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BSNL plans to rope in technology partners for its 4G services rollout

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-run BSNL is planning to rope in technology partners for the rollout its 4G services on revenue sharing basis in 14 telecom circles of the country. The telecom PSU has soft launched 4G services in Chandigarh on revenue sharing basis.

"BSNL management committee has approved rollout of 4G services. We are in process of issuing expression of interest for rolling out 4G services on revenue sharing basis. It should be issued around mid of this month," BSNL Chairman and Managing Director Anupam Shrivastava told PTI.

"We will provide only bandwidth to technology service provider who will manage and operate 4G services," he said. The company has 20 MHz liberalised spectrum in 2,500 MHz band for rolling out 4G services.



We will provide only bandwidth to technology service provider who will manage and operate 4G services, says BSNL CMD Anupam Shrivastava

BSNL paid ₹8,313.80 crore for 2,500 MHz spectrum in all its service areas in 2010 but later returned airwaves in 6 of them which include Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kolkata.

BSNL has second largest mobile sites presence in the country. It expects to have 1.35 lakh base stations by the end of next financial year. The compa-

ny has adopted strategy of asset monetisation and low capital expenditure and hence decided to roll out 4G services on same model. The BSNL CMD said that the PSU had to spent its whole funds for buying spectrum, 3G and 4G, and nothing was left for investment in networks.

"On 25th day of 3G auction (in 2010), we saw prices going up beyond unimaginable levels. While other had option to choose circles and withdraw, BSNL was not given choice. We had to pay the final price in all 20 circles," Shrivastava said. He said that after 3G, auctions for wireless broadband spectrum was held. "Our whole fund went to spectrum buying and was not left with cash to invest in networks, Now, we have breathing space and decided on business strategy, and hence we are regaining glory," Shrivastava said.