

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1348

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BROAD BAND SERVICE OF BSNL

Hasan Chaudhary Munawwar;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Pingle Shri Devidas Anandrao;Yadav Shri Parasnath;Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu

**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has announced Broadband Policy recently;
- (b) if so, the salient features of the policy;
- (c) the extent to which it is likely to help in the enhancement of quality of life and economic growth;
- (d) whether the Government has agreed to consider the recommendations made by the TRAI in this regard;
- (e) whether the Department is also discussing the issue of open sky policy for satellite terminal operators with the Department of Space; and
- (f) if so, the extent to which the Department of Space has agreed to the said proposal?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (Dr. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a)&(d) Government has announced Broadband Policy 2004 on 14th October, 2004 after considering various aspects including Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recommendations on Accelerating Growth of Broadband and Internet Penetration.

(b) The salient features of the policy are given at Annexure.

(c) Widespread availability of Broadband service is likely to result in growth in National output, increased employment opportunities and creation of Broadband as new industry. In addition societal applications like Telemedicine and E-education using Broadband services are likely to help in providing quality education and healthcare to a large section of population.

(e)&(f) It is the intention of the Government to make available transponder capacity for very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) services at competitive rates after taking into consideration the security requirements. Department of Space is already interacting with VSAT service providers. Department of Telecommunications, in consultation with the concerned Ministries, will soon propose measures in the direction of Open Sky policy for VSAT operators. The role of Department of Space is critical in such an endeavour.

**ANNEXURE**

**SALIENT FEATURES OF BROADBAND POLICY 2004**

**1. Definition and Targets:**

Broadband has been defined as an always-on data connection supporting interactive services including Internet access with minimum download speed of 256 Kbps per subscriber. The new broadband policy aims to target three million broadband subscribers and six million Internet subscribers with a timeframe of December 2005. By the end of year 2010, the policy aims to target 20 million broadband subscribers and 40 million Internet subscribers

**2.0 Technology Options for Broadband Services**

The Broadband Policy Framework visualizes creation of infrastructure through various access technologies which can contribute to growth and can mutually coexist. Spread of infrastructure is a must for healthy competition and therefore it would be the endeavour of the Government that the telecommunication infrastructure growth in the country is not compromised in any manner.

**2.1 Various access technologies, inter-alia, are:**

**(a) Optical Fibre Technologies**

With the increase in commercial availability of fibre technologies, the cost of fibre rollout is approaching the cost of other wired

networks. Spread of optical fibre networks shall be emphasized keeping in view the long-term perspective.

(b) Digital Subscriber Lines (DSL) on copper loop :

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) as well as other access providers are expected to aggressively use their copper loop infrastructure for providing Broadband services through this technology.

Recognising that last mile copper loop is not a 'bottleneck facility' for broadband services, access providers shall be free to enter into mutually agreed commercial arrangements for utilization of available copper loop for expansion of broadband services. The owner of local loop shall be free to decide the areas in which investment is to be made to upgrade the infrastructure for Broadband services. The information regarding the areas in which Broadband services are being offered by a service provider shall be available in the public domain.

Further, use of brand-name being treated as a part of the value shall be permitted in such commercial arrangements.

Management of BSNL and MTNL has decided to provide 1.5 million connections by the end of 2005. The corporate/ work plan of these public sector Undertaking (PSUs) have been drawn up for this purpose. Thereafter, annual plan for expansion of Broadband services by BSNL and MTNL will be determined in consultation with them. A quarterly review of their performance by the Government in the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) shall be undertaken to evaluate the achievement and redefine the future roadmap, if necessary.

It is hoped that other access service providers would also provide broadband connections using their copper in a targeted manner. A constructive review of their performance shall also be undertaken.

(c) Cable TV Network

Cable TV network can be used as franchisee network of the service provider for provisioning Broadband services. However, all responsibilities for ensuring compliance of terms & conditions of the licence shall vest with the licensee. The terms of franchise agreement between Licensee and his franchisee shall be settled mutually by negotiation between the two parties involved.

(d) Satellite Media

Very small Aperture Terminals (VSAT) and Direct-to-Home(DTH) services would be encouraged for penetration of Broadband and Internet services with the added advantage to serve remote and inaccessible areas.

Department of Telecommunications, in consultation with the concerned Ministries, will soon propose measures in the direction of open sky policy for VSAT operators. The role of Department of Space is critical in such an endeavour.

To keep pace with technological advances, throughput and antenna size for VSATs shall be periodically reviewed.

Commercial VSAT service providers having internet service provider (ISP) licence shall be permitted use of same hub station and remote station to provide Internet service directly to the subscribers. Further, this remote station shall be permitted to be used as a distribution point to provide Internet Services to multiple independent subscribers. Necessary amendments in the licence agreement shall be carried out immediately.

DTH service providers shall be permitted to provide Receive only Internet service after obtaining ISP Licence from Department of Telecommunications . Further, ISP Licensees shall be permitted to allow customers for downloading data through DTH after obtaining necessary permission from the competent authority DTH service providers will also be permitted to provide bidirectional Internet services after obtaining VSAT and ISP Licence from DoT.

(e) Terrestrial Wireless

Recognising that terrestrial wireless is another upcoming technology platform for Broadband, it has been decided in principle to delicense 2.40-2.48 GHz band for low-power outdoor use on non-protection, non-interference and non-exclusive basis. Necessary notification shall be issued.

To accelerate penetration of Broadband and Internet, the 5.15-5.35 GHz band shall be de-licensed for the indoor use of low power wifi systems. For outdoor use, the band 5.25-5.35 GHz shall be de-licensed in consultation with DoS and delicensing in the band 5.15-5.25 GHz would be considered after the process of vacation. Alternative spectrum bands which are not in high usage and could be deployed for broadband services, shall also be explored and identified.

## 2.2 Quality of Service (QoS)

TRAI would be requested to prescribe QoS parameters for provisioning of broadband service using various access technologies at an early date.

## 2.3 Simplification of Standing Advisory Committee on radio frequency Allocation (SACFA)/Wireless Planning and Coordination (WPC) Clearance

The VSAT operators shall be allowed to start the installation process for VSAT terminals after a period of one month of submitting all relevant documents to WPC for SACFA/WPC clearance wherever the total height of such installation is less than 5 meters above the

rooftop of an authorized building.

In the case of Receive Only VSAT terminals and DTH with Receive only Internet, no SACFA/ WPC clearance will be required wherever the total height of such installation is less than 5 meters above the rooftop of an authorized building.

Government have decided that the reference to Wireless in local loop(WLL) in IND49 of National Frequency Allocation Plan (NFAP)-2002 shall be deleted to promote use of indigenously developed technologies. This would enable service providers, other than basic services under their licence.

A transparent scheme is being outlined separately for time-bound frequency allocation, siting clearance and wireless licensing by removing the cumbersome procedures, computerization and by setting predetermined standards.

### 3.0 Other Salient Features

National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) has been set up by DIT, Government of India to ensure that Internet traffic, originating and destined for India, should be routed within India. It is expected that NIXI will take appropriate steps for increasing the utilization of such facilities.

The government has assigned a very high priority to indigenous manufacture of broadband related equipments and shall endeavour to work closely with the concerned ministries and manufactures associations so that the equipments are made available at an affordable price.

DoT is conscious of the fact that Broadband services can reach the urban and rural consumers only if services are offered at affordable and easy terms. Department of Telecommunications will work out a package in consultation with Ministry of Finance and related Departments as well as concerned service providers to achieve this.