

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2396

ANSWERED ON:28.03.2012

NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN

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

- (a) whether the Government has prepared and finalized the National Broadband Plan;
- (b) if so, the details and the salient features thereof alongwith the action taken by the Government in this regard so far;
- (c) whether the Government has provided/proposes to provide high speed broadband facilities in rural areas;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the number of villages/panchayats covered under the scheme so far, State-wise;
- (e) whether the slow pace of internet broadband coverage has adversely affected the economic and social development and thereby Gross Domestic Production (GDP) of the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government to increase broadband penetration in the country?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (d) Department of Telecommunication had received the recommendation made by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) dated 8th December 2010 on 'National Broadband Plan'. The Government has already approved the scheme for creation of National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) on 25th October 2011, for providing Broadband connectivity to 2.5 lakh village Panchayats. The objective of this scheme is to extend the existing optical fibre network to Panchayats by utilizing the Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF). The project is proposed to be completed in 2 years.

In addition, USOF has launched a Rural Wireline Broadband Scheme to increase broadband penetration in rural and remote areas. Under this scheme BSNL will provide 8,88,832 wire-line Broadband connections to individual users and Government Institutions over a period of 5-years in this scheme. As on February 2012, a total of 3, 54,595 broadband connections have been provided. The telecom circle wise detail is given in Annexure I

Further, Govt. under Bharat Nirman-II has a target of covering 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayat in 2012. State wise broadband coverage of village Panchayats is given in Annexure-II

The Govt. in draft revised National Telecom Policy 2011, has inter-alia proposed to revise the existing Broadband download speed of 256 Kbps to 512 Kbps and subsequently to 2 Mbps by 2015 and higher speeds of at least 100 Mbps thereafter. However, no final decision has been taken in the matter so far.

(e) & (f) Studies have shown that increase in the penetration of Internet/Broadband has a positive impact on the growth of Gross Domestic Product.

In addition to this following initiatives have been taken by the Government to increase the broadband penetration:

i) Allotment of Spectrum for 3G and BWA services will facilitate proliferation of broadband through mobile handsets and wireless technologies.

ii) Permitting Sharing of infrastructure amongst the Service providers.

iii) The Indian Telegraph Rules have been amended, and stream IV has been added under the title "Provision of broadband connectivity to villages in a phased manner" to bring provisioning of broadband connectivity to the rural areas under the purview of the USOF.

iv) USOF schemes for supporting shared infrastructure for mobile services in rural and remote areas are under implementation. These towers will also be used to provide Broadband connectivity in the newly covered Block/Taluka headquarters.

v) A Rural Wire-line Broadband Scheme has been launched under USOF to increase broadband penetration in rural and remote areas. Under this scheme BSNL will provide 8, 88,832 wire-line Broadband connections to individual users and Government Institutions over a period of 5-years in this scheme.