

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:184

ANSWERED ON:21.07.2014

MOBILE NETWORKS IN LWE AFFECTED AREAS

Chavan Shri Ashok Shankarrao;Sule Smt. Supriya Sadanand

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of deficient mobile network in remote and inaccessible areas of various States affected by Left Wing Extremist (LWE) activities and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the number of mobile towers proposed to be set up in these States/areas to improve connectivity, State-wise along with the estimated cost;
- (c) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has taken any new initiative to improve telecom services in these areas, including taking over network assets/infrastructure of the existing service providers and if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the time by which the mobile towers are likely to be set up in LWE affected areas of the country?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) 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 (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 184 FOR 21ST JULY, 2014 REGARDING "MOBILE NETWORKS IN LWE AFFECTED AREAS"

(a) Government is concerned about the coverage and quality of telecommunication services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. Government has approved a proposal to install mobile towers at 1836 locations in the States affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) with funding support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has already installed mobile towers at 363 locations for which financial support to meet operational expenses would be provided by Government through USOF.

(b) The number of mobile towers proposed to be set up in these States, State-wise, to improve connectivity is given at Annexure-I. The project cost discovered by BSNL through transparent, open tender process is Rs. 3567.58 Crores. In its meeting held on 13.06.2014, the Telecom Commission recommended that the proposal may be placed before the Union Cabinet for approval.

(c) BSNL is implementing Phase VII of its expansion of mobile network by installation of Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) for provision of 2G services and Node B for provision of 3G services. The State-wise details of BTSs/Node B under installation by BSNL is given at Annexure-II. There is no proposal by BSNL to take over network assets/infrastructure of the other existing service providers.

(d) Mobile networks under the USOF scheme are likely to be set up in 15 months. Phase VII expansion of BSNL in the States affected by LWE is likely to be completed by April 2015.