

**INTERVIEW: India's ITI Aims For Revenue Of INR50 Bln In 4 Years -Chairman - NewsRISE
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NEW DELHI (Aug 30) -- India's ITI expects its revenue to jump more than three times to 50 billion rupees (\$782 million) in the next three to four years as the state-owned telecom equipment maker expands its offerings into new technologies and services to revive growth.

“We are already in a number of government preferred projects such as Bharat Net and providing Wi-Fi infrastructure,” Chairman and Managing Director S. Gopu told NewsRise in an interview on Wednesday. The company has also diversified into new areas such as offering services to Aadhaar enrolment and other citizen-centric projects, which will help expand revenue, he added.

He expects the company's orderbook to touch nearly 100 billion rupees in the next two years and is awaiting clarity on a bid for a 70 billion rupees large army contract to upgrade its network infrastructure.

ITI, the first public sector undertaking established in independent India, had been grappling with losses and declining revenue as it struggled to compete with a host of private players who entered India's telecom market at the beginning of this century. The company, which was referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction in 2004, has since been able to turn around with the help of government grants and by diversifying into new areas such as defense and digital technologies. In the last fiscal year that ended in March, ITI's revenue stood at 16.21 billion rupees.

Last year, the company turned a profit after the government provided part of a 40 billion rupees relief package to improve its plant infrastructure and pay off some of the debt. Gopu expects the company to break even without any government support in this fiscal year as revenue grows more than 30%. In the last fiscal year, it reported a net loss of 560 million rupees barring any government support. The company, in which government owns nearly 95%, expects some of its profitable services projects to generate enough cash to pare down its debt that stood at 8.50 billion rupees at the end of June.

Gopu said the company is exploring various options to comply with the regulatory mandate of a 25% public holding. One of the options being explored include a follow-on public offering, Gopu said, declining to give any details. It is also planning to trim down its staff count to 2,500-3,000 people in the next two years from 3,900 currently.

Shares of ITI surged 8.5% in Mumbai trading, while the benchmark S&P BSE Sensex gained 0.80%.