

are provided by users which includes concerned agencies of Central Government and State Governments.

(c) and (d) Various schemes are being implemented/planned with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for providing telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country.

National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project is planned to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 Lakh) in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Railtel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats (GPs) and Blocks. The project is being executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) namely Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL). Once NOFN is implemented, broadband connectivity would be available at all Gram Panchyats including villages in North-Western India and Himalayan States.

In its meeting held on 13.06.2014, the Telecom Commission accorded 'in-principle' approval for a scheme for providing mobile services in uncovered villages with the financial support of USOF and directed that Detailed Project Report (DPR) be prepared for the same. Uncovered villages in the country are proposed to be covered in a phased manner including villages in North-Western India and Himalayan States.

Effect of mobile phones on teenagers

1885. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of teenagers who are using mobile phones in the country;
- (b) whether excessive use of such phone causes any kind of harmful effect on children;
- (c) whether it is a fact that teenagers who use such phones are prone to abnormalities, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the action plan to address this issue?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Sir, the information about percentage of teenagers using mobile phones is not maintained in Department of Telecom (DoT).

(b) and (c) Some concerns about ill effects of EMF radiations due to use of mobile phones on humans (including children) have been raised. However, World Health Organization (WHO) in its Fact Sheet No. 304, May 2006 on Electromagnetic Fields and Public Health (Base Stations and Wireless Technologies) has concluded that “considering the very low exposure levels and research results collected to date, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak Radio Frequency (RF) Signals from base stations and wireless networks cause adverse health effects.” “From all evidence accumulated so far, no adverse short or long term health effects have been shown to occur from the RF Signals produced by base stations (mobile phone towers)”.

Further, in a Writ Petition filed in Hon’ble High Court Allahabad, Lucknow bench, the Hon’ble Court vide its order dated 10.01.2012 constituted a committee including Members from NTs Kharagpur, Kanpur, Delhi, Roorkee, Bombay and from other scientific institutions of the country including Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) Delhi. The committee submitted its Report on 17-01-2014. The Committee in its report has observed that: “as regards the possible health hazards of EMF radiation from mobile phones, WHO has concluded in its Fact Sheet No. 193, year 2011 that a large number of studies have been performed over the last two decades to assess whether mobile phones pose a potential health risk”. Further, “to date, no adverse health effects have been established as being caused by mobile phone use. The studies are still going on in different parts of the world to assess possible health effects of mobile phone exposure”.

(d) WHO has recommended that ‘National authorities should adopt international standards to protect their citizens against adverse levels of RF fields. They should restrict access to areas where exposure limits may be exceeded.’ WHO has referred to the International Exposure Guidelines developed by International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) for Electro Magnetic Field (EMF) radiation limits. Department of Telecommunication (DoT) has already prescribed stricter precautionary limits for EMF radiation from mobile tower. The present prescribed limits for EMF radiations from Base Station in India are one-tenth (1/10th) of the limits prescribed by ICNIRP.

In order to ensure compliance to the prescribed EMF radiation limits from mobile tower in India, self-certificates are required to be submitted by telecom service providers as per the guidelines issued by DoT. To cross check these, audit of base transceiver station (BTS) sites is carried out by Telecom Enforcement Resource & Monitoring (TERM) field units of DoT. This is regularly done by TERM units for the purpose of monitoring that

the EMF radiation exposure is within prescribed norms. In case, any BTS site is found to violate the prescribed EMF norms, as per the prescribed procedure, actions are taken by imposing a penalty of ₹ 10 lakh per BTS per incidence.

Fight against cyber crime

1886. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is proposed to enter into a CBI-National Association of Software and Services Companies pact to fight cyber crime;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) how far will this ensure bringing in the latest technological development from across the globe and industry to CBI to control this menace?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) In the year 2010, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Data Security Council of India (DSCI), a not-for-profit company, set up by National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) for the period 2010-12. The said MoU between CBI and DSCI was renewed again in the year 2014 focusing on the capacity building of Law Enforcement Agencies for combating Cyber Crime in the Country. A number of courses pertaining to Cyber Crime Investigation are coordinated at CBI Academy in collaboration with DSCI.

(c) The MoU enables in bringing in the latest technological developments from across the globe and the industry to CBI to control the Cyber Crime menace. As part of the MoU reputed national and international faculties have been invited for various sessions on computer forensics and Cyber Crime Investigations and also to apply innovative information technology tools in Cyber Forensics. The training for cyber crime investigation has been provided to officers from CBI, investigation officers of state police organisations and countries of South Asia.

Classifying set top boxes as telecom network equipment

1887. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has come forward to resolve the hurdles and issues in the indigenization of digitization by classifying Set Top Boxes (STBs) as telecom network equipment;