

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4318

ANSWERED ON:19.12.2012

BROADBAND COVERAGE TO PANCHAYATS

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

- (a) whether target achievement data of 2011-12 for broadband coverage of Village Panchayats shows zero progress in 15 States/UTs that include Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab and Rajasthan and the progress in other States including Gujarat has also not been satisfactory;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor, State-wise;
- (c) whether the National Telecom Policy, 2011 proposes to provide high speed and high quality broadband access to all village panchayats by the year, 2014;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken/being taken by the Government to achieve the target;
- (e) whether the Broadband Policy, 2004 is facing stiff competition from private companies; and
- (f) if so, the steps taken/likely to be taken by Union Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) There are 10 States / Union Territories in which achievement has been Zero in the year 2011-2012. States/ UTs-wise details of Village Panchayats covered by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) during 2011-2012 are given in Annexure I.

The reason for Zero achievement is non-coverage of Village Panchayats by Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Lines (ADSL +) and Wimax.

(c) to (f)

One of the objective of the National Telecom Policy 2012 (NTP-2012) states that 'provide high speed and high quality broadband access to all village panchayats through a combination of technologies by the year 2014 and progressively to all villages and habitations by 2020.'

The target for Internet and Broadband subscribers in the country as given in the Broadband Policy 2004 and achievements are as follows.

Internet Subscribers Broadband

Year	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
	(Wireline	(Wireline		
Ending	subscribers)	subscribers)		

2005	6 million	6.7 million	3 million	0.903 million
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2007	18 million	10.36	9 million	3.13 million
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2010	40 million	18.69	20 million	10.99 million
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In the quarter ending June 2012, subscribers of PSUs and Private Internet service providers were 15.01 millions and 8.00 million

respectively. The share of the PSUs is 65.24 %.

The steps taken by Government to increase Broadband Penetration and participation of License service providers are as under,

(i) The Union Cabinet 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. The objective of this scheme is to extend the existing optical fibre network to Panchayats by utilizing the Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF). Non-discriminatory access to the network will be provided to all the telecom service providers. 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 will be 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 25.2.2012 for this purpose.

(ii) 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 i.e. by 2014. As on 31.08.2012, a total of 3,91,245 broadband connections have been provided.

(iii) "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. At least 70% of the subsidized bandwidth capacity, created under the scheme, shall be shared with the licensed service providers.

(iv) "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. Agreement has been signed with Railtel on 16.01.2012 in this respect with a subsidy quote of Rs.89.50 Crore. At least 70% of the subsidized bandwidth capacity, created under the scheme, shall be shared with the licensed service providers.

(v) "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.

At least 70% of the subsidized bandwidth capacity, created under the scheme, shall be shared with the licensed service providers.