

(b) BSNL has been advised to take steps to improve performance and increase revenue and control expenditure. Letter of Comfort has been given from time to time to BSNL for raising loans to meet its CAPEX and OPEX requirements.

MTNL and BSNL as knowledge carriers

2072. SHRI KUMAR KETKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the plans that Government is mulling over to utilise the telecom knowledge of MTNL and BSNL;

(b) the Status of financial reserves of BSNL and MTNL and whether Government would invest it in the market; and

(c) whether BSNL and MTNL would act as a knowledge carriers in new electronic policy and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has informed that it is utilising its telecom knowledge to train its own employees and other organisations/agencies like State Governments, Central Government Departments and PSUs, All India Council of Technical education (AICTE) along with apprenticeship training(s). It also provides vocational trainings for Engineering and Management students. It is currently providing skill development training to 10,000 candidates under Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Sanchar Kaushal Vikas Pratishthan (PDDUSKVP) Scheme, a pilot skill development scheme of Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

In addition, DoT has leveraged the strength of BSNL to implement the following projects on nomination basis:

1. Providing mobile connectivity in 2199 identified locations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas.
2. Implementation of comprehensive telecom development plan for Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands through augmentation of satellite connectivity/bandwidth.
3. Optical Fibre Cable based Network for Defence Services (NFS Project).
4. Execution of BharatNet project.

5. Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region for provision of mobile services in uncovered villages in Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam.
6. Implementation of Transmission-Media Plan for North Eastern Region.
7. Submarine Optical Fibre Project for providing connectivity to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
8. Setting up of 25000 Wi-Fi Hotspots at Rural Telephone Exchanges of BSNL.

MTNL has signed an MoU with New Delhi Municipal Corporation Smart City Limited (NDMCSCL) with the objective to provide various services like FTTH, Public Wi-Fi for making NDMC area as a SMART City. The project involves around 2000 FTTH connections in Connaught Place area and approx. 250 access points for Wi-Fi enabling.

BSNL and MTNL are incurring losses since 2009-10. As on 01/04/2019, the net worth of BSNL and MTNL is ₹ 34,276 Cr (unaudited and provisional) and ₹ (-) 9,735 Cr respectively.

Domestic telecom equipment

2073. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the domestic telecom equipment makers in the country sought for price preference over multinationals;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued the Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) notification for telecom products, services and works. The Notifications while making no provision of price preference to local suppliers, it provides for market access to local suppliers from 50% to 100% of the tendered quantity if they meet the notified local content and are able to match the price quoted by the lowest bidder (who is not a local supplier) when the local suppliers are within 20% of the said lowest bid.