

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2021

ANSWERED ON:05.12.2012

VPT AND BROADBAND TO VILLAGES

Gandhi Smt. Maneka Sanjay;Muttemwar Shri Vilas Baburao;Noor Mausam;Pandurang Shri Munde Gopinathrao;Pradhan Shri Nityananda;Sharma Shri Jagdish;Tagore Shri Manicka;Tandon Shri Lal Ji

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

- (a) the number of villages provided with Village Public Telephone (VPT) facility till date and the number of villages which are yet to be provided with such facility in the country, State-wise;
- (b) the time by which all the villages of the country are likely to be provided with VPT facility along with steps taken or being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) the number of Panchayats to which the facility of broadband connection has been provided with so far and the number of Panchayats which are yet to be provided with this facility; .
- (d) whether the Government has set any target for providing broadband connection in all Gram Panchayats under Bharat Nirman; and
- (e) if so, the efforts being made by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

- (a) The number of villages provided with Village Public Telephone (VPT) facility and the number of villages which are yet to be provided with such facility in the country as on 31.10.2012 are given in the Annexure.
 - (b) VPT facility is likely to be provided in remaining feasible villages by March, 2013 by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).
 - (c) 157371 numbers of Panchayats have been provided with the facility of broadband connection by BSNL and 90493 numbers of Panchayats are yet to be provided with broadband facility.
 - (d) & (e) Bharat Nirman phase-II covered the provisioning of Broadband bandwidth to Village Panchayats, however 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 Panchyats. The objective of this scheme is to extend the existing optical fibre network to Panchayats by utilizing the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). The project is proposed to be completed in 2 years. The proposed cost of initial phase of the NOFN scheme is Rs. 20,000 Crores (Approx.)
- NOFN project is being executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) i.e. Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), a company incorporated under Indian Companies Act, 1956 fully owned by Central Government, with equity participation from Government, BSNL, RailTel and Powergrid. The Company has been incorporated on 25.02.2012 for this purpose.