

**Partnership of BSNL with French company**

1130. SHRI S. MUTHUKARUPPAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that BSNL has partnered with a French company to offer data connectivity through SMS in areas where there is no internet connectivity;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that both the companies signed a business partnership agreement to jointly market the service in India; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) to (d) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has informed that it has signed a Master Service Agreement (MSA) with M/s Be Bound India Private Limited (BB India) for provisioning of Seamless Connectivity Services (SCS) to the Enterprise customers of BSNL on non-exclusive basis in all zones of BSNL. M/s Be Bound India Private Limited is incorporated under Companies Act, 2013. Be-Bound SAS, France is the parent company of M/s Be Bound India Private Limited.

**Increase in Wifi hotspots**

†1131. SHRI LAL SINH VADODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Government is seriously considering increasing Wifi hotspots;
- (b) if so, whether Government has taken any step in this regard; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband/ internet connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) (approx. 2,50,000) in the country. As part of BharatNet project, the Last Mile connectivity, through Wi-Fi or any other suitable

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.