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R-ADAG outsources call centre operations

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The Reliance Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (R-ADAG) has awarded a 5-year outsourcing contract to a Delhi-based call centre and Caretel Infotech, a part of Dalmiya group, for about Rs 300 crore.

The contract, spread over five-year period, includes setting up of customer call centres for the group's telecom company, recently launched DTH, mutual funds and insurance services.

The move gains importance as R-ADAG operates a large captive BPO company, Reliance BPO, employing over 12,000 personnel across New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. Moreover, Reliance BPO - which mainly provides services to group company Reliance Communications (RCom) - is also in the process of setting up three centres in Kolkata, Hyderabad

and Chennai with a headcount of 1,500 per centre.

Caretel Infotech has already set up two call centres, a 500-seater in Hyderabad and a 700-seater in Kolkata. The company has already started services for R-ADAG from these centres and is looking at ramping up seats in the next couple of months, sources close to the development said.

For RCom, the telecom service provider of the group, Caretel Infotech would provide inbound call centre services for the company's CDMA services. It would also provide voice-based services for Reliance's DTH operations, BIG TV and the financial services - like mutual funds, insurance and consumer finance - offered by Reliance Capital.

The group is believed to have agreed to pay around Rs 2 per minute for every inbound call received by Caretel Infotech, which is a bit on the higher side. However, this could not be con-

firmed.

When contacted, a R-ADAG spokesperson declined to provide details, while Caretel Infotech on their part declined to comment.

According to industry analysts, R-ADAG might be looking at outsourcing as its subscriber additions might be becoming too difficult to manage. The company is adding 1.75 million customers a month and has a total of over 54 million users in the country.

However, the most plausible reason would be that the company is looking at cost arbitration that when the calls are moved to less expensive destinations like Hyderabad and Kolkata.

This is also a part of an emerging trend in the country with telecom service providers outsourcing their network and technology to global majors that will enable them to concentrate on expanding services.