

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3545

ANSWERED ON:18.03.2015

TOWERS IN NAXAL AREAS

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any study to ascertain the number of mobile towers required and functioning in Left extremist and naxal affected areas;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the towers installed and proposed to be installed in such areas, State and region-wise;
- (c) the details of locations identified for setting up of mobile towers and the funds allocated and spent for expansion of telecom service in these areas;
- (d) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) which is assigned to expand telecom service in these areas has failed to install the required number of towers and sought additional funds for the purpose; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government on the request of BSNL and also the steps taken for expansion of telecom services in the affected areas?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Government has identified 2199 locations affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, for installation of mobile towers.

The State-wise details of mobile towers identified by the Government is as below:

| S. No. | State | No. of Mobile towers Already Installed by BSNL |
|--------|----------------|--|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 54 1 |
| 2. | Bihar | 184 0 |
| 3. | Chhattisgarh | 497 351 |
| 4. | Jharkhand | 782 0 |
| 5. | Maharashtra | 60 3 |
| 6. | Madhya Pradesh | 22 6 |
| 7. | Odisha | 253 0 |
| 8. | Telangana | 173 2 |
| 9. | Uttar Pradesh | 78 0 |
| 10. | West Bengal | 96 0 |
| | Total | 2,199 363 |

In addition BSNL has commissioned 105 sites under its own Global System for Mobile communication(GSM) Phase-V/VII expansion program is as below:

| S. No. | Telecom Circle | No. of sites |
|--------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh including Telangana | 26 |
| 2. | Bihar | 30 |
| 3. | Chhattisgarh | 7 |
| 4. | Jharkhand | 9 |
| 5. | Maharashtra | 1 |
| 6. | Odisha | 19 |
| 7. | West Bengal | 13 |
| | Total | 105 |

Details of tower locations district wise in LWE affected areas is at Annexure-I.

(c) Government has approved the project on 20.08.2014 to provide Mobile services in 2199 locations [1836 new sites & 363 sites

already installed by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)] in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. The estimated project implementation cost is Rs. 3567.58 crore, to be funded from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). BSNL has been nominated to execute the project. A sum of Rs. 596.51 crore has been released to BSNL under the scheme till 28.02.2015.

(d) & (e) BSNL had requested for 16.5% Administrative Charges over and above the approved implementation cost which has not been accepted. USOF will fund Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and Operating Expenditure (OPEX) net of revenue for five years and also provide 10 percentage on CAPEX and OPEX to BSNL for meeting administrative costs. Government has also decided that the ownership of the assets created under this project will vest in BSNL.

Ongoing/proposed Schemes for expansion of telecom services in LWE affected areas as following:

1. National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN):

Government is implementing National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project to provide broadband connectivity through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) to all the Gram Panchayats in the country including LWE affected states (approximately 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats) at an estimated cost of Rs. 20,100 Crore by bridging the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats and Blocks. Under this project, at least 100 Mbps (megabits per second) bandwidth would be made available at each Gram Panchayat (GP) to be used by all the service providers on non-discriminatory basis. Bharat Broadband Nigam Limited (BBNL), a Central Public Sector Undertaking Unit (CPSU) has been created to execute the project. Work is being implemented by BBNL through 3 CPSUs viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Railtel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL).

The scheme to connect all the Gram Panchayats with respective blocks through OFC is envisaged to be completed in a phased manner by December 2016.

State wise list of Gram Panchayats under NOFN in Phase-I

| Sl. No. | States | Total GPs | GPs in Phase-I |
|---------|----------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 12831 | Nil# |
| 2. | Bihar | 8364 | 5202 |
| 3. | Chhattisgarh | 9770 | 1963 |
| 4. | Jharkhand | 4423 | 1408 |
| 5. | Madhya Pradesh | 23024 | 10516 |
| 6. | Maharashtra | 27987 | 11520 |
| 7. | Odisha | 6235 | 3298 |
| 8. | Telangana | 8770 | 2180 |
| 9. | Uttar Pradesh | 51970 | 22036 |
| 10. | West Bengal | 3354 | 2642 |
| 11. | Grand Total | 156728 | 60765 |

(Andhra Govt. has decided to implement the scheme in coordination with the Govt. of India and are in the process of making detailed project report.)