

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:11
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2012
INTERNET BROADBAND PENETRATION
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the extent of internet/broadband penetration in the country;
- (b) whether India is having one of the lowest internet and broadband penetration among the developing countries;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the targets fixed and achieved till date separately in urban and rural areas along with the reasons for under achievement, State-wise; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to increase internet/ broadband penetration in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 11 FOR 8TH AUGUST, 2012 REGARDING "INTERNET/BROADBAND PENETRATION"

(a) Total number of Internet subscribers (including 13.81 million Broadband subscriber) is 22.86 million as on 31st March 2012. In addition, around 448.89 million wireless subscribers have subscribed to Data services.

(b) The Number of fixed broadband subscriber in 20 countries at the end of December 2010 is given at Annexure-I.

(c) The main impediments which are hindering the growth of internet/ broadband are as under:-

- i. Lack of interest in private operators for broadband network expansion in rural areas being non-remunerative
- ii. Difficulty in laying of OFC network due to issues related to right of way clearances and high cost of right of way charges
- iii. High backhaul cost
- iv. Low PC penetration
- v. High cost of Customer Premises Equipment (CPEs)
- vi. Low literacy levels
- vii. Lack of local content
- viii. Poor power supply

(d) The target for Internet and Broadband subscribers in the country as given in Broadband policy 2004 and achievements are as follows:

Year Ending Internet Subscribers Broadband Subscribers

Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
(wireline subscribers)	(wireline subscribers)	(wireline subscribers)	(wireline subscribers)

2005 6 million 6.70 million 3 million 0.903 million
2007 18 million 10.36 million 9 million 3.13 million
2010 40 million 18.69 million 20 million 10.99 million

The detail of Broadband connections provided by BSNL in rural and urban areas (state wise) as on 30/6/2012 is given at Annexure-II.

(e) The Government has 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 and increasing the broadband penetration in rural and remote areas.. The objective of this scheme is to extend the existing optical fiber 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 following scheme to increase broadband penetration in rural and remote areas:-

1. 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 30.06.2012, a total of 3,75,648 broadband connections have been provided.

2. (i)"Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District SDHQ DHQ OFC Network in ASSAM"

This OFC Scheme would connect 354 locations in 27 Districts of Assam within 18 months from 12/2/2010. As of February 2012, about 177 nodes have been installed.

(ii) "Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District SDHQ-DHQ OFC Network in NE-I Circle (comprising states of Meghalaya, Mizoram & Tripura)"

The States of Meghalaya, Mizoram & Tripura have been taken up for OFC augmentation in this scheme. This OFC Scheme would connect 188 locations in 19 Districts within 24 months from the date of signing of the Agreement.

(iii) "Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District SDHQ-DHQ OFC Network in NE-II Circle (comprising states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur & Nagaland)"

The States of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur & Nagaland have been taken up for OFC augmentation in this scheme. This OFC Scheme would connect 407 locations in 30 Districts within 30 months from the date of signing of the Agreement.