

crores. This will result in Higher Data Speed Broad Band Services/Leasing of high capacity Bandwidth to telecom operators/Internet Service Providers, Resilient Protected bandwidth upto 10 Gbps. The major projects under this are:—

- Expansion of Provider Edge Network of BSNL: Out of planned 232 PE Routers, BSNL has commissioned 228 PE Routers along with their integration with Core Routers.
- A super express highway of 200 GBPS bandwidth is planned with Next Generation-Optical Transport Network (NG-OTN) to be deployed in 47 cities. The deployment plan is to cover 24 cities in Phase-I and 23 cities in Phase II. Phase I is completed and Purchase Order for Phase-II has been issued on 21.09.2016.

F. Customer Centric Initiatives

- BSNL has focused on customer care services by installing exclusive call centers for GSM services, Wire-line and Broadband services.
- Minimum 512 Kbps broadband speed upgraded to 2 Mbps.

(b) BSNL has planned following project/scheme to improve the communication network in Samastipur district of Bihar during the current financial year:—

Project/Scheme	BTS (in Nos.)
New GSM BTSs (Base Transceiver Stations) under Ph-VII Plus	8
Replacing Old technology BTSs with New Technology (ZTE) under Ph-VII Plus	11
New Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer (DSLAMs) for Broadband	5
C-DOT MAX NG Exchanges for Wireline	3

Delay in implementation of BharatNet

1189. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Gram Panchayats that have been covered under the BharatNet so far;
- (b) whether there has been a delay in the implementation of BharatNet; and
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor, and the measures taken to overcome the issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), now renamed as BharatNet, is planned to create network infrastructure for providing Broadband

connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) (approx. 2,50,000) in the country. The project is being implemented in a phased manner, with Phase I to connect 1,00,000 GPs being implemented currently, which is targeted to be completed by March, 2017. Status of BharatNet Phase-I as on 20.11.2016 is as under:—

Items	Achievement
Pipe laid (GPs)	75,028
Optical Fibre Cable pulled (GPs)	63,631
GPs provided with connectivity	14,009

(b) and (c) BharatNet/NOFN was approved by the Cabinet on 25.10.2011. The physical work of connecting the GPs commenced only after June, 2014. The reasons for delay are:—

- (i) BharatNet/NOFN Project is a unique project unprecedented in scope, scale and range to connect all the Gram Panchayats (approx. 2,50,000) widely dispersed across the country. The physical work of implementation of project only started in the later half of 2014.
- (ii) The implementation required field survey of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) route to connect GPs.
- (iii) Procurement and supply related issues.
- (iv) Challenges faced in awarding contracts because of various reasons viz. difficult areas (Hilly/Rocky/Left Wing Extremism), limited number of trenching and laying contractors, Schedule of Rates (SoR) of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), High rates quoted by contractors.
- (v) Lengthy procedures for Right of Way (RoW) permission from various Central and State Agencies.
- (vi) This national project involves multiple agencies and hence requires inter-agency co-ordination for resolution of implementation issues.
- (vii) Unavailability of Gram Panchayat/Government building in some States.

Several measures have been taken for speedy implementation of the project, as below:—

- (i) Work front of 1,00,000 GPs under Phase-I has been increased by 25,000 GPs so that work in 1,00,000 GPs is completed by 31st March, 2017.
- (ii) Strategy to procure equipment has been decentralized now. Tender for procurement of Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON) equipment has been finalized and purchase orders have been issued to 3 bidders. Essential accessories needed to connect GPs, shortage of which was affecting progress, are being procured from BSNL Telecom Factory. Authorization for procurement

for certain other minor but essential equipment such as Fibre Termination Boxes, Splitters has been made to the concerned CPSUs.

- (iii) Under the project, incremental Fibre from Fibre point of Interconnect (FPOI) to GP is being laid. At several places existing BSNL fibre before FPOI was damaged or of poor quality. Such 18,290 Km of existing fibre of poor quality has been identified for replacement based on joint survey.
- (iv) The proposal for Operation and Maintenance arrangement finalized between BBNL and BSNL has been approved by DoT.
- (v) Three Committees have been set up at various levels for monitoring the progress and resolution of issues.

Improving services of BSNL in Jammu and Kashmir

1190. SHRI NAZIR AHMED LAWAY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the developments made by the present Government in improving the services for subscribers of BSNL landline connections in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) the district-wise details of developments made so far, particularly in Kulgam district; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the BSNL telecom exchange in Kulgam district as the subscribers of the area are facing lot of problems on a daily basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Following developmental activities have been carried out for landline subscribers of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in Jammu and Kashmir:—

1. Landline and Broadband connections provided are as below:

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (up to Oct 16)
Landline	15939	20623	18223

2. Transmission system/Bandwidth up gradation: 28 numbers of high capacity transmission systems Multi Add Drop Multiplexers (MADM16) have been installed for augmentation of available capacity/bandwidth for telephone/broadband exchanges.
3. Transmission routes: A plan for more than 1500 Km. of new transmission routes has been finalized for improvement in reliability of transmission media. Execution of work on Srinagar-Leh, Jammu-Srinagar, Doda-Kishtawar and Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch routes is already undertaken by NTP (Northern Telecom Project).