

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1074  
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2013  
TELECOM FACILITIES IN HILLY STATES  
Maharaj Shri Satpal

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

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any schemes to make comprehensive improvements in the telecommunication services in the hilly States and regions of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the present status of telecom facilities in these States and regions, State-wise;
- (d) whether any time-limit has been fixed for providing telephone facilities to such States; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project is planned to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 Lakh) in the country including hilly States and regions through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats and Blocks. Non-discriminatory access to the network will be provided to all categories of service providers.

To improve the telecom connectivity in the predominantly hilly areas, North-Eastern region. Telecom Commission on 06.11.2013 has accorded 'in principle' approval for the proposal to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Plan for the North-East, based on the recommendations [dated September 2013] given by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and directed that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) be prepared for the same.

As on 30.09.2013, 5,82,323 out of the 5,93,601 inhabited villages [i.e. 98.10%] as per Census 2001 have been covered with Village Public Telephones (VPTs). VPTs are being provided in remaining inhabited uncovered villages including hilly states and regions through Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPTs).

Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District SDHQ-DHQ OFC Network in North Eastern Region has been launched to provide sufficient back-haul capacity to integrate the voice and data traffic from the access network in the rural areas to their core network by strengthening the OFC network between district headquarters and block headquarters in North Eastern region using BOO model, i.e. build, operate & own basis.

(c) Tele-density data is maintained telecom service area-wise. The teledensity service area-wise is available in Annexure-I.

(d) & (e) As per the initial survey carried out by field units of DoT there are about 56,000 inhabited villages in the country which are yet to be connected with mobile communication services. State-wise Summary of Villages Uncovered with Mobile Services as per the survey carried out by TERM Cells of DoT is at Annexure-II.

The financial approval for implementation of the scheme to connect these villages would be obtained after stakeholder consultation to be undertaken as per rule governing disbursement of funds from USOF. Village in North-East region will be covered in the first phase as part of the proposed comprehensive Telecom Plan for North-East. The roll out period for provisioning of Village Public Telephones in remaining uncovered villages has been extended up to 31st March, 2014.