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BSNL to strive for top slot in mobile telephony

The company started nationwide expanding of its network after gap of around 5 years



State-owned BSNL, country's 5th largest player in terms of mobile phone subscribers, today said it will strive to reach the number one spot in the market after next round of its network expansion.

"We are currently expanding our network by around 15 million lines which is called phase 7 of network expansion. In the next round of expansion, which will be phase 8, we will give real push to be number 1 in the industry," BSNL Chairman and Managing Director RK Upadhyay said on the sidelines of its Enterprise

Cloud Services launch with Dimension Data.

The company started nationwide expanding of its network after gap of around 5 years.

BSNL had 14.62% market share with around 9.71 crore mobile subscribers at end of April, as per GSM industry body COAI.

Upadhyay said that after the completion of phase 7 expansion, the company will strive for top position in four to five service area. BSNL occupied 2nd position in terms of subscriber numbers in Orissa, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala, and was 3rd in eight service areas as of April-end.

The loss making public sector unit has shown some sign of arresting the downslide last fiscal, after logging losses since 2009-10.

BSNL losses, as per unaudited results, stand at Rs 8,198 crore for 2012-13, compared Rs 8,851 crore posted in 2011-12. The figure does not include around Rs 2,700 crore which the company has to get from the government for supporting rural landline operations.

On the data centre business, Upadhyay said the company has made no investment in setting up data centres but has partnered with Japanese firm NTT owned Dimension Data for offering cloud computing based services.

"We have invested around Rs 200 crore for setting six data centres with BSNL and cloud services. The reach of BSNL is huge and we are leveraging on the asset that BSNL has," Dimension Data CEO Kiran Bhagwanani said.

Cloud computing services offer software to clients on use-basis without their having to buy it.

He said that around 15% capacity of these centres is occupied within a year and by the end of this fiscal, around 50% of the capacity will be put to use.

BSNL and Dimension Data signed agreement with around 12 organisations for cloud computing services which include Indian Railways IT arm CRIS, EXL Services, Federal Bank, Genpact India, Hindustan Times, India Today, KPIT Cummins, State Bank of India, Sapient Corporation and Agra's BR Ambedkar University.