

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:206

ANSWERED ON:05.02.2014

EXPANSION OF TELECOM SERVICES

Mahajan Smt. Sumitra;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari

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

- (a) the targets fixed and achieved for expansion and improvement of telecommunication services during the Twelfth Five Year Plan so far, State-wise including Madhya Pradesh;
- (b) the action taken by the Government for under-achievement of targets, if any, in any States or region;
- (c) whether the allocation made for expansion of telecom services in the rural areas has been utilized fully and properly;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the measures taken by the Government in this regard along with the action taken to fix the responsibility; and
- (e) the future action plan of the Government for expansion and improvement of telecommunication services in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & LAW AND JUSTICE (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. 206 FOR 5TH FEBRUARY, 2014 REGARDING "EXPANSION OF TELECOM SERVICES".

(a) & (b): State-wise targets for expansion of telecom services in the country for the Twelfth Five Year plan have not been fixed by the Planning Commission. One of the objectives of the National Telecom Policy 2012 is to increase rural teledensity in the country from 39.26 percent as on March, 2012 to 70 percent by 2017.

(c) to (e): The details of funds disbursed through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) against the implementation of USOF funded schemes to improve telecom coverage in rural areas, during Twelfth Five Year Plan up to 31.12.2013 are given in Annexure.

The Government has approved a proposal on 04.06.2013 to install mobile towers at 2199 locations in 9 States (Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal), which are affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE). Work has been awarded to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). USOF would fund the Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Operational Expenditure (OPEX) net of revenue for five years. Estimated project cost is Rs.3046.12 Crores.

The National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project approved on 25.10.2011 is planned to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 Lakh) in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Blocks. Various applications for e-governance, e-education, e-health etc. will be provided.

A scheme to extend financial support from USO Fund for provisioning of mobile communication services in remaining inhabited uncovered villages of the country is envisaged.

Villages in North East Region will be covered in the first phase as part of a Comprehensive Telecom Plan for North-East. The Telecom Commission in its meeting held on 06.11.2013, has granted 'in principle' approval for implementation of the comprehensive telecom plan for North-East with a outlay of Rs. 2320.70 crore and has directed that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) be prepared for the same.