

competition from the private sector telecom operators, from the 2 quarter of current FY, the share has started going up. From 8.29% at the end of 1st quarter, it went upto 8.40% at the end of 2nd quarter and further to 8.53% at the end of 3rd quarter. And, finally, as on 29-02-2016, the share stands at 8.66%.

(d)

BSNL: In general the BSNL Telecom services are meeting the quality of service parameters prescribed by Telecom regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). However BSNL is strengthening its efforts/initiatives further to improve its quality of service so that the market share of BSNL remains intact in the given fiercely competitive India Telecom market by expanding and upgrading its network and also by taking Customer Centric Initiatives.

MTNL:

- To improve network capabilities and provide better speed/quality of service to its customers MTNL has planned to upgrade the existing 3G network of Mumbai with enhanced Downlink speed of 21.1 Mbps as against 3.6 Mbps speeds in the existing Network.
- The case for up-gradation / augmentation / expansion of existing 2G/3G network is being under consideration of MTNL Board.
- MTNL is planning to provide the backhaul media connectivity of existing mobile tower sites in Delhi and Mumbai on OFC network in place of Microwave network.
- MTNL is also exploring synergy with BSNL for its mobile services amongst other initiatives.

Because of the aforementioned measures taken by PSUs, the declining trend in the public sector's share of mobile telephones has been arrested, under effective supervision of the DoT.

Delay in implementation of NOFN

1507. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government's rural broadband project—National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) is facing long delays, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether Government proposes an alternative plan to implement the rural broadband project in the country, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) /BharatNet is a project of mega nature widely dispersed across the country for taking optical fiber to the unreached areas especially the rural and remote. Due to its vastness in magnitude and time consuming survey work to ascertain the length of incremental fibre, locating the existing fibers, mobilisation of physical resources, supply constraints with a given set of suppliers to meet the vast demands of material requirements, challenges faced in awarding contracts in difficult areas (Hilly/Rocky/Left Wing Extremism), limited number of trenching and laying contractors, difficulty in getting Right of Way (RoW) permission from various agencies like NHAI, Forest, Oil and Gas companies etc., there has been delay in execution of the project.

Despite constraints, the work of laying optical fibre network has been speeded up manifold in the last 2 years. All efforts are being made to achieve the target of 1 lakh GPs under phase-I of the project by March, 2017 and the remaining 1.5 lakh GPs under phase-II by December, 2018. As on 02.05.2016, Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) has been laid to 50,465 Gram Panchayats (GPs) with a total length of 1,11,729 km and 1,39,582 km pipe laid as against OFC laid to 59 GPs with total length of 250 km and about 2,000 km pipe laid in March, 2014. Out of 50,465 GPs, 6,834 GPs have been provided with broadband connectivity. In phase-II, broadband will be provided to GPs through an optimum combination of OFC, radio and satellite.

Number of BSNL subscribers

1508. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of BSNL wireline and wireless subscribers in the last five years;

(b) the number of complaints received in the last five years, State/UT-wise regarding inadequate/poor broadband speed delivered by BSNL; and

(c) the number of subscribers who have ceased using BSNL's services citing low/poor broadband speed delivery as a reason during the last five years, State/UT-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Details of wireline and wireless subscribers of