

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:22

ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015

NATIONAL OPTICAL FIBRE NETWORK

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

(a) the present status of the implementation of the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project along with the number of Gram Panchayats provided with high speed rural broadband network so far, State-wise;

(b) whether establishment of Wi-Fi hotspots are proposed to provide Wi-Fi services at public places under the project if so, the details thereof and the action taken in this regard so far; and

(c) the details of criteria for selection of Gram Panchayats particularly those in remote, backward and hilly areas, along with the action taken for timely implementation of the project?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) 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 (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 22 FOR 25TH FEBRUARY, 2015 REGARDING "NATIONAL OPTICAL FIBRE NETWORK".

(a) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) aims to connect all Gram Panchayats in the country through optical fibre cable (OFC) by bridging the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats and Blocks for providing broadband.

Bharat Broadband Nigam Limited (BBNL), a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), was incorporated with an objective to create, operate, maintain and manage NOFN. BBNL has entered into agreements with three Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel & Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) for laying incremental optical fiber for connecting all Gram Panchayats.

As on 15.02.2015, tenders for trenching and pipe laying works have been finalized for 2,060 blocks. Work orders have been issued for 1613 blocks and work has commenced in 1,275 blocks. Total 953 Gram Panchayats have been connected through NOFN for high speed rural broadband network.

The three CPSUs have placed purchase orders for supply of 1,07,728 kilometres (kms) of PLB HDPE (Permanently Lubricated High Density Polyethylene) ducts. 30,851 kms of PLB duct and 17,355 Kms of OFC have been laid. Cable laying has been completed for 7,470 GPs. 1,08,753 kms of OFC and accessories have been delivered. Purchase orders for electronic transmission equipment have been issued and supply commenced. State-wise details are at Annexure.

(b) The project of Government User Network (GUN) overlay over NOFN aims, inter alia, to provide community wi-fi infrastructure at one location in each GP is presently under consideration of Government.

(c) All Gram Panchayats including those in remote, backward and hilly areas are to be connected through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) for providing broadband connectivity in a phased manner by December 2016.

Following action is being taken for timely implementation of the project:

- (i) Execution of project in a phased manner to learn and improve from experiences of project implementation.
- (ii) Multi-pronged strategy for execution of work being adopted for accelerated implementation of the project.
- (iii) Regular monitoring and review of the project at various levels