

**Developing the country as IT hub**

†1882. SHRI PRABHAT JHA:

SHRI VIJAY GOEL:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government plans to develop the country as an IT hub;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether its roadmap has been prepared along with the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any plan to make broadband services available to all villages in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and by when this task is proposed to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) To strengthen and enhance India's position as the Global IT hub and to use IT and cyber space as an engine for rapid, inclusive and substantial growth in the national economy, the National Policy on Information Technology (NPIT) was approved by the Cabinet on 14th September, 2012. The focus of the policy is on deployment of ICT in all sectors of the economy and providing IT based solutions to address citizen centric issues. It also aims to further boost the contribution of our IT and IT enabled services (IT-ITeS) sector to the national economy. The policy seeks to achieve the twin goals of bringing the full power of ICT within the reach of the entire country and harnessing the capability and human resources of the nation to enable India to emerge as the global hub and destination for the IT and ITe Sector by 2020.

(c) and (d) Government has approved the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) scheme. The scheme envisages connecting all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) through a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to be created for the purpose. The details of the Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country State/UT-wise are given in the Statement (*See below*).

The Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) viz. Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) was incorporated on 25.02.2012. BBNL is getting the project executed through 3 Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) Railtel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL).

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Government of India, concerned State Governments and BBNL for free Right of Way (RoW) for laying of OFC have been signed with all States and UTs except Tamil Nadu and Lakshadweep.

NOFN project is being implemented in a phased manner and is likely to be completed by March, 2017.

**Statement**

*The details of Gram Panchayats to be connected by  
Optical Fibre Cables (OFC)*

Sl. No.	State/Union Territory	Number Gram Panchayats (GPs)
1.	Andaman and Nicobar (UT)	67
2.	Andhra Pradesh	21852
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	1756
4.	Assam	2205
5.	Bihar	8474
6.	Chandigarh (UT)	17
7.	Chhattisgarh	10041
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli (UT)	10
9.	Daman and Diu (UT)	14
10.	Gujarat	14141
11.	Haryana	6279
12.	Himachal Pradesh	3241
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	4146
14.	Jharkhand	4464
15.	Karnataka	5631
16.	Kerala	977

Sl. No.	State/Union Territory	Number Gram Panchayats (GPs)
17.	Lakshadweep (UT)	10
18.	Madhya Pradesh	23028
19.	Maharashtra	27971
20.	Manipur	3011
21.	Meghalaya	1463
22.	Mizoram	776
23.	Nagaland	1123
24.	Odisha	6234
25.	Puducherry (UT)	98
26.	Punjab	12800
27.	Rajasthan	9200
28.	Sikkim	163
29.	Tamil Nadu	12617
30.	Tripura	1038
31.	Uttar Pradesh	51994
32.	Uttarakhand	7555
33.	West Bengal	3352
TOTAL		245748

**Amendment in Information Technology Act**

1883. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of several recent incidents highlighting misuse and discretionary interpretation of Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2008. Government would consider amending the Act accordingly, so as to prevent such actions which pose a danger to the constitutional guarantee of free speech for all citizens;