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BSNL invests Rs 11,000 crore to improve services: Ravi Shankar Prasad

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NEW DELHI: State-run telecom company BSNL is investing an over Rs 11,000 crore to improve its all-round services including strengthening network, modernizing telephone exchanges and installing mobile towers in the naxal-dominated areas, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

"BSNL and MTNL are taking several steps to enhance revenues through investments to strengthen its network and focus on consumer care and service delivery to improve quality of service," telecom minister Ravi Shankar Prasad informed the Lok Sabha in a written reply.

Both companies have drastically lost their subscriber base mainly due to inadequate investment that led to network coverage issues, inability to compete with private sector telecom firms with regard to marketing and customer satisfaction, he said.

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As per details shared by the minister, BSNL is augmenting its mobile network by installing additional 14,421 2G mobile sites and 10,605 3G sites with an estimated investment of Rs 4.804 crore.

The state-run firm is modernising all telephone exchanges with an investment of about Rs 600 crore for improving landline services. It is also migrating old technology system in exchanges in an agreement with C-DoT at an estimated cost of Rs 350 crore.

The government has assigned work to BSNL to install 2,199 mobile towers in naxal-affected areas at an investment of Rs 3,567.58 crore and provide mobile connectivity to uncovered villages in Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam with an investment of Rs 1,975.58 crore.

On MTNL, Prasad said MTNL is also adding 1,080 3G mobile sites each in Delhi and Mumbai along with 800 2G sites in Delhi and 566 2G sites in Mumbai.

The minister also mentioned that MTNL is modernising its telephone exchange in same manner as BSNL. He, however, did not disclose the investment that MTNL is making in various projects.

"MTNL has been unable to invest in expansion and modernisation of network due to financial crisis. BSNL has been unable to invest in expansion of its network over the period 2009-13," Prasad added.



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