

BSNL continues to gain at private telcos' expense in Aug

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released the subscriber data for Aug'24. The key highlights are as follows:

- **Wireless subs: SIM consolidation continues post tariff hikes; BSNL only gainer in Aug'24**
 - Industry's **wireless subscribers declined by further 5.8m MoM** (after 0.9m decline in Jul'24), due to SIM/spend consolidation post the tariff hikes by three private telcos in Jul'24. Excluding IoT devices, wireless subs base declined by ~6.2m in Aug'24.
 - Similar to Jul'24, BSNL (+2.5m) was the only telco to gain wireless subs, while RJio/Bharti/VIL lost 4.0m/2.4m/1.9m wireless subs in Aug'24.
 - Bharti lost **4.2m wireless subs in Jul-Aug'24** (vs. 2.3m paying net adds in 1Q). Bharti's **2Q subs decline could be higher than our est. of 1.5m**. Similarly, VIL lost **3.3m wireless subs in Jul-Aug'24** (vs. 2.5m paying subs decline in 1Q) and **2Q subs decline could be higher than our est. of 4m**.
 - Mobile Number Portability (MNP) requests further inched up to 14.7m in Aug'24 (vs. ~12m in FYTD25). We expect industry subscriber base to stabilize over the next few months.
- **VLR subs: Peak active subscriber base inches up, indicating subscriber churn is limited to inactive users for RJio**
 - **VLR (or peak active) subscriber base inched up by 2.0m MoM (vs. 1.5m decline in Jul'24)**.
 - RJio added 2m VLR subs, indicating that the subscriber decline was limited to its inactive user base.
 - Similar to Jul'24, Bharti and VIL's VLR base declined again in Aug'24 by 1.7m and 2.6m, respectively, while BSNL gained further 4.1m VLR subs (after 2.9m additions in Jul'24).
- **Mobile Broadband (MBB) subs: MBB subs growth moderated in Aug'24 on RJio's clean-up of inactive base**
 - Industry's **MBB net adds moderated to 2.6m in Aug'24** (vs. ~5m monthly MBB net adds on average in FYTD25) as **BSNL's robust 6.6m MBB net adds** were offset by RJio's subs base decline.
 - Bharti's MBB net adds moderated to 0.4m in Aug (vs. ~2.6m monthly net add on average in FYTD25), while Vi's MBB subs declined by further 0.8m MoM in Aug'24.
 - Bharti added **modest ~2.9m MBB net adds in Jul-Aug'24**, posing a **downside risk to our estimate of 6m MBB net adds for 2Q**.
 - Vi **lost ~1.9m MBB subs in Jul-Aug'24** (vs. 0.1m net adds in 1Q), posing a **downside risk to our 2Q estimate of 0.2mn MBB net adds**.
 - Subscriber mix continues to improve, with ~78% of industry's wireless subs now opt for MBB data (up ~470bp YoY). Bharti's MBB subs proportion was up ~620bp YoY to ~72%.

■ **Fixed Broadband (FBB) subs: RJio drives robust industry growth in Aug'24**

- Industry FBB subs increased by 860k MoM to 42.84m (+18% YoY), driven largely by acceleration in RJio's FBB net adds (680k), likely on ramp-up in Jio AirFiber offering.
- Bharti added 130k subscribers MoM in Aug'24, taking the total base to 8.3m (+21% YoY). Bharti's 250k FBB net adds in Jul-Aug'24 (vs. 350k in 1Q) is tracking in line with our 2Q estimate of 400k FBB net adds.
- RJio and Bharti now account for ~50% market share in FBB. We expect the duo's market share to increase further, driven by the ramp-up in FWA offerings.

