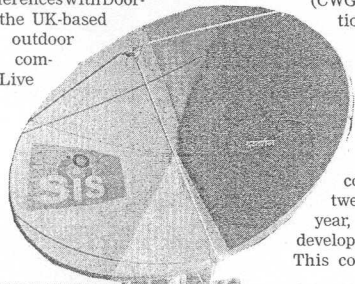


UK broadcast firm, Doordarshan iron out differences over Games coverage

■ SIS Live agrees to broadcast the Commonwealth Games ■ Doordarshan to pay more than the agreed price

Ashish Sinha

New Delhi, Jan 22: Having ironed out the differences with Doordarshan, the UK-based specialist outdoor broadcast company SIS Live



has confirmed that it will not pull out of the broadcast coverage of the upcoming Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2010 in high definition (HDTV) format.

In return, it is likely to receive extra money for covering the event for Doordarshan. The raise will be above the Rs 240-crore contract agreed between both parties last year, sources close to the developments said.

This comes after SIS Live

threatened to walk out of the CWG broadcast coverage deal with Doordarshan last month owing to a prolonged delay in signing the contract. In October 2009, SIS Live had announced bagging the CWG 2010 broadcast coverage deal from Doordarshan after a global tendering process.

"We are signing the contract with Doordarshan in next few days and will cover the Games for it," Alan Bright, commercial manager and project head of SIS Live for CWG 2010 told *FE* from Singapore.

Commonwealth Games 2010 would be held in New Delhi from October 3 to

October 14 and SIS Live will have to set up world-class telecast facilities at the venues of 17 sporting events.

SIS Live bagged the contract in October last year on the basis of a global tender, beating nine other broadcast firms. In the final round, only two firms—SIS Live and Nimbus Communications—had submitted the financial bids.

However, SIS Live could not sign the contract offered by Doordarshan owing to the differences over financial, technical and legal norms in the contract. Doordarshan, in turn, had blamed SIS Live for backing out of the mutually agreed terms.

However, any increase in the pay out to SIS Live by Doordarshan is likely to lead to legal hurdles later, experts say. "If it is established that a firm has received additional payments than what it had submitted in the tendering process, the entire tendering process can come under the legal scanner," says a senior executive in a legal firm that handles several media related contracts.

Meanwhile, Nimbus Communications is miffed with Doordarshan over the entire tendering process. "We have not taken the legal recourse yet...if the tender has not been signed even after the stipulated time frame then something is wrong somewhere. Technically, a fresh bid should have been called by Doordarshan as it failed to enter into contract with any firm. This is part of the tender document drafted by Doordarshan itself," a top executive of Nimbus told *FE* on conditions of anonymity.

However, SIS Live is confident of executing the work within the limited time. "We will hire around 250 Indians to assist us in the Commonwealth Games broadcast coverage and are in the process of putting things in place," Bright of SIS Live said.

Picture clarity

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