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BSNL to lease 15k PoS to push digital bill payment

New Delhi, Dec 30: State-run BSNL is planning to take on lease about 15,000 point of sale machines to enable more customers to use digital methods of bill payment, and sees digital transactions accounting for up to 40% of all bill payments by March 2017, nearly double of current levels.

"We are in the process of leasing about 15,000 point of sale (PoS) machines to be used by customer service centres so that electronic payment can be encouraged. That is also the direction in which the country is moving, everyone is looking at electronic payment methods," BSNL CMD Anupam Shrivastava told PTI.

He further said that telecom corporation intends to have about 20-50 customer service centres in each of its telecom districts, equipped with PoS machines.

"We have 334 telecom districts or SSA. We are saying that in each telecom district, between 20-50 customer service centres should have PoS machines," he said, adding that at present, 1,500-2000 PoS machines are available in BSNL's own customer service centres.

By March 31, BSNL expects up to 40% of the total bill payments to come from digital mode. At present, digital payment account for less than 20%



of the overall bill payment.

"Before March 31, we would like it (digital methods of payment) to account for 35-40% of our overall bill payment across mobile, landline, broadband, Fibre to The Home (FTTH) services," he said.

At present, Shrivastava said, payment methods vary depending on the amount of bill. E-payment tends to be more favoured for FTTH billing, while cash finds favour in case of landline bill payment.

"On December 15, we had a meeting with the Chief General Managers (CGMs) and they have been told to equip the customer service centres with PoS facility. We are of the view that for POS machines at this point of time, capital expenditure should not be incurred and therefore it should be taken through lease mechanism for which talks have already started with various banks," he said.

PTI