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Title : Need to accord approval to the proposal of Government of Orissa for linking the State with the network under Edusat Programme of ISRO.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (BHADRAK): Sir, the Edusat Satellite dedicated exclusively for educational services have been launched in the geo-synchronous orbit by ISRO on 20th September 2004. It is primarily meant for providing connectivity to schools, colleges and higher levels of education and also to impart formal distant education including developmental communication, especially, for development of the rural and remote regions.

Besides the extensive coverage of VSAT and DRS Network of Gram-Sat pilot project, Orissa have a studio and digital satellite uplink, which can serve as the regional hub for Orissa for the Edusat programme. The Government of Orissa have recently riginallyd 450 High Schools in Orissa through the Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC) grant. These schools can be brought under the Edusat network, besides schools located in close proximity to the VSAT and DRS nodes of the Gram-Sat network. The Universities, Engineering Colleges and Polytechnic Schools / Institutions can also be covered under the Edusat network.

In view of the above, the Government of Orissa have requested the Department of Space, Government of India to consider the needs of the State for networking with Edusat and select Orissa as one of the two pilot States to be covered under Edusat programme by ISRO, Department of Space, Government of India. ISRO, Department of Space, Government of India have also been requested to arrange to evaluate the existing network capability of Gram-Sat network and advise Government of Orissa to rigina our needs and support the same technically and financially.

Hence, I urge upon the Government to accord their approval to the project as per the request made by the State Government of Orissa in this regard.