

Indian cell phone cos send SOS to govt amid tariff warfare

AFP, New Delhi
Indian mobile communications operators sent out an SOS to the government Tuesday amid a tariff cut war sparked by the launch of cheap limited services by the country's largest private company.

The launch by Reliance Industries wireless in local loop (WLL) service recently led to a drastic cut in long-distance cellular call rates as other mobile companies tried to see off the new competitor.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) - without directly naming Reliance - charged Tuesday that the telecom watchdog has heaped favors on the company, which has business interests spanning petrochemicals

to textiles. The low-cost WLL technology offers subscribers limited communications within cities and towns but is far cheaper compared with mobile services offered by other cellular phone firms.

The COAI argued that domestic cellular service providers are unable to match Reliance by offering free incoming calls because of charges they are obliged to pay to fixed-line telephone service providers. "And if we are forced to compete with promotional rates which may be offered by a new entrant then we will be subsidising consumers from our own pocket," Rajiv Bhatia, chief of the Indian arm of US telecoms giant AT and T told a COAI-led news conference.

COAI accused the government of offering sweeping concessions to WLL providers, such as allowing them to set their own tariff structures.

"We have been raising the issue of a level playing field but the issue has been largely ignored by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India," added COAI vice president Dilip Modi.

The association said WLL providers were maneuvering for a larger slice of India's mobile market, which currently has about 10 million subscribers.

lipsticks, goes ahead with WLL services.

Earlier this month the cellular operators decided to slash long-distance tariffs to a flat rate of 2.99 rupees (six US cents) a minute.

Previously, a three-tiered tariff structure was in place in which the rate increased according to distance to a maximum nine rupees a minute.

The association Tuesday warned the favors shown to the WLL operators could ring the death knell for the cellular operators who have spent 250 billion rupees (5.2 billion dollars) to build their networks.

Observers say the price cuts will weigh heavily on the established operators who have already totted up losses of 80 billion rupees.

Karmo Foam holds dealers' conference

The annual dealers' conference-2003 of Karmo Foam and Adhesive Industries was held at a city hotel on Saturday, says a press release.

Dealers from all districts were present at the conference.

Crests were presented to the managing director of Social Investment Bank and vice-president of Dutch Bangla Bank, who were chief guest and special guests respectively on the occasion.

ACI becomes CityCell Digital corporate client

ACI has become a corporate client of CityCell digital, says a press release.

An agreement to this effect was signed between the two organisations at the corporate head office of ACI Ltd at Tejgaon in the city recently.

Farhad Alam-AVP (Corporate Sales), Jamal Raj-Sr Executive, PBTL, and Hassan Tareque Chowdhury, personnel manager, and M Rejaul Karim, administrative officer, ACI, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective companies.



PHOTO: BSRS

Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS) organised a workshop on 'Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2002' at its head office in the city recently. Md Rabiul Islam, managing director of BSRS, inaugurated the workshop while Harun-ur-Rashid, general manager of Bangladesh Bank, was the main speaker.



PHOTO: PBTL

Farhad Alam, AVP (Corporate Sales) of Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited (PBTL), and Hassan Tareque Chowdhury, personnel manager of ACI, exchange documents after signing an agreement in the city recently. Jamal Raj, senior executive, Faria Karim, executive of PBTL, and Rejaul Karim of ACI, were, among others, present at the signing ceremony.

Indian women trade team meets CCCI chief

BSS, Chittagong

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) President Amir Humayun Mahmud Chowdhury Tuesday called upon the Indian business leaders and entrepreneurs to play their due role in reducing the yawning trade gap between Bangladesh and India.

The CCCI president made the call when a visiting 7-member delegation of the ladies organisation of the Indian Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) headed by its president Surekha Kothari met him at the CCCI office here to discuss trade-related issues.

New brand Indian Motorcycle in Bangladesh

BSS, Dhaka

Runner Automobiles Limited, a local company, started marketing of a new brand Indian motorcycle in the country from Saturday.

Managing Director of the Company Hafizur Rahman formally launched the marketing of the motorcycles at the company's factory at Savar here on Saturday.



PHOTO: LG GLOBAL BRAND

A reunion of dealers and distributors of LG Global Brand Pvt Ltd was held in city yesterday. (From left) Rofiqul Anwar, managing director of Global Brand Pvt Ltd, P Y Jong, general manager of LG South Asia, A S M Abdul Fattah, chairman of Global Brand Pvt Ltd, Peter Lee, manager of LG Monitor Asia Export Group, and Jashim Uddin Khondaker, director of Global Brand Pvt Ltd, are seen in the picture. A prize giving ceremony and a cultural show were also held on the occasion.



PHOTO: JAYSON

Md Salimullah, managing director of Jayson Pharmaceuticals Ltd and chairman of Jayson Group of Companies, presides over the annual marketing and sales conference-2003 of the company in the city recently.

CURRENCY

The following is yesterday's forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

| TT/OD | Selling | BC | Currency | Buying | | |
|---------|---------|-----|----------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | TT Clean | OD Sight Doc | OD Transfer |
| 59.2500 | 59.3000 | USD | 58.3500 | 58.1786 | 58.1090 | |
| 63.3975 | 63.4510 | EUR | 60.6257 | 60.4476 | 60.3752 | |
| 95.5643 | 95.6450 | GBP | 92.6831 | 92.4109 | 92.3003 | |
| 35.3130 | 35.3428 | AUD | 33.5804 | 33.4818 | 33.4417 | |
| 0.5043 | 0.5047 | JPY | 0.4873 | 0.4859 | 0.4853 | |
| 43.0408 | 43.0771 | CHF | 41.7950 | 41.6722 | 41.6224 | |
| 6.8300 | 6.8357 | SEK | 6.7084 | 6.6887 | 6.6807 | |
| 38.6724 | 38.7050 | CAD | 37.6185 | 37.5080 | 37.4631 | |
| 7.6048 | 7.6112 | HKD | 7.4742 | 7.4522 | 7.4433 | |
| 34.3200 | 34.3489 | SGD | 33.4979 | 33.3995 | 33.3595 | |
| 16.2632 | 16.2769 | AED | 15.7579 | 15.7116 | 15.6928 | |
| 15.9257 | 15.9391 | SAR | 15.4365 | 15.3912 | 15.3727 | |

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

| Indian rupee | Pak rupee | Lankan rupee | Thai baht | Nor kroner | NZ dollar | Malaysian ringgit |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 47.91 | 58.175 | 96.75 | 42.730 | 6.9429 | 0.5409 | 3.80 |

SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 14.01.2003.

| Berth No | Name of vessels | Cargo | L Port call | Local agent | Date of arrival | Leaving | Import disch |
|----------|-----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|---------|--------------|
| J/2 | Amanat Shah | Sugar (P) | Mumb | CLA | 4/01 | 20/1 | 787 |
| J/3 | Jon Jin | Sugar (P) | Kaki | SSTL | 25/12 | 17/1 | 898 |
| J/5 | Cameron | C Clink | Mala | NWSL | 4/1 | 16/1 | 1860 |
| J/6 | Myeik | GI(Maize) | Yang | MTA | 31/12 | 19/1 | 785 |
| J/7 | Gladiator-1 | GI | Sing | Prog | 8/1 | 15/1 | 2202 |
| J/11 | QC Lark | Cont | P Kel | QCSSL | 9/1 | 14/1 | 595/686 |
| J/12 | Mardios(EBB) | Cont | P Kel | RSL | 12/1 | 15/1 | 294/x |
| J/13 | Xpress Resolve | Cont | Col | Everbest | 11/1 | 15/1 | 67/x |
| CCT/2 | Banglar Moni | Cont | Sing | BSC | 12/1 | 16/1 | 133/487 |

Vessels due at outer anchorage

| Name of vessels | Date of arrival | L Port call | Local agent | Cargo | Loading port |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| Banga Barta (Cont) | 28/12 | 14/1 | Hald | Baridih | Cont |
| Banglar Maya | 14/1 | Yang | Royal | Yamaize | Log |
| Anangel Success | 13/1 | Sing | Rainbow | GI | W/Lt |
| Sunrise Ocean | 14/1 | Kant | Uniship | C Clink | - |
| Banga Bodor | 14/1 | Sing | Bdship | Cont | Sing |
| Kripa | 15/1 | P kel | PSSL | Cont | Sing |
| Balabac Sprait | 14/1 | Sing | H&SL | GI | - |
| An Guang Jiang | 15/1 | Yang | Bdship | GI | - |
| Amalfi | 15/1 | - | ANCL | C Clink | - |
| Banglar Urmi | 15/1 | Mumb | Mutual | Sugar(P) | - |
| Kota Cahaya | 16/1 | Sing | Pil(BD) | Cont | L/Sing |
| Xpress Manaslu | 15/1 | P Kel | RSL | Cont | L/Sing |
| Banga Borat | 15/1 | Sing | Bdship | Cont | L/Sing |
| Vast Bangalore | 15/1 | Chen | Prog | GI(St C) | - |
| Diana | 15/1 | Sing | RML | GI (St C) | - |
| AFT Section Maxita | 15/1 | Sing | OTBL | For Demoliton | - |
| Britoil-8 | 15/1 | Sing | OTBL | S Maxita | - |
| Tug Titan-4 | 15/1 | Indo | OTBL | 3H Barge | - |
| 3 Hopper Barge | 15/1 | Indo | OTBL | For Demolition | - |
| Oceanic Pescadores | 15/1 | - | Everett | GI(St C) | - |
| Banglar Bonik | 16/1 | Col | Baridih | Cont | Col |
| Orient Freedom | 16/1 | PKL | PSSL | Cont | L/Sing |
| Jaami | 17/1 | CBO | Everest | Cont | L/Col |
| Banga Birol | 18/1 | - | Bdship | Cont | L/Sing |
| Caravos Explorer | 18/1 | Ind | Ancient | Wheat(G) | - |
| Maersk Crest | 18/1 | Hald | JF | Vshi | - |
| QC Honour | 19/1 | P Kel | QCSSL | Cont | L/Sing |

Vessels at outer anchorage/Vessels ready

| | | | | |
|----------------|------------|-------|---------|------|
| INWA | GI (Y Ma) | Myan | MTA | 9/1 |
| Handy Jade | C Clink | Tarj | BSL | 12/1 |
| Achilleus | MS/HSD | Sing | MSTPL | 12/1 |
| Eagle Strength | Cont | Sing | NOL | 13/1 |
| Indurva Valley | Wheat(P) | Viza | Uniship | 13/1 |
| Belsurdian | HSD | Sikka | Sosl | 11/1 |
| Dai Hong Dan | WT(P)/Rice | Vish | Uniship | 13/1 |
| QC Teal | Cont | P Kel | QCSSL | 13/1 |

Vessels awaiting employment/instruction

| | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|------|-----|
| Banglar Doot | - | - | BSC | A/A |
| Ocean Pride | - | - | PSAL | R/A |

Movement of vessels for 15.01.2003

| | Outgoing | Incoming | Shifting |
|------|------------|----------|----------------|
| J/7 | Gladiator | CCT/3 | B Barta |
| J/12 | Mardio | J/13 | Kripa |
| J/13 | XP Resolve | J/7 | Diana |
| DOJ | B Shourab | J/4 | B Starit |
| | | DOJ | B Jyoti |
| | | R/5 | Belguardian |
| | | RM/6 | Achillies |
| | | GSJ | B Doot |
| | | J/8 | B Maya |
| | | J/9 | An Guang-Jiang |

The above are yesterday's shipping position and performance of vessels at Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

STOCK