

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6639
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2015
REGION SPECIFIC PLAN FOR TELECOM SERVICES
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has prepared or proposed to prepare region specific telecom expansion plan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to provide better communications in the coastal areas both by telecom PSUs and Private Telecom Service Providers?

Answer

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

- (a) to (c) Government has prepared the following projects for improving telecom services in the country, including in the coastal areas:
 - (i) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) : NOFN project is planned to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 Lakh) in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of PSUs viz. BSNL, RailTel and Power Grid and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Blocks, for providing broadband connectivity. NOFN project will enable access providers and service providers like mobile operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), cable TV operators, content providers can launch various services in rural areas. Various applications for e-health, e-education, e-governance etc. will be provided.
 - (ii) Optical Fibre Network in North Eastern Region: Scheme 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 Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) network. The scheme involves OFC Network augmentation between the Sub District HQ (SDHQ) and Districts' HQ. Under this scheme the number of nodes to be connected in Assam, NE-I (Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura) & NE-II (Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Nagaland) are 354, 188 & 407 respectively.
 - (iii) Scheme for Mobile Communication Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected Areas : Government, on 20.08.2014, approved a project to provide Mobile Services in 2199 locations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The scheme is being executed by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).
 - (iv) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region: Government has approved a proposal on 10.09.2014 to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region. The Project envisages provision of mobile coverage to 8621 identified uncovered villages, installation of 321 mobile tower sites along National Highways and strengthening of transmission network in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
 - (v) Mobile services in uncovered villages: A scheme to extend financial support from USO Fund for provisioning of mobile communication services in inhabited uncovered villages (including coastal villages) of the country not having mobile coverage is under consideration. It is estimated that there are about 55,669 villages in the country that do not have mobile coverage. Mobile coverage to balance uncovered villages is to be provided in a phased manner over five years with coverage in Hilly States & Western Border States being taken up in the first phase.
 - (vi) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep:

Telecom Commission has given 'in principle' approval on 07.11.2014 for Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan including provision of mobile connectivity for Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands with the total estimated investment of Rs. 221.05 crores.

Private telecom service providers create telecom infrastructure based on economic viability of service provision.