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## Tata Teleservices and Quippo Telecom in partnership

Tata Teleservices Limited (TTSL) and Quippo Telecom Infrastructure Limited, promoted by the Kaporis of SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited, have announced the merger of their passive infrastructure businesses to create India's largest independent telecom infrastructure company. Under the terms of this strategic partnership, TTSL and Quippo Telecom will swap 51 percent and 49 percent stake, respectively, in the infrastructure business held by them. The management rights in Wireless-TT Info-Services Limited (WTTIL)—the tower arm of TTSL—shall now move over to an independent and professional management run by Quippo Telecom, to make it a truly independent tower operator without being managed by a telco. Quippo will make an upfront cash payment of approximately Rs. 2,400 crore, as also transfer its passive telecom tower portfolio of approximately 5,000 towers to WTTIL. The combined entity will, therefore, have a portfolio of over 18,000 towers—thereby making it the largest independently managed tower company in India, with an enterprise valuation of approximately Rs. 13,000 crore.

For its pan-India GSM network rollout, Tata Teleservices Limited (TTSL) recently tied up with Nokia Siemens Networks (NSN). Under the terms of the partnership, NSN has been identified as one of the main vendors that will manage the operations of the networks it deploys over a period of five years. Managed services form just one portion of the vast scope of the deal—the complete services outlay includes local supplies, network planning, project management, network roll-out, and systems integration activities across the national network. NSN is said to have been selected on the basis of its mobile soft-switching solution, its home location register, its advanced subscriber data management platform and the energy-efficient Flexi Base Station. Underwriting its faith in Nokia Siemens Networks, TTSL will also deploy the company's packet core solution, including the Flexi Intelligent Services Node for all 23 circles in the country, enabling it to offer mobile Internet access across subscriber segments.

## BSNL to put Rs. 1,600 crore in broadband infrastructure

BSNL Chairman and Managing Director Kuldeep Goyal said that the telecom operator had received order from the government to roll out eight million broadband connections for which BSNL would invest Rs. 1,600 crore to create the infrastructure facilities. He was speaking on the sidelines of launching Nova Net PC, a new range of personal computer which the company revealed in association with Chennai-based Novatium Solution. He added BSNL is planning to add 9 million connections by end of 2009 and is planning 8 million customers every year. Goyal said that the broadband penetration, currently, in the country is less than 1 percent, of which BSNL has around 60 percent market share with 3.52 million connection base. Currently, BSNL has around 200,000 broadband customer base in rural areas and is planning to increase it to 3 million by the end of 2009. BSNL is in talks with the government for using the USO fund to provide broadband in rural areas at subsidized rate. BSNL is planning to reach 1,000 rural blocks through its wireless broadband (WiMAX) technology. It is planning to set up terminals at affordable prices for customers to use broadband through its 22,000 telephone exchanges across the country. BSNL's next target is to roll out Internet protocol Television (IPTV) connections to 50,000 in 93 cities from the present 4,000 in 9 cities. It is opening 23,000 new telephone exchanges mostly in remote areas with initial marketing funds of Rs. 500 crore. BSNL is also planning to provide one call data record (CDR) for all

