

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:449

ANSWERED ON:14.07.2014

INTERNET AND BROADBAND CONNECTIONS IN VILLAGES

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

- (a) whether the Broadband network and 3G Internet services have been provided in the country particularly in Villages, Gram Panchayats, Hilly and Small habitation areas;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State/ UT-wise;
- (c) whether the Government is making any provision under the Computer Literacy Programme to teach the students of Government schools, villages etc. to operate computer and use internet;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether any effective measures have been taken by the Government to make the broadband and 3G Internet services easily accessible in all the rural and hilly areas, villages and small habitation areas particularly in the backward areas of the country; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Madam, Internet Service Licensees and Access Service licensees are permitted to provide broadband services in their licensed service area. The access service licensees holding 3G Spectrum are also permitted to provide 3G Services in that service area. The service providers are not maintaining specific information regarding provisioning of service in villages, gram panchayats, hilly and small habitation areas. State-wise breakup of broadband subscribers as on March 2014 is enclosed as Annexure-I.

(c) & (d) As per the information provided by Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of "Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Schools", financial assistance is provided to the States/UT(s) inter-alia to procure computers, computer infrastructure along with a provision for internet connectivity for the coverage of government and government aided secondary and higher secondary schools in the States and UTs with emphasis on educationally backward blocks and areas with concentration of SC/ST/Minority /Weaker sections. So far, 88236 schools have been approved to cover under the scheme. The state-wise breakup of number of schools that have so far been covered under the ICT in school scheme is enclosed as Annexure-II.

(e) & (f) For expansion of broadband services in rural, remote and hilly areas, following schemes have been undertaken by the Government through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) :-

1. Rural Wireline Broadband Scheme:

Under this scheme, BSNL will provide 8,88,832 wire-line Broadband connections to individual users and Government Institutions and set up 28,672 Kiosks by 2015. As of 31st May 2014, a total of 6,05,113 broadband connections have been provided and 14,540 kiosks have been set up in rural and remote areas.

2 General Infrastructure Augmentation:

i) Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Network in Assam:

This Scheme would connect 354 total locations in Assam in total 27 Districts by December 2014. As of May 2014, about 302 locations have been installed.

ii) Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District OFC Network in NE-I Circle (comprising states of Meghalaya, Mizoram & Tripura):

The States of Meghalaya, Mizoram & Tripura have been taken up for OFC augmentation in this scheme. This OFC Scheme would

connect 188 locations in 19 Districts by 15.01.2015.

iii) Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District OFC Network in NE-II Circle (comprising states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur & Nagaland):

The States of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur & Nagaland have been taken up for OFC augmentation in this scheme. This OFC Scheme would connect 407 locations in total 30 Districts by 15.07.2015.

iv) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN):

NOFN is planned to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram panchayats in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of BSNL, RailTel and Power Grid Corporation of India and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats and Blocks, for providing broadband connectivity.