



# S Tel launches GSM service in India

Announces plans to launch in six growth circles soon beginning with Himachal Pradesh

Offers consumers choice of two most sought after tariff plans

**New Delhi, 16th December, 2009** : S Tel Pvt Ltd, a joint venture between Siva Group (formerly Sterling Infotech Group) and BMIC Limited, a subsidiary of Bahrain Telecommunications Company (Batelco), today announced its plans to launch its GSM mobile services in India. The company will commence operations beginning with the Himachal Pradesh telecom circle where services are expected to be launched within this week. Telecom circles for which S Tel has licences are Odisha, Bihar & Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Assam and North East.

To cater to the needs of its target segment, the company announced tariffs that aspire to make the Indian consumer's life simple since they are easy to understand and transparent with no hidden surprises. The company launched two most preferred tariff plans which will charge the consumer @ 1 paisa/ second and 50 paisa/ minute respectively, both for STD and Local outgoing calls.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. P. Swaminathan, Director, S Tel and President, Siva Group, said, *"The goal of Siva Group is to make advanced technologies work for the benefit of the common man. We are committed to creating an efficient business model aimed at community welfare. Mobile telephony is without doubt the most explosive development in the Indian infrastructure history. With the number of mobile users expected to double by 2015, we are now entering another exciting phase in telecom growth. The six circles that S Tel is entering in, is where the next wave of growth lies. We are excited to be playing our part in the growth of this critical sector contributing to India's economic growth and competitiveness."*

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Shamik Das, Chief Executive Officer, S Tel said, "The six growth circles with a population of 226 million people provide us an opportunity to deliver a tailored, relevant value proposition. Launch of S Tel's services will enhance mobile penetration in these circles and rapidly bring benefits of technology and communication networks to people in these regions.

*"Our brand values of 'uncomplicating and demystifying' telecom to the Indian consumer will resonate in everything we do – be it our tariffs, VAS, customer care or distribution. Our value proposition is an honest brand that speaks the language of the local people, product and service offering that is simple & transparent, customer care that is sensitive and swift, a network that is congestion free, reliable, provides superior voice*



*clarity and a distribution network that allows product accessibility at consumer's doorstep. Through a combination of these and our best-in-class partnerships, we intend to positively impact the lives of people in these circle,"* he added.

Mr. V Srinivasan, CEO, Siva Group and Mr. Peter Kaliaropoulos, CEO, Batelco were overjoyed at the launch of S Tel's services. Mr. V Srinivasan, said, "With S Tel, we have added yet another feather to Siva Group. The venture will leverage Siva Group's telecom lineage as well as Batelco's diversified experience as an integrated telecommunications operator with operations in 7 countries. Excited about S Tel's launch in India, Mr. Peter Kaliaropoulos stated, "India being the world's fastest growing mobile market and a huge untapped population offers tremendous opportunities for growth."

Besides a robust traditional distribution network, S Tel will leverage Non Traditional channels (NTCs) to make its products available at the consumer's doorstep. NTCs will include business units such as insurance agencies, cable operators, courier services & Ground Panchayats that are characterised by high customer interaction touch points.

The company has a host of VAS services packed with localised content that is relevant to its audience. Besides Astrology, Bollywood and Cricket & Sports, the portfolio of VAS services have tips on devotion (Gita, Bible, Gurbaani, etc), career & education (interview & exam tips) as well as female care (beauty, cookery, fashion, etc tips). S Tel has entered into an agreement with Indiatimes.com to offer rich localised content to its consumers.

In line with its promise to be transparent, the company will seek double consent of the consumer before delivering & charging them for VAS. Taking simple & transparent charging to prepaid customers a step further, the company will leverage sophisticated applications to eliminate top customer care complaints – Negative Balance & Partial Billing. The company has a dedicated call centre to attend to VAS related customer queries.

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#### About S Tel Private Limited (S Tel)

S Tel Private Limited (S Tel), a new telecom operator in the Indian marketplace, is a joint venture between Siva Group (formerly Sterling Infotech Group) and Bahrain Telecommunications Company (Batelco).

Headquartered in NCR region of Delhi, S Tel has acquired Unified Access Services Licenses (UASL) and spectrum to operate in six Category C circles – Odisha, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, North East, Assam and



Jammu & Kashmir. These licenses will enable the company to provide Unified Mobile service, wireless broadband and innovative Value Added Service (VAS) covering a population of over 226 million across these circles.

Siva Group is a USD 3 billion group (about Rs.14, 000 crores), with diversified business interests in verticals such as wind energy, shipping & logistics, hospitality & realty, media, EPC, education and agro business. Bahrain headquartered Batelco is a diversified, integrated telecommunications operator with Mobile, fixed and wireless broadband, Datacom and fixed line services. It has operations in 7 markets across the Middle East, North Africa and Asia.

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