

# Bandhan Bank forays into South

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Bandhan Financial Services, one of the largest microfinance institutions, is all set to foray into South India as Bandhan Bank. It had received an in-principle bank licence from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) a year ago, and the final nod last month. President Pranab Mukherjee will launch the bank in Kolkata on August 23.



**Chandra Shekhar Ghosh.**

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From August 23, 2015, it will start its banking operations across the country with 600 branches. Of them, 14 will be in south India. Speaking about its entry as Bandhan Bank, Chandra Shekhar Ghosh, the soon-to-be MD and CEO of Bandhan Bank, said: “We began our financial services in 2001. At present we have our presence in 22 states with 67

lakh customers. The loan book stands at over Rs 10,000 crore. From August 23, we will start functioning as Bandhan Bank.”

Even after the transformation to Bandhan Bank, microfinance services will continue under the new bank’s micro banking division. “Our bank will have two divisions — micro banking and general banking. Under micro banking, our microfinance services will contin-

ue as before, and under general banking, we will provide banking services like deposits and loans,” said Ghosh.

The bank will open three branches in Bengaluru at Indiranagar, Koramangala, and Bannerghatta, as part of the 14 branches planned in South India at launch. “Though we are starting off with three branches in Karnataka, in another couple of years we are planning to open 11 more,” he said.

Bandhan Bank will start with a Rs 11,000-crore loan book and capital of Rs 3,200 crore. Ghosh said the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Singapore government-backed GIC, and state-run Sidbi have invested to the tune of Rs 1,020 crore. “Ashok Kumar Lahiri, former chief economic advisor to the government, will be the bank chairman,” he said.