written subjects of which 20 were Indian languages, 13 were foreign languages and one classical language.

The ICSE exams started on February 21 and concluded on March 28. They were conducted on 18 days.

The ISC examination (Class 12) was conducted in 47 written subjects of which 12 were Indian languages, four foreign languages and two classical languages.

For ISC, the exams began on

February 12 and concluded on April 4. They were conducted on 28 days.

A total 2,695 schools presented candidates for the Class 10 exams with 82.48 per cent (2223) schools attaining a pass percentage of 100.

For class 12, a total of 1,366 schools presented candidates with 66.18 per cent (904) schools attaining a pass percentage of 100.

Over 2.43 lakh candidates had appeared in Class 10 examination while the number of students who appeared for class 12 examination stood at 99,901.

In Class 10, the western region recorded the highest pass percentage (99.91) followed by the southern region (99.88). Southern region has the highest percentage of girls (49.52) who had appeared in the Class 10 examination.

In Class 12, the Southern region recorded the highest pass percentage (99.53) followed by the western region having a pass percentage of 99.32. The Western region has the highest percentage of girls (50.55), who had appeared in the examination.

SC to hear in July Karnataka's plea for financial assistance for drought management

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday said it will hear in July a plea filed by the Karnataka government seeking a direction to the Centre to release financial assistance from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) to the state for drought management.

The Centre had on April 29 told the apex court that around Rs 3,400 crore has been released to the Karnataka government for drought management in the state. The matter came up for hearing on Monday before a bench of justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Karnataka government, said the state will file an affidavit in the matter.

The bench posted the matter for hearing in July.

During the hearing last week, Sibal had told the bench that Rs 3,450 crore has been released but the state's request was for assistance of Rs 18,000 crore. The petition has sought to declare that the Centre's action in not

releasing the financial assistance for drought management according to the NDRF is "ex-facie violative" of the fundamental rights of the people of the state guaranteed under articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution.

It said the state is reeling under "severe drought", more than 48 lakh hectares with the estimated loss (cost of cultivation) of Rs 35,162 crore," the plea, filed through advocate D L Chidananda, said.

It said the assistance sought from the Centre under the NDRF is Rs 18,171.44 crore.

It said the state is constrained to move the apex court against the "arbitrary actions" of the Centre in denying the financial assistance for drought management to Karnataka under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and the manual for drought management updated in 2020.

"Further, the impugned action of the Central Government is violative of statutory scheme of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the manual for

drought management and the guidelines on constitution and administration of the State Disaster Response Fund and National Disaster Response Fund," the plea said. It said under the manual for drought management, the Centre is required to take a final decision on the assistance to the state from the NDRF within a month of the receipt of the inter-ministerial central team (IMCT).

"Despite the IMCT report, which visited various drought affected districts from October 4 to 9, 2023 and made a comprehensive assessment of drought situation in the state and consideration of the said report by the sub-committee of the National Executive Committee constituted under section 9 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, Centre has not taken a final decision on the assistance to the state from the NDRF even after a lapse of almost six months from the date of the said report," the plea said.



Money laundering case: HC grants interim medical bail to Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal

STATE TIMES NEWS
MUMBAI: The Bombay High Court on Monday granted interim bail for two months on medical grounds to Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal, who has been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case.

A single bench of Justice N J Jamadar said Goyal shall pay a surety of Rs 1 lakh and not leave Mumbai without prior permission from the trial court.

"The applicant (Goyal) shall be released on interim bail for a period of two months. He shall abide by all conditions imposed," the bench said.



The high court also directed Goyal to surrender his passport.

Goyal (75) had sought the interim bail on medical

and humanitarian grounds as both he and his wife Anita Goyal are suffering from cancer.

A special court in

February refused bail to Goyal but permitted him to be admitted in a private hospital of his choice and seek medical treatment.

Goyal then moved the HC, seeking bail on merits and to be released on interim bail on medical grounds.

Goyal's counsel Harish Salve had urged the court to consider the case on humanitarian grounds.

However, ED's counsel Hiten Venegaonkar opposed the bail and said the agency did not have any problem if Goyal's hospitalisation was extended.

Venegaonkar had submitted that the court may extend Goyal's hospitalisa-

tion for a period of four weeks and then call for a fresh medical report to assess his situation.

But Salve said that apart from deteriorating physical health, Goyal's mental health was also not good.

Goyal was arrested by the ED in September 2023 on allegations that he had laundered money and siphoned off loans to the tune of Rs 538.62 crore given to Jet Airways by the Canara Bank.

His wife was arrested in November 2023 when the ED submitted its chargesheet in the case.

She was granted bail by the special court the same day considering her age and medical condition.

Reports of NEET-UG question paper leak baseless, every single paper has been accounted for: NTA

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The reports claiming question paper leak in the medical entrance exam NEET-UG are "completely baseless and without any ground", the National Testing Agency (NTA) clarified on Monday.

Stressing that every question paper has been "accounted for", the NTA said that purported images of the question paper circulating on social media have no relation with the actual paper.

"It has been ascertained from NTA's security protocols and Standard Operating Procedures that the social media posts pointing towards any

paper leak are completely baseless and without any ground.

"To put rumours to rest, it is also stated that every single question paper has been accounted for," said Sadhana Parashar, Senior Director, NTA.

Parashar said that no external person or agency can access the centres once the examination starts.

She said that after the gates of the examination centres are closed, no one from outside is permitted access inside the halls, which are under CCTV surveillance.

"All other photographs of question papers circulating in social media have no relation to the actual

examination question paper which has been administered," she added.

The entrance exam was conducted on Sunday at 4,750 centres in 571 cities including 14 cities abroad.

The NTA had on Sunday claimed that the distribution of wrong question papers at an exam centre in Rajasthan led to some candidates walking out with the papers. The agency had denied any leak of the question paper.

"The integrity of the examination process was not compromised. The exam was later re-conducted for the 120 affected candidates at the centre," Parashar had said on Sunday.