

- (a) the present geographical area and population that is catered to by GSM based mobile connectivity of BSNL in Bihar;
- (b) the steps taken to provide adequate telecom equipments by BSNL in Bihar Telecom circle to meet/cover all GSM subscribers;
- (c) the requirement of 2G and 3G Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) for Bihar Telecom circle as have been assessed and out of it how many are in position at present; and
- (d) the steps being taken to augment the infrastructure and provide required equipment to meet the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) covers 68% of geographical area and about 65 million of population in Bihar through Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) based mobile connectivity.

(b) to (d) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) augments its capacity for mobile network based on techno-commercial considerations. Presently, Bihar Telecom Circle of BSNL has GSM based equipped capacity of 22,65,684 lines. However, to augment the mobile infrastructure, BSNL has finalised tender for procurement of mobile equipment in North/South and East Zone during the 2012-13.

Broadband for villages

2392. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is proposed to set apart ₹ 20,000 crores for reaching out broadband to around 2.5 lakh villages in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of villages that would be covered in Odisha and other such underdeveloped States; and
- (d) the details of other such facilities that are proposed to be created in the farflung rural areas to help the villagers remain updated about latest developments in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

The Government has approved a scheme for creation of a National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) on 25.10.2011 for providing Broadband connectivity to 2,47,864 Village Panchayats in the country. The project will be funded by USOF and initial estimated cost of project is Rs.20,000 Crore. The project is proposed to be completed in 2 years.

NOFN project is being executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) *i.e.* Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), a company incorporated under Indian Companies Act 1956 fully owned by Central Government, with equity participation from Government, BSNL, Railtel and Powergrid. The Company has been incorporated on 25.2.2012 for this purpose

The optical fibre has predominantly reached State capitals, districts and blocks, at present. National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project is planned to connect 2,47,864 Gram Panchayats in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibres of PSUs *viz.* BSNL, RailTel and Power Grid and laying incremental fibre wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats and Blocks.

(c) State-wise details of Gram Panchayats including Gram Panchayats in Odisha to be covered with broadband connectivity through the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project is given in Statement (*See below*). This includes 6233 Gram Panchayats in Odisha.

(d) On completion of the NOFN project, non-discriminatory access to the network will be provided to all the categories of service providers. These access providers/service providers like mobile operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), cable TV operators, content providers can launch various services in rural areas. Various applications for e-health, e-education, e-governance etc. will be provided.

Statement

State-wise detail of Village Panchayats to be covered with broadband connectivity through the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project

| Sl.No. | State/Union Territory | Number of Village Panchayats |
|--------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 67 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|--|-------|
| 2. | Andhra Pradesh | 21862 |
| 3. | Assam | 3943 |
| 4. | Bihar | 8460 |
| 5. | Chhattisgarh | 9837 |
| 6. | Gujarat (including Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu) | 14439 |
| 7. | Haryana | 6234 |
| 8. | Himachal Pradesh | 3241 |
| 9. | Jammu and Kashmir | 4146 |
| 10. | Jharkhand | 4559 |
| 11. | Karnataka | 5657 |
| 12. | Kerala | 999 |
| 13. | Lakshadweep | 10 |
| 14. | Madhya Pradesh | 23022 |
| 15. | Maharashtra (including Goa) | 28078 |
| 16. | Tripura | 1040 |
| 17. | Mizoram | 768 |
| 18. | Meghalaya | 1463 |
| 19. | Arunachal Pradesh | 1756 |
| 20. | Manipur | 3011 |
| 21. | Nagaland | 1110 |
| 22. | Odisha | 6233 |
| 23. | Punjab | 12809 |
| 24. | Chandigarh | 17 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------|---------------|----------|
| 25. | Rajasthan | 9200 |
| 26. | Tamil Nadu | 12617 |
| 27. | Puducherry | 98 |
| 28. | Uttar Pradesh | 52125 |
| 29. | Uttarakhand | 7546 |
| 30. | West Bengal | 3354 |
| 31. | Sikkim | 163 |
| TOTAL: | | 2,47,864 |

Subsidies provided from USOF

2393. SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund balance at the end of November, 2012;

(b) the details of addition and utilization of USO Fund for each of the last five years;

(c) the details of subsidies provided by Government from USO Fund and the subsidy mechanism;

(d) whether Government has conducted any impact assessment of subsidies provided through USOF;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA): (a) The details of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund balance at the end of October, 2012 are given in Statement-I (*See below*). Potential balance at the end of November, 2012