

Major Government Projects Executed By BSNL

BSNL has been entrusted with implementation of numerous strategic projects by the Government of India. More than Rs. 1, 00,000 Crores. These figures are indicative and intended to demonstrate the scale of national projects executed through BSNL over the past two decades.

Indicative Value of Strategic Government Projects and National Assets Created by BSNL (2000–2026)

Sr	Project	Strategic Objective	Project Value in Approx.
1.	BharatNet Programme	Rural Broadband Connectivity	40,000 Crs
2.	Various USOF funded Telecom Projects	Rural and Remote Connectivity	16000 Crs
3.	Defence Network Projects	National Security Communications	10,000 Crs
4.	North East Telecom Development Plan	Strategic Regional Connectivity	8,000 Crs
5.	4G Saturation Projects in Remote Areas	Digital Inclusion	8,000 Crs
6.	Uncovered Village Connectivity Projects	Universal Telecom Access	6,000 Crs
7.	Border Area Telecom Projects	National Security & Border Connectivity	5,000 Crs
8.	Disaster Restoration & Emergency Communication Systems	Disaster Management Support	Continuous National Obligation

These projects are primarily developmental and strategic in nature and cannot be evaluated through commercial returns alone.

A. 4G Indigenous Mobile Network : BSNL is spearheading the world's largest deployment of an indigenously developed 4G mobile network using a complete Indian Technology stack developed by Indian public and private sector organizations. The project supports the Government's "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative, strengthens India's telecom security, reduces dependence on foreign vendors, and lays the foundation for indigenous 5G deployment. BSNL has undertaken this strategic national mission despite significant operational and financial challenges. The contribution of BSNL is publically appreciated by Honorable Prime Minister of India.

B. Network for Defence Services: BSNL has implemented and continues to maintain

highly secure telecom infrastructure for the Defense Services by laying extensive optical fibre networks across the country. The project facilitates migration of Defense communication networks to dedicated and secure systems, enhancing national security and ensuring reliable communication for the Armed Forces. Such projects are executed primarily in national interest rather than commercial consideration.

- C. Telecom connectivity in uncovered villages:** BSNL has played the lead role in extending telecom connectivity to remote, rural, border, Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-affected, hilly and island areas, where private telecom operators generally do not invest due to poor commercial viability. Through various Universal Service Obligation (USOF/DBN-funded) projects, BSNL has connected thousands of previously uncovered villages, enabling digital inclusion, education, healthcare, financial services and socio-economic development.
- D. Disaster recovery and emergency communication networks:** BSNL serves as the country's most dependable telecom operator during natural disasters and national emergencies. It restores communication services on priority during floods, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides and other calamities, often under extremely difficult conditions. BSNL also provides critical emergency communication support to Central and State Governments, disaster management authorities, defense forces and other essential agencies, ensuring continuity of governance and public safety.
- E. Digital India initiatives and e Governance support systems:** BSNL is a major implementation partner for several flagship Digital India initiatives by providing secure telecom and IT infrastructure for Central and State Governments. It supports numerous e-Governance platforms through data centers, cloud services, BharatNet connectivity, MPLS/VPN networks, National Knowledge Network connectivity, NIC networks, video conferencing, and secure communication services for Government departments. BSNL's nationwide presence and trusted public sector status make it a preferred partner for critical digital infrastructure supporting governance, citizen services and national development.
- F. North East Telecom Development Programme:** BSNL has implemented large scale telecom infrastructure projects across the North Eastern States under difficult geographical and climatic conditions viz. Strategic connectivity, Border area development, Enhanced public services, Regional economic growth.
- G. Border Area Telecom Projects:** BSNL has created telecom infrastructure in strategically sensitive border regions where commercial viability is often limited and these projects mainly support National security, Emergency communications, Border population welfare and Strategic integration of remote regions.
- H. Defence Communication Infrastructure:** BSNL has played a vital role in establishing and maintaining communication networks supporting Defence services and strategic Government communications. The value of these networks lies primarily in their contribution to national security and operational readiness rather than in commercial returns.
- I. Island Connectivity Projects:** BSNL has been instrumental in extending telecom services to remote island territories including Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep and these projects have enhanced National integration, Security

preparedness, Tourism development, Emergency communications etc.

J. BharatNet Project for rural broadband connectivity: BSNL has been one of the principal agencies for implementing BharatNet, the world's largest rural broadband initiative which include Broadband connectivity to Gram Panchayats, Support for digital governance, Telemedicine and online education, Rural entrepreneurship and digital commerce, Financial inclusion and digital banking. It may be please noted that the economic and social impact of BharatNet extends far beyond the revenues directly earned from the project. The contribution of BSNL needs to be assessed not merely on commercial profitability but on the basis of its strategic, social, developmental and sovereign responsibilities discharged on behalf of the Government of India.

K. Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP):

- 1. CTDP for North East Regions (NER):** The Government approved a proposal to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for the North Eastern Region. The project aims at providing mobile coverage to the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
 - 2. CTDP for Islands:** Comprehensive Telecom Development Project (CTDP) for islands aims to provide connectivity to Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep via Submarine Optical Fiber Cable and Bandwidth Augmentation to the Island groups. Telecom Commission, in its meeting held on 07.11.2014, approved in principle an integrated and Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep in accordance with TRAI recommendations dated 22.07.2014 for improving Telecom Services in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. The plan consists of the following schemes:
 - 3. Submarine OFC Connectivity to Andaman and Nicobar Islands:** The project of connecting Chennai with Port Blair and other islands of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, viz., Swaraj Deep (Havelock), Long Island, Rangat, Little Andaman (Hutbay), Kamorta, Car Nicobar & Great Nicobar (Campbell Bay) through 2313 km long Submarine Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) was approved on 21.09.2016. The project was commissioned during August 2020 and September 2020.
- L. Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Connectivity Projects:** Today, the Government has declared that extremist movement has been closed. In this work, BSNL has contributed by providing Telecom network in these areas without looking any profit or loss.
- a. Phase I:** The project for provisioning of mobile services (2G based) in 2199 locations in left wing extremism (LWE) affected areas was approved on 20.08.2014. The work was awarded to M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) on a nomination basis. Under the agreement (30.09.2014), Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund shouldered the capital expenditure for 1836 sites and operational cost for 2199 sites for five years (1836 new towers and 363 existing towers which are already installed by BSNL in these areas. Subsequently, Ministry of Communications (MOC) and IT in June 2016 approved the provisioning of mobile services for additional 156 sites under the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) agreement.

- b. Phase II:** The proposal of installing 4072 mobile towers with 2G and 4G technology at locations identified by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in left wing extremism (LWE) affected areas was approved on 23.05.2018 with subsidy support of Rs 7330 crore (excluding taxes) from Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund. The roll out period was 18 months from the date of signing of the contract with implementing agencies. A tender was floated for revised 2217 tower locations identified by Ministry of Home Affairs at an estimated cost of Rs 3214.65 crore on 04.11.2019. The tender for 4G based mobile services in LWE II areas was floated in 2019 and 2021 far back when BSNL was struggling with 3G only and neither BSNL was allowed to procure 4G like RJIL and Airtel nor was it allowed to upgrade its BTS to 4G although they were capable enough.

With LWE project BSNL has Established telecom infrastructure in LWE affected districts under Government sponsored programmes which has Strengthened internal security operations, Improved administration and governance, Enabled banking and digital services, Integrated remote populations into the national mainstream.

M. Completed USOF Project RDEL: One Time Subsidy Support Provided Under Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund In Respect Of About 90.5 Lakh Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) Installed Prior To 1.4.2002. The Support From USOF Has Been Given For The Period 1.4.2002 To 31.1.2004 (Twenty Two Months) Towards The Difference Between The TRAI Prescribed Rental And Rental Charged By The USP From The RDEL Subscribers. In Pursuance Of TRAI Recommendations Dated 27th March, 2008 Support Is Being Extended To BSNL For Rural Wire Lines Installed Prior To 01.04.2002 For A Period Of Three Years Commencing 18th July, 2008. The Quantum Of Support Shall Be Rs. 2000 Crores Per Annum.

N. Hiring of International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity: Hiring of 10 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala from Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL), Bangladesh, via cox bazar. To make available high quality and high speed internet access to the states of the northeastern region of the country, universal service obligation (USO) fund signed an agreement with BSNL on 18.08.2021 for the hiring of international bandwidth for internet connectivity to Agartala from Bangladesh submarine cable company limited (BSCCL), Bangladesh via Cox Bazar or Kuakata. The first 10 gbps link was commissioned on 26.11.2021 and the second 10 gbps link was commissioned on 21.04.2022. As per the agreement, USO fund shall provide financial support of Rs 17.15 Crore to BSNL for over three years for hiring the aforesaid international bandwidth.

O. Augmentation of Bandwidth in Andaman And Nicobar Islands: The Work Of Augmentation Of Satellite Bandwidth From 2Gbps To 4Gbps In Andaman And Nicobar Islands Was Awarded To BSNL On A Nomination Basis. The CAPEX of Rs 36.39 Crores (Plus Applicable Taxes) Is Being Funded by Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund, While OPEX (Satellite Transponder Charges) is being funded by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)/Union Territory (UT) Administration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Many of these benefits are public goods that cannot be adequately measured through conventional accounting metrics. The executives of BSNL have implemented and

maintained these nationally important projects and networks under challenging operational and financial conditions for more than two decades.

Need for an Alternative Evaluation of Profit loss of BSNL: Evaluation of BSNL should therefore include

1. Strategic contribution to national security.
2. Value of Government projects executed.
3. Social benefits delivered.
4. Rural and remote connectivity achievements.
5. Infrastructure assets created and maintained.
6. Support to Digital India and governance.
7. Contribution to regional and inclusive development.

BSNL has served as the Government of India's principal telecom implementation agency for strategic, developmental, and socially important projects since 2000. The organization has created substantial national assets, enabled Digital India, strengthened national security, connected remote regions, and delivered critical public services.

Accordingly, consideration of implementation of 3rd Pay Revision for BSNL executives should take into account:

- a. The national importance of BSNL's functions.
- b. The scale of Government projects executed.
- c. The strategic infrastructure created and maintained.
- d. The public value generated for the nation.
- e. The long standing stagnation of executive pay scales despite enhanced responsibilities.

The executives of BSNL have been responsible for planning, executing, operating, and maintaining these nationally important projects and infrastructure assets under challenging conditions across the country. The scale of responsibilities discharged by BSNL executives is comparable to and often exceeds, those in many Central Public Sector Enterprises that have already received revised and upgraded pay structures.

Therefore, BSNL's contribution should be assessed in terms of national value creation, strategic importance, and public service delivery rather than solely through annual profit and loss accounts. Any policy decision concerning BSNL, including executive pay scale up gradation, should appropriately recognize these unique contributions and responsibilities.

The scope, complexity, and strategic significance of the responsibilities discharged by BSNL executives are comparable to and in many cases exceed, those of executives in similarly placed Central Public Sector Enterprises.

As such, a review assessment would provide a more realistic measure of contribution by BSNL and its executives to the nation than a narrow focus on annual profitability.