Exhibit 1: Subscriber trends and Sep'24 ask rate for Bharti

Bharti (m)	1QFY25	July-Aug'24	2QFY25E	Sep'24 ask rate
EoP wireless subs	389	384.9		
Net adds	3.3	-4.1		
Paying wireless subs	354.5		353	
Net adds	2.3	-4.2	-1.5	2.7
MBB subs	273.3	276.3		
Net adds	7.8	2.9		
Reported data subs	267.1		273.1	
Net adds	6.3	2.8	6	3.2
FBB subs	8	8.3		
Net adds	0.31	0.25		
Reported Homes subs	8		8.4	
Net adds	0.35	0.25	0.4	0.15

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 2: Subscriber trends and Sep'24 ask rate for VIL

VIL (m)	1QFY25	July-Aug'24	2QFY25E	Sep'24 ask rate
EoP wireless subs	217.3	214		
Net adds	-2.5	-3.3		
Paying wireless subs	210.1		206.1	
Net adds	-2.5	-3.3	-4	-0.7
MBB subs	127.8	125.9	128	
Net adds	0.1	-1.9	0.2	2.1

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 3: Visitor Location Registry (peak-active) subscriber base was up ~2m in Aug'24

VLR subscriber base (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	376	376	375	375	378	381	383	385	383	384	385	384	382
VIL	199	200	198	199	197	195	194	193	193	191	188	185	183
RJio	417	420	422	423	425	426	427	430	433	437	441	441	443
Top Three players	992	996	995	996	999	1,002	1,003	1,009	1,009	1,012	1,014	1,010	1,007
BSNL/MTNL	51	51	50	50	49	49	49	49	48	48	47	50	54
Total	1,043	1,047	1,045	1,046	1,048	1,051	1,052	1,058	1,058	1,060	1,061	1,060	1,062

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 4: RJio added 2m VLR subs indicating churn was limited to inactive subs; BSNL continued to gain at Bharti/VIL's expense

VLR net adds (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	-0.4	0.6	-1.2	-0.4	3.0	3.6	1.5	2.8	-2.1	0.9	0.7	-1.2	-1.7
VIL	-2.9	0.4	-1.4	0.1	-1.8	-1.7	-1.1	-0.6	-0.6	-1.7	-2.7	-3.0	-2.6
RJio	1.2	3.2	1.8	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.2	3.6	3.0	3.5	4.0	-0.2	2.0
Top Three players	-2.2	4.2	-0.8	0.9	2.4	3.0	1.5	5.8	0.3	2.7	1.9	-4.4	-2.2
BSNL/MTNL	-0.9	-0.7	-0.6	-0.4	-0.4	-0.2	-0.1	-0.2	-0.4	-0.6	-0.7	2.9	4.2
Total	-3.0	3.5	-1.4	0.5	1.9	2.8	1.4	5.7	-0.1	2.1	1.3	-1.5	1.9

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 5: RJio extended its lead further in VLR market share; BSNL market share up ~70bp in July-Aug 2024

VLR subscriber market share (%)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	36.0	35.9	35.9	35.8	36.0	36.3	36.4	36.4	36.2	36.3	36.3	36.2	36.0
VIL	19.1	19.1	19.0	19.0	18.8	18.6	18.4	18.3	18.2	18.0	17.7	17.5	17.2
RJio	40.0	40.1	40.4	40.5	40.5	40.5	40.6	40.7	41.0	41.2	41.6	41.6	41.7
Top Three players	95.1	95.2	95.2	95.3	95.3	95.3	95.4	95.4	95.4	95.5	95.6	95.3	94.9
BSNL/MTNL	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.7	5.1

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 6: RJio's VLR proportion improved to ~94% on likely clean-up of inactive subscriber base; Bharti's remain in 99% range

VLR proportion (%)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	99.8	99.6	99.2	98.6	98.9	99.6	99.6	99.9	99.2	99.1	98.9	99.1	99.2
VIL	87.3	87.8	88.0	88.5	88.2	88.0	87.9	87.9	87.9	87.5	86.6	85.8	85.3
RJio	93.6	93.6	93.3	92.9	92.3	91.7	91.3	91.6	91.7	92.1	92.5	92.6	93.9
BSNL	52.7	53.4	53.2	53.3	52.9	53.3	53.3	54.6	55.0	54.6	54.3	55.8	58.7
MTNL	35.8	32.3	26.8	26.4	26.0	26.4	25.9	25.7	23.2	22.4	22.0	23.3	26.0
Total	90.9	91.0	90.8	90.6	90.5	90.5	90.3	90.8	90.6	90.7	90.7	90.6	91.2

