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BSNL floats fresh tender for network expansion in West zone

State-run BSNL has issued a fresh tender for procuring telecom equipments in its West zone after Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) Limited did not participate in the earlier offer due to various issues.

"We had to float fresh tender for 63 million lines to complete our Phase 7 network expansion. ITI was offered to supply these equipments but they did not take it up," a senior BSNL official told PTI.

After a gap of five years, BSNL floated a 14.37 million line tender to expand its network capacity and part of it was given to ITI for equipment supply under reservation quota.

When contacted ITI, Chairman and Managing Director KL Dhingra said: "ITI did not participate in the tender as ITI could not get ToT (Transfer of Technology) partner." "We had been allotted an order as reservation quantity of 6.39 million line West Zone of BSNL. This project was not commercially viable due to low volumes and highly competitive prices quoted by L1 bidder," he further said.

Chinese firm ZTE had emerged as L1 bidder in the tender and was awarded major portion of this tender and along with Alcatel Lucent, which was selected for supply of equipments for building an intelligent network for BSNL. BSNL has offered other firms, who were in the fray for equipment supply, to match the price at which ZTE has agreed but none of the companies accepted the offer citing very low price quoted by the Chinese firm, industry sources said.

The BSNL official said supplies have started for Phase 7 network expansion and expect to complete all the supplies within estimated cost of Rs 4,000 crore.