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## BSNL, Power Grid Set to Sign Pact on N-E Connectivity

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Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd will shortly sign a bandwidth-sharing agreement with Power Grid Corporation of India to boost telecom connectivity across the Northeast, says a telecom department note.

Power Grid, the state-run power transmission utility, operates an overhead optical-fibre network using its power-transmission infrastructure. Power Grid will provide 400 gigabit per second of bandwidth to state-run BSNL for building a network path to improve connectivity in places close to the Chinese and Bangladesh borders.



**Power Grid will provide 400 gigabit per second of bandwidth to BSNL for improving connectivity near borders**

The bandwidth sharing pact is a cost-optimisation move "aimed at preventing duplication of resources with central public sector enterprises," says the note, seen by ET.

Both Telecom Secretary MF Farooqui and Power Secretary Pradeep Sinha have agreed that an ideal way to create an alternate path for routing telecom traffic is by leveraging Power Grid's surplus

optic-fibre cable capacity in the region, the note says.

Financial terms of the deal are being finalised, a BSNL official said. A similar pact with Oil India Ltd is under consideration for reinforcing connectivity between the capitals of the northeastern states, the official said.

In a related development, the foreign ministry has asked BSNL to submit a revised proposal on inking a multi-year international Internet bandwidth leasing pact with Bangladesh Telecommunications Co. to establish optical-fibre cable connectivity between India and Bangladesh through a new gateway near Agartala, according to another telecom department note, also seen by ET.

The 15-km link will need to be established between the Akhaura border near Agartala and the nearest town in Bangladesh where the local company has a point of presence, it says. This link will be ideal for improving international connectivity in the Northeast, the BSNL official said.