

Growth of digital communications infrastructure

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to lay incremental 30 lakh km. route of optical fibre cable while also increasing tower density from 0.42 to 1 tower per thousand of population by 2024;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the vision of the national broadband mission is to fast track growth of digital communications infrastructure, bridge the digital divide, facilitate digital empowerment and inclusion and provide affordable and universal access to broadband for all; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) National Broadband Mission (NBM) has been launched on 17th December 2019 with a vision to fast track growth of digital communications infrastructure, bridge the digital divide, facilitate digital empowerment and inclusion, and provide affordable and universal access of broadband for all. Deliverables and Outcomes of the Mission, *inter-alia* include laying of incremental 30 lakhs route km of Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) and increase in tower density from 0.42 to 1.0 tower per thousand of population by 2024.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**Domestic investment in production of atomic energy**

481. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the domestic investment in production of atomic energy is not sufficient in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether suggestions have been received from various parties to permit Foreign Direct Investment in atomic energy sector;

- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of Government thereto;
- (e) whether any plan has been formulated to promote domestic and Foreign Direct Investment in atomