

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:601

ANSWERED ON:03.08.2011

RURAL BROADBAND INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

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

- (a) the number of villages connected with broadband internet till date, Statewise;
- (b) the role of private service providers in providing internet connection in the rural areas;
- (c) the details of the villages connected with optical fibre network connection so far, State-wise;
- (d) whether the Government has launched `Rural Wireless Broadband Scheme` in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the villages covered under the scheme so far and the target fixed for the current Five Year Plan, State-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a) 1,33,712 Village Panchayats are covered with broadband internet facility. The number of village Panchayat covered with Broadband internet, as on June 2011, State-wise is given at Annexure-I. However, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) has covered 1,69,201 villages through broadband internet as per Annexure-II.

(b) Both private and public sector service provider are encouraged to participate in the USOF schemes subject to meeting the eligibility criteria.

(c) Presently, Optical fiber connectivity is largely available upto the block headquarters.

(d) USOF is working on this scheme for providing financial assistance by way of subsidy for the wireless broadband infrastructure such as base stations by utilizing the existing infrastructure available with the Telecom service providers. The scheme has been approved by the competent authority and the draft tender document has been prepared and uploaded in the public domain on 21.04.2011 for comments/suggestions of stakeholders and the same are being processed for finalization of the tender.

This scheme would provide broadband coverage to about 5 lakh villages at a speed of 512 kbps. This scheme is envisaged to provide Broadband in all states of India,

(e) As the scheme is yet to be launched no villages have been covered under the scheme so far. Regarding the target fixed for the current Five Year Plan for Rural Wireless Broadband Scheme, it is envisaged to sign Agreement with the successful bidders for implementing the scheme in all the bidding unit across India.