

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5928

ANSWERED ON:29.04.2015

OPTICAL FIBRE CABLE FOR DEFENCE

Ahlawat Smt. Santosh;Biju Shri Parayamparanbil Kuttappan;Sampath Shri Anirudhan

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

- (a) whether there has been significant delay in the rollout of highly secure "OPTIC FIBRE CABLE" (OFC) network for defence communications;
- (b) if so, details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the time and cost overrun due to the delay;
- (c) the details and salient feature of the agreement made between the Ministry of Defence and Department of Telecommunications;
- (d) whether the contract awarded to BSNL has further been outsourced in whole/part to some other contractors; and
- (e) if so, details thereof and the current status of the project and measures taken by Government to ensure timely completion of this project?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) network for Defence Services namely Network for Spectrum (NFS) was approved by Government on 3rd July, 2012 to be completed in 36 months. The project is likely to have time overrun due to litigation in procurement and difficulties encountered in contracting for the main component i.e. OFC.

(c) A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Ministry of Communication & Information Technology (MoCIT) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) for vacation of spectrum and setting up of exclusive, dedicated OFC Network for Defence Services (Army, Navy, Air Force) on 22.05.2009. The main features of this MoU are as follows:

- # Ministry of Communication & Information Technology (MoCIT) will setup an exclusive and dedicated OFC network for Armed forces.
- # The Armed Forces will release the spectrum out of defence usage as per certain timelines and triggers for usage for commercial purposes.
- # The network is to be completed in three and half years.
- # The network shall be implemented by Bharat Sanchar Nigam limited (BSNL).
- (d) & (e) NFS has various components namely:
 - # OFC for Backbone network and Access network for all three Armed Services.
 - # Associated transmission equipments involving Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM), microwave and satellite systems.
 - # Secrecy devices
 - # Network Management System for OFC and for the network as a whole.

The project involves laying of around 60,000 Km of OFC. The OFC component is critical to the completion of the whole project. This component has been divided into 07 packages on regional basis. Purchase orders for all the seven packages have been issued in July/ August, 2014. The tenders for all the other components for various electronic equipments are at different stages.

Department of Telecommunications periodically monitors the implementation of the project along with the Defence Services and BSNL.