

**Fibre grid of Andhra Pradesh**

377. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has studied the fibre grid of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that for just ₹ 149, Government of Andhra Pradesh through fibre grid is providing internet at 15 MBPS speed, 150 free to air TV channels and telephone services; and

(c) if so, whether there are any plans before the Ministry to replicate this in other States to bring down expenses for above such services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that it is providing internet at 15 Mbps speed, 150 free to air TV channels and telephone services through fibre grid at ₹ 149.

(c) The Ministry also has plans for laying aerial Fibre in other States under Phase II of BharatNet for quicker roll out of network.

**Increasing the speed of internet in the country**

†378. SHRIMATI MISHA BHARTI:

SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken by Government to increase the speed of internet in the country and its reach into small rural areas;

(b) the mediums of providing high speed internet service in the country; and

(c) by when the entire country will be connected through optical fibre network?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) BharatNet Project is planned to establish a network infrastructure to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media, which will be shared by all categories of service providers on non-discriminatory basis. It is expected that this will expand the internet access to rural and remote areas as well as increase the speed of internet. The recent auction of spectrum will facilitate the roll-out of 4G services, which is also likely to increase the speed and reach of internet in the country.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Internet is being provided in the country through wireline, wireless and satellite medium using various access technology such as Digital Subscriber Loop, Fibre-To-The-Home, Global System for Mobile (GSM) communications 2G/3G/4G, Wi-max, Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) etc.

(c) The BharatNet Project is planned to be implemented in three phases. Under first phase of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are to be connected by laying underground OFC by March, 2017. Under second phase, connectivity will be provided to remaining 1.5 lakh GPs in the country using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media, by September, 2018. Under phase three, futuristic network with ring topology to be used between districts and blocks and blocks and GPs is targeted to be completed by 2023. As on 06.11.2016, Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) has been laid to 62,463 Gram Panchayats (GPs) with a total length of 1,43,445 km. Out of these, 12,597 GPs have been provided with broadband connectivity.

#### **Production and consumption of sugar**

379. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India is the largest consumer of sugar in the world;
- (b) if so, the production and consumption thereof during each of the last three years;
- (c) whether consumption of sugar has become a hotspot for diabetes and obesity as a main reason; and
- (d) whether some State Governments have expressed their interest to cultivate Stevia crop as an alternative to sugar, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. India is the largest sugar consumer in the world. Details of production and consumption of sugar during last three sugar seasons in the country are as under:-

| Sugar Season<br>(October-September) | Production<br>(in Lac Tonnes) | Consumption<br>(in Lac Tones) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2013-14                             | 245.54                        | 243.00                        |
| 2014-15                             | 284.63                        | 256.00                        |
| 2015-16                             | 251.21                        | 248.00                        |