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RCOM awards \$400m deal to Alcatel-Lucent

■ **NEW DELHI:** Telecom infrastructure company Alcatel-Lucent has bagged outsourcing contract for Network Managed Services from Anil Ambani group firm Reliance Communications (RCOM) for both CDMA and GSM networks. "The deal is estimated at over \$400 million," RCOM's official said, adding that the deal between the two was signed on Saturday. Under the agreement, Alcatel-Lucent and RCOM would form a JV company and the network management services would be outsourced to that JV firm. RCOM, who has been given GSM licence under the dual technology clause, is likely to start GSM-based nation wide mobile services by the end of current financial year. RCOM would be the only operator in the country offering mobile services in both CDMA and GSM platforms. "We are aiming to set up nation-wide GSM and CDMA network by fiscal end, which will cover 23,000 towns and six lakh villages serving 97% of the Indian population," RCOM president S P Shukla had recently said. The company has been given start-up GSM spectrum (radio frequency) to offer wireless services and also CDMA spectrum in the remaining two circles of North East and Assam.