

# BSNL employees' union opposes monetisation of telecom assets

**The government is planning to monetise BharatNet fibre assets**

NEW DELHI, PTI

State-run telecom firm BSNL employees' union on Thursday opposed the government's plan to monetise 2.86 lakh km of optical fibre laid under the BharatNet project as well as 14,917 mobile towers owned by it and sister concern MTNL.

BSNL Employees Union alleged that the sale of mobile towers to corporates is the beginning of the privatisation of BSNL and MTNL.

If monetisation of these assets is allowed, then the gov-

ernment's next target will be to monetise the 7 lakh route kilometre length of optic fibre, it added.

"In the name of National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP), the government has decided to hand over the national assets at a throwaway price to the corporates.

"The argument of the government that the ownership of these assets will continue to remain with the government itself is nothing but a sugar-coated poison," BSNL EU said in a statement.

The government has announced plans to garner Rs 35,100 crore from the partial monetisation of BharatNet fibre assets and 14,917 mobile towers owned by state-run telecom firms BSNL and MTNL as part of the Rs 6 lakh crore NMP.

"The handing over of the mobile towers to the corpo-

rates will deliver a body blow to BSNL and MTNL. Now, it has become clear, why the Modi government has been creating roadblocks for the past one year and eight months, in the launching of the 4G service by BSNL.

"It is only because the government had already made up its mind to sell out BSNL's mobile towers. If this is allowed, then the next target of the government will be, BSNL's 7 lakh route kilometre length of Optic Fibre," BSNL EU alleged.

The union said it strongly opposes the handing over of the nation's wealth to corporates in the name of the National Monetisation Pipeline and demanded that the same must be stopped.

It called upon all BSNL employees to organise lunch hour demonstrations throughout the country on Friday.

Bengaluru