

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:491

ANSWERED ON:14.07.2014

UNDERSEA CABLE NETWORK

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to set up undersea cable linking/submarine cable linking particularly between Chennai and Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the benefit likely to accrue as a result thereof;
- (c) the estimated cost of the project and the funds allocated/released for the purpose;
- (d) the time by which the said project is likely to be completed; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to have a secured reliable network to all the strategically important locations in the country?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (e) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is working on a proposal to lay submarine optical fiber cable from Chennai to Port Blair. Submarine cable connectivity will enhance the reliability and enable extension of coverage of telecom network in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) has been asked to prepare the Detailed Project Report (DPR). The estimated cost and timelines would be known on receipt of DPR. TCIL expects that the DPR will be prepared by September 2014.

DoT has taken the following steps to have a secured reliable telecom network in the strategically important locations in the country:

# Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has been asked to give its recommendations for implementing a comprehensive telecom plan for the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands after making a gap analysis, and assessing the investment required.

# The Telecom Commission, in its meeting held on 13.06.2014, has approved a proposal to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for North Eastern Region (NER) at an estimated project cost of Rs. 5336.18 Crores. This scheme would be implemented with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).