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 7: Wireless subs base declined further by ~6m in Aug (after ~1m decline in July) on SIM consolidation post tariff hikes

Wireless subscriber base (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	376	378	378	380	382	382	384	386	387	388	389	387	385
VIL	228	228	225	224	223	222	221	220	219	218	217	216	214
RJio	446	449	452	456	460	464	468	470	472	475	477	476	472
Top Three players	1,050	1,055	1,056	1,060	1,065	1,068	1,072	1,075	1,078	1,081	1,083	1,079	1,071
BSNL/MTNL	98	96	95	94	94	93	93	90	89	88	88	91	93
Total	1,148	1,150	1,151	1,154	1,158	1,161	1,165	1,165	1,167	1,169	1,171	1,170	1,164

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 8: Similar to July, BSNL was the only telco to gain overall subs in Aug as it didn't hike tariffs

Wireless net adds (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	1.2	1.3	0.4	1.7	1.9	0.8	1.5	1.8	0.8	1.3	1.3	-1.7	-2.4
VIL	0.0	-0.7	-2.0	-1.1	-1.4	-1.5	-1.0	-0.7	-0.7	-0.9	-0.9	-1.4	-1.9
RJio	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.4	4.0	4.2	3.6	2.1	2.7	2.2	1.9	-0.8	-4.0
Top Three players	4.4	4.0	1.5	4.1	4.5	3.4	4.1	3.2	2.7	2.5	2.3	-3.9	-8.3
BSNL/MTNL	-2.2	-2.3	-0.6	-0.9	-0.2	-1.2	-0.2	-2.4	-1.2	-0.5	-0.7	2.9	2.5
Total	2.2	1.7	0.8	3.2	4.3	2.2	3.9	0.8	1.5	2.0	1.6	-0.9	-5.8

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 9: BSNL gained 50bp in subscriber market share in July-Aug'24, while all three private telcos lost ~16-18bp market share

Wireless subscriber market share (%)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	32.8	32.8	32.9	32.9	33.0	33.0	33.0	33.1	33.1	33.2	33.2	33.1	33.1
VIL	19.9	19.8	19.6	19.4	19.3	19.1	18.9	18.9	18.8	18.7	18.6	18.5	18.4
RJio	38.8	39.1	39.3	39.5	39.7	40.0	40.1	40.3	40.5	40.6	40.7	40.7	40.5
Top Three players	91.5	91.7	91.7	91.9	91.9	92.0	92.1	92.3	92.4	92.4	92.5	92.3	92.0
BSNL/MTNL	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.1	8.1	8.0	7.9	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.7	8.0

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 10: Mobile Broadband (MBB) subscriber base grew by modest 2.2m (vs. ~5m average in FYTD25) on RJio's subs decline

MBB subscriber base (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	247	251	251	255	257	260	262	266	268	270	273	276	276
VIL	126	127	126	127	127	127	127	128	126	127	128	127	126
RJio	446	449	452	456	460	464	468	470	472	475	477	476	472
Top Three players	818	826	829	838	844	851	856	863	866	872	878	878	874
BSNL/MTNL	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	25	32
Total	840	848	850	858	866	872	877	884	887	893	899	904	906

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 11: BSNL gained further 6.6m MBB subs, while Bharti's MBB net adds moderated to 0.4m (vs. 2.5m on average in FYTD25)

MBB net adds (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	2.6	3.6	0.5	4.0	2.3	2.4	2.3	3.5	2.1	2.6	3.2	2.6	0.4
VIL	1.3	1.0	-0.8	1.0	0.7	-0.5	-0.2	1.1	-1.3	0.8	0.6	-1.1	-0.8
RJio	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.4	4.0	4.2	3.6	2.1	2.7	2.2	1.9	-0.8	-4.0
Top Three players	7.1	8.0	2.9	8.4	6.9	6.1	5.6	6.8	3.5	5.6	5.6	0.7	-4.4
BSNL/MTNL	1.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.5	0.4	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1	0.2	0.5	-0.5	4.6	6.6
Total	8.1	8.0	2.8	7.9	7.4	6.0	5.2	6.7	3.7	6.1	5.1	5.3	2.1

