

India's Bharti taps Nokia, others to roll out 3G

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An Indian man talks on his mobile phone next to a Bharti Airtel sign in New Delhi 2009. India's top mobile firm Bharti Airtel said Monday it had awarded contracts to establish its third-generation (3G) networks in the country to Ericsson, Nokia and Huawei Technologies Co.

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Swedish telecom equipment maker Ericsson, Finland's Nokia and China's Huawei will "plan, design, deploy and maintain" the networks in areas where Bharti Airtel has bandwidth to offer 3G products, Bharti said in a statement.

The Indian mobile giant won bandwidth to offer 3G services in 13 of India's 22 telecom-service areas in a multi-billion-dollar government auction earlier this year.

A Bharti spokesman would not immediately disclose the value and length of the deals.

India's government began allocating 3G bandwidth at the start of the month.

For at least the first year as 3G is rolled out, the main focus is expected to be on improving call quality.

3G allows [mobile phone users](#) to surf the Internet, video conference and download music, video and other content at a much faster pace than the current second-generation service.

India's 2G spectrum is congested and the 3G networks will allow operators to free up [bandwidth](#) for more users.

The country is following in the footsteps of fellow [emerging market](#) giant China, which started offering [3G services](#) last year.

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