

India to lease bandwidth from Bangladesh to reduce BSNL's dependence on Tata Communications

By [Kalyan Parbat](#), ET Bureau | 13 Aug, 2013, 04:53AM IST

[Post a Comment](#)

KOLKATA: India will for the first time turn to Bangladesh for meeting its global telecom connectivity requirements. It plans to lease nearly 100 gigabytes (GBs) of international bandwidth from two state-owned suppliers in the neighbouring country to route a chunk of India's overseas call and data traffic through a new gateway in Agartala, said a top official in state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL).

The move is aimed at reducing BSNL's dependence on [Tata Communications Ltd](#)'s Chennai landing station for routing international voice and data traffic emanating from India's eastern, northeastern and southern states. However, this expenditure of valuable foreign exchange could have been avoided had a planned cable landing station been built in time, say experts.

[BSNL](#) has been mandated by the telecom department to ink multi-year international internet bandwidth leasing pacts with Bangladesh Telecommunications Co Ltd (BTCL) and Bangladesh Submarine Cable Co Ltd (BSCCL) to establish optical fibre cable (OFC) connectivity between India and Bangladesh, says a telecom department note seen by ET.

Both [BTCL](#) and [BSCCL](#), state-owned telecom companies in Bangladesh, didn't respond to emailed queries.

Such bilateral OFC links will connect the Agartala international gateway with Dhaka and the Cox's Bazaar cable landing station in Bangladesh for accessing the global bandwidth.

The strategic bilateral telecom partnership was discussed by top telecom policy makers from India and Bangladesh at an internal meeting in Dhaka on July 30. Foreign ministry representatives of both countries also participated in the meeting.

"Though commercials are yet to be formalised, BSNL may have to shell out roughly \$10 million (Rs 61 crore) annually to Bangladesh for leasing international internet bandwidth over a 10-to-20 year span," said a top company official who was present in the meeting.

Bangladesh also proposes to leverage its proposed OFC links with India to address the international connectivity needs of landlocked Saarc countries like Nepal and Bhutan, but the [Indian government](#) is yet to take a firm view on this, said another official present in the meeting.

Bangladesh is a co-owner of the South East Asia-Middle East-West Europe 4 (SEA-ME-WE 4) submarine cable system that runs from Singapore to France and connects Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, UAE, Tunisia and Algeria. It is the primary Internet backbone between South East Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East and Europe.

But the bilateral partnership, if approved by the two governments, could stir a hornet's nest since telecom experts believe India will be squandering away precious foreign exchange over the next 10-to-20 years to Bangladesh to route its own international long distance (ILD) traffic - that too at a time forex reserves are critical when the rupee has been sharply hit against the US dollar.

B K Syngal, ex-chairman & managing director of ILD operator, Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (now Tata Communications) described the proposed move "as a colossal waste of India's forex resources, which could have been avoided had the proposed cable landing station in Haldia announced nearly nine years ago seen the light of the day".



The move is aimed at reducing BSNL's dependence on Tata Communications Ltd's Chennai landing station for routing international voice and data traffic.

Editor's Pick

- [India-Pak rivalry: Afghan angle involved in border shelling and tensions](#)
- [Pak parliament passes anti-India resolution](#)
- [PM shouldn't be keen on talking to Sharif: Advani](#)
- [India, US, Afghanistan trilateral dialogue next month](#)
- [No final decision by UK on 3000 pound visa bond for Indians](#)

Syngal also claimed that "had the ill-fated Jal Mala fibre -optic project, skirting the Indian coastline from Gujarat to West Bengal , transpired, India would perhaps not have had to depend on Bangladesh for its international connectivity needs".

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Markets](#) | [Personal Finance](#) | [Mutual Funds](#) | [Infotech](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Features](#) | [Videos](#) | [My Portfolio](#) | [Budget 2013](#)

[Live Market](#)

[News](#)

[Portfolio](#)

[Mobile](#)

[Live TV](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Commodities](#)

[Speed](#)

[QnA](#)

[Blogs](#)

[Alerts](#)

Other Times Group news sites

[Times of India](#) | [Mumbai Mirror](#)
[Times Now](#) | [Indiatimes](#)
|

Living and entertainment

[Timescity](#) | [iDiva](#) | [Bollywood](#)
[Zoom](#) | [Healthmeup](#) | [Luxpresso](#)
[Technology](#) | [Guylife](#) | [Online](#)
[Songs](#)

Networking

[itimes](#) | [Dating & Chat](#) | [Email](#)
[MensXP.com](#)

Hot on the Web

[Breast Feeding](#) | [Online Shopping](#)
[Movie Review Videos](#) | [Miss India](#)
[Used Cars in Chandigarh](#) | [Bike](#)
[Price India](#)

Services

[Book print ads](#) | [Online shopping](#) | [Free SMS](#) | [Website](#)
[design](#) | [CRM](#) | [Tenders](#)
[Matrimonial](#) | [Ringtones](#) | [Astrology](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Property](#) | [Buy car](#) | [Bikes in](#)
[India](#)
[Used Cars](#) | [Online Deals](#) | [Restaurants in Delhi](#) | [Movie Show Timings in](#)
[Mumbai](#)
[Remit to India](#) | [Buy Mobiles](#) | [Listen Songs](#)

[About us](#) / [Advertise with us](#) / [Terms of Use and Grievance Redressal Policy](#) / [Privacy Policy](#) / [Feedback](#) / [Sitemap](#) / [Code of Ethics](#)

Copyright © 2013 Times Internet Limited. All rights reserved.