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 12: BSNL gained ~120bp in MBB subs market share in 2QTD FY25, while RJio/VIL lost ~100bp/35bp market share

MBB subscriber market share (%)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	29.4	29.6	29.5	29.7	29.7	29.8	29.9	30.0	30.2	30.2	30.4	30.5	30.5
VIL	15.0	14.9	14.8	14.8	14.7	14.5	14.4	14.5	14.2	14.2	14.2	14.0	13.9
RJio	53.1	53.0	53.2	53.1	53.1	53.2	53.3	53.2	53.2	53.1	53.0	52.6	52.1
Top Three players	97.5	97.5	97.5	97.6	97.5	97.6	97.6	97.7	97.7	97.6	97.7	97.2	96.5
BSNL/MTNL	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.8	3.5

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 13: Share of MBB subs in overall wireless subs improved further 60bp MoM in Aug'24 to ~78%, with Bharti at ~72%

MBB subs proportion (%)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	65.6	66.3	66.4	67.1	67.4	67.9	68.2	68.8	69.2	69.7	70.3	71.2	71.8
VIL	55.0	55.6	55.7	56.4	57.1	57.2	57.4	58.1	57.7	58.3	58.8	58.7	58.8
RJio	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total	73.2	73.7	73.9	74.4	74.8	75.1	75.3	75.8	76.1	76.5	76.8	77.3	77.9

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 14: MNP requests inched up further to 14.7m in Aug'24

Mobile Number Portability (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Monthly MNP requests	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.0	12.4	12.4	11.5	11.4	11.1	12.0	11.8	13.7	14.7
Cumulative MNP request	877.4	890.1	902.8	914.8	927.2	939.6	951.1	962.5	973.6	985.6	997.4	1011.1	1025.8
As % of wireless subscribers	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.-%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.3%

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 15: Fixed Broadband (FBB) subscriber base up by ~0.9m in Aug'24 to 42.8m (+18% YoY)

FBB subs (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	6.9	7.0	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	8.0	8.0	8.2	8.3
RJio	9.6	9.8	10.0	10.2	10.4	10.6	10.9	11.3	11.6	12.0	12.4	12.9	13.5
BSNL	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
ACT	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Others	14.1	14.2	14.3	14.4	14.5	14.6	14.7	14.8	14.9	14.9	14.9	14.5	14.5
Total	36.4	36.9	37.4	37.8	38.4	38.9	39.5	40.1	40.7	41.3	41.8	42.0	42.8

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 16: RJio added record ~0.7m FBB subscribers in Aug'24 likely driven by ramp-up in Jio AirFiber offerings

FBB net adds (m)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
Bharti	0.16	0.16	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.12	0.13
RJio	0.19	0.16	0.22	0.18	0.23	0.25	0.29	0.35	0.35	0.38	0.41	0.45	0.68
BSNL	0.03	-	0.04	0.05	0.03	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.04	0.01	-	0.01
ACT	0.01	0.01	0.01	-	0.02	-	0.01	0.01	-	0.01	-	-	0.01
Others	0.32	0.13	0.07	0.10	0.17	0.10	0.10	0.04	0.10	0.06	0.01	(0.4)	0.03
Total	0.71	0.46	0.48	0.44	0.56	0.52	0.59	0.60	0.65	0.60	0.52	0.15	0.86

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

Exhibit 17: RJio's market share inch up ~100bp MoM in Aug'24; Bharti and RJio now accounts for ~50% market share in FBB

FBB market share (%)	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24
BSNL+MTNL	10.3	10.2	10.1	10.0	10.1	10.0	10.0	10.1	10.1	10.2	10.1	10.0	10.0
Bharti	18.8	18.9	19.1	19.2	19.3	19.3	19.3	19.3	19.3	19.3	19.2	19.2	19.4
RJio	26.3	26.3	26.4	26.7	26.9	27.1	27.3	27.7	28.1	28.5	29.0	29.7	30.6

Source: TRAI, MOFSL

NOTES

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