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## BSNL to invest ₹400 cr in 3G, 4G networks in AP, Telangana

The two states to be fully covered by June next year

### OUR BUREAU

Hyderabad, April 11

BSNL will invest ₹400 crore this financial year in upgrading its mobile network and other equipment.

Besides establishing 4G tower network in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the BSNL will also expand 3G tower network in the two states.

### Timeframe

"The 4G network laying will be completed this year and commercial services will begin in January 2018. By June 2018, we will cover Andhra Pradesh and Telangana," BSNL officials have said.

The firm lags behind Airtel and Idea with a subscriber base of a little over 99 lakh. Airtel has about 2.5 crore connections, followed by Idea with 1.7 crore.

BSNL added 22.73 lakh gross prepaid connections in 2016-17, showing a growth of 36.4 per cent over the previous year additions of 16.66 lakh.

"We will increase the 3G tower footprint by 1,282. We already have 4,400 towers in the two States. We will be setting up 1,150 4G towers, which include 550 in Telangana and 600 in Andhra Pradesh," the officials said here on Tuesday.

### Revenue growth

Addressing a press conference to present the performance in 2016-17, L Anatharam, Chief General Manager (Telangana Telecom Circle of BSNL) said the combined AP Circle achieved a revenue of ₹2,526 crore in 2016-17, showing a growth of 2.53 per cent over the revenue of ₹2,463 crore in the previous year.

Of this, mobile business grew by 5 per cent from ₹1,405 crore in 2015-16 to ₹1,475 crore in the following year.

### Wi-Fi hotspots

He said the firm is planning to launch Wi-Fi services in public spaces such as hospitals, colleges, universities and shopping complexes to provide Internet services at 4G speeds. "The 3G subscribers will get higher data speeds in these hotspot zones and faster downloads," he said.