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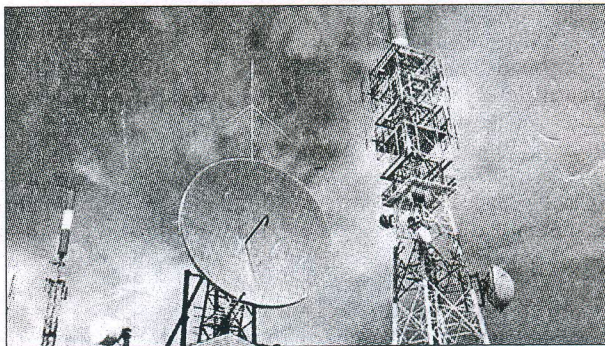
Vodafone-BSNL 2G intra-circle roaming pact to tackle call drops

New Delhi, Sept 11: Private operator Vodafone and state-owned BSNL on Sunday announced a 2G intra-circle roaming agreement (ICR) that is designed to benefit their customers and help reduce call drops.

"The agreement will enhance coverage for both Vodafone and BSNL customers. Next month, we will jointly provide seamless connectivity at the BRICS summit, which is to be held in Goa," BSNL CMD Anupam Shrivastava said.

The state-run firm, which regained its 5th position in terms of mobile subscribers in June, has nearly 1,14,000 sites across the country with a wide reach in rural areas.

Shrivastava added: "This partnership with Vodafone will help us make our network coverage better, especially in urban areas." The availability of additional towers is expected to help both the companies



address the coverage gap, thereby minimise chances of call drops.

Vodafone India has over 1,37,000 mobile sites across the country. The agreement will allow Vodafone to expand its 2G network further, especially in rural areas, and strengthens BSNL's network reach in urban localities.

"We made significant investments to expand, enhance and upgrade our network, making Vodafone SuperNet

our best network ever, world-class and future-fit. This partnership with BSNL will further strengthen the reach of our network, especially in the hinterland and surrounding rural areas," Vodafone India MD and CEO Sunil Sood said in a statement. Additionally, the agreement will support Vodafone's coverage plans in Tamil Nadu where it failed to win back 900 Mhz spectrum that it used for 2G services in the 2015 auction. *PTI*