

Following action is being taken by BSNL to reduce cases of theft of telecom cables in the State of Himachal Pradesh:

- Close co-ordination with Police and Municipal Authorities to minimize the cases of cable thefts/damages.
- Regular patrolling of major routes to prevent thefts and damages.
- Quick restoration of services by replacement/repair of cables.

(c) and (d) At present, there is no such proposal in BSNL.

World's back office for voice based customers support

2689. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Philippines is set to overtake India as the world's back office for voice-based customer support and sales this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that BPO exports from India do not slide?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) and (b) As per National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), most of the BPO business that is done in Philippines is voice based and the export revenues generated by the BPO industry in India and Philippines for the last 5 years is as under:

	(in US\$ Billion)				
Financial Year (FY)	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
India	6.3	7.6	9.9	11.7	12.4
Philippines	3.2	4.2	5.5	7.2	9.1

Source: NASSCOM

Based on the projections made by NASSCOM, Indian BPO industry would continue to remain ahead during this year.

(c) Government extends several incentives for Information Technology Enabled Services/BPO Sector in the country. Under Software Technology Parks (STP) scheme, approved units are allowed to import goods required by them for carrying of IT/ITES export activities as per the Foreign Trade Policy. Such goods may be imported either on outright purchase basis or free of cost or on loan basis from the client without payment of custom duty. Apart from this, the approved STP units can avail excise duty exemption on procurement of indigenously available capital goods, components and other specified

goods. So far as direct taxes are concerned, the tax benefits to units located in Software Technology Parks under the provision of Section 10A of the Income Tax Act, 1961 which was initially available upto assessment year 2010-11 has been extended upto assessment year 2011-12.

Laying of optical fibre cables in villages

2690. SHRI A.A. JINNAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has drawn any plans to connect all the villages with the telephone lines and lay optical fibre cables in the villages so as to provide telephone connectivity and high speed broadband in rural India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the task is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has drawn plan to connect all the villages with telephone lines. As on 31.10.2010, about 5,71,795 villages (including Gram Panchayats) out of the total 5,93,601 inhabited villages as per Census 2001 have been provided with Village Public Telephones (VPT) facility .

(i) VPTs under Bharat Nirman

Agreements were signed with M/s BSNL in November, 2004 to provide subsidy support for provision of VPTs in 62302 no. of uncovered villages in the country excluding those villages having population less than 100, those lying in deep forests and those affected with insurgency. As on 31.10.2010, 61919 *i.e.* 99.38% VPTs have been provided under this scheme.

(ii) Newly Identified VPTs

Reconciliation of the VPTs working in the inhabited villages as per Census 2001 was carried out taking into account the existing VPT and those provided under Bharat Nirman. All the remaining 62443 inhabited villages as on 01.10.2007 as per Census 2001 irrespective of criteria of population, remoteness, accessibility and law and order situations have been included for provision of VPTs with subsidy support from USO Fund under this scheme. Agreements in this regard were signed with BSNL on 27.02.2009. As on 31.10.2010, 44078 VPTs out of the 62443 *i.e.* 70.58% VPTs have been provided under this scheme.

The remaining inhabited villages are likely to be provided with telephone facility in a phased manner by 2011-12.

As far as providing broadband in rural areas is concerned Government is actively working on formulation of a National Broadband Plan. TRAI consultation with