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Mr S.P. Shukla (right), President-Wireless, Reliance Communications, and Mr Mahesh Prasad, President -, at a press conference in Mumbai on Tuesday. — Shashi Ashiwal

RCom goes rural for Net penetration

Our Bureau

Mumbai Aug. 25

Reliance Communications has announced a host of measures to increase mobile telecom and Internet penetration in rural India.

The Anil Ambani-controlled company has launched new initiatives in its Internet service plan: BharatNet, Grameen (a new value-added service on mobiles) and M2M (machine to machine) solutions for rural customers.

BharatNet plan is RCom's high-speed wireless Internet service that will cover 20,000

rural locations. It will be designed for rural and sub-urban markets offering speeds of approximately 153 kbps. This tariff will be available across rural India, excluding the metros and top 100 cities, according to a company press release.

RCom is offering BharatNet Internet access for Rs 98 a week with downloads up to 350 MB.

Grameen VAS will cover several specialised services on the mobile phone such as Mandi Bhav (market price), agriculture and animal husbandry updates, weather

forecast, local information, and news in multiple Indian languages. Grameen VAS is priced at Rs 15 a month.

The M2M solutions include mobile applications that aid automation, surveillance, remote monitoring and data gathering. "The investments we plan to make are extensions of our network capabilities and will not be very high," Mr Mahesh Prasad, President - MDCS, RCom, said at a press meet here. He did not, however, elaborate on the investments planned for these initiatives.