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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6547
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2015
BROADBAND PENETRATION
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

(a) whether India ranked 125th in the world below Bhutan and Sri Lanka in termsof broadband penetration and 113th in terms of wireless or mobile internet;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has suggested the need to revamp Government bodies involved in decision-making including Wireless Planning Commission (WCP);

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto; and

(e) whether TRAI has also called for spectrum audit and setting up data centre parks on the line of industrial parks and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

# <span style="color:red">Answer</span>

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) As per 'The State of Broadband 2014: Broadband for All' report, published by the Broadband Commission of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which was published in September 2014, reports the ranking of Bhutan, Sri Lanka and India with respect to Fixed and Mobile Broadband penetration for 2013 as under:

| | Fixed Broadband Penetration (per 100 inhabitants) | Rank | Mobile Broadband Penetration (per 100 inhabitants) | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bhutan | 2.7 | 108 | 15.6 | 83 |
| Sri Lanka | 2.0 | 115 | 7.8 | 100 |
| India | 1.2 | 125 | 3.2 | 113 |

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India(TRAI) in its recommendations "Delivering Broadband Quickly: what do we need to do?" has identified some of the main reasons for poor Broadband penetration as below:

(i) Right of Way (RoW) permission and its high cost affecting provision of optical fibre and tower infrastructure.

(ii) Non-availability of adequate power.

(iii) Lack of availability of sufficient quantum of globally harmonised spectrum in contiguous form.

(iv) Availability of content in regional languages.

(v) Lack of adequate connectivity in backhaul and lack of backhaul transmission facilities.

(vi) High cost of access devices.

The 'Digital India' programme of Government has been formulated to leap frog India in the field of Broadband by enabling and supporting the creation of broadband infrastructure and developing an ecosystem for broadband usage.

(c) to (e) TRAI has inter alia, recommended the following

(i) Conversion of the Wireless Planning Commission (WPC) into an independent body.

(ii) The urgent need for audit by an independent agency of all allocated spectrum both commercial as well as spectrum allocated to various Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) /Government organizations as a national priority.

(iii) Encouragement to local and foreign companies to build 'Data Centre Parks' on the lines of industrial parks, Special Economic Zones(SEZs) etc. by providing them land, infrastructure and uninterrupted power supply at affordable rates.

A committee has been constituted on 28.04.2015 in Department of Telecommunications to examine the TRAI recommendations.

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