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Foreign equipment supplier like ZTE violating BSNL tender norms: Telecom equipment manufacturers association

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NEW DELHI: [Telecom equipment manufacturers association](#) TEMA has written to the Telecom Secretary alleging that foreign equipment suppliers, like Chinese firm ZTE, are violating terms of recently finalised tender of state-run [BSNL](#) for network expansion.

Telecom Equipment Manufacturer's Association (TEMA) alleged that [ZTE](#) and others are circumventing clause of tender which mandates equipment supplier to install products which have been already approved by BSNL.

"One of the clause of the tender relating to bidders eligibility and qualification states that 'if any type product exists, the same shall be offered'. This clause put in by BSNL with the right intent is circumvented by the foreign bidders by ZTE etc.," TEMA said in the letter.

BSNL recently awarded major portion of its 14.37 million lines expansion tender to ZTE and part of it to Alcatel Lucent. This tender is one of the biggest tenders floated by the state-run telecom firm.

ZTE quoted lowest price for equipment and other vendors were unable to match the price even after BSNL gave them second opportunity for supplying equipment at price quoted by the Chinese vendor.

While BSNL Chairman and Managing Director R K Upadhyay said "All tender norms will be strictly followed", ZTE refused to comment.

TEMA has further alleged the foreign vendors are offering imported products in place of those products which are available indigenously and already approved by BSNL.

The industry body has further said these vendors are taking quotation from domestic vendors and using it to bring down prices of their foreign sub-vendors in the tender.

"We feel that this is not only a gross violation of such an important tender condition, but also an injustice to the indigenous manufacturers and also against national interest," TEMA letter states.

The Union Cabinet has already approved preference for domestically manufactured electronic products, in procurement of those electronic products which have security implications for the country and in the government procurement.

Telecom sector is considered to be sensitive sector and an amendment was made in May last in the licence condition of telecom companies where security clause was made more stringent.

Osian Chlorophyll Chennai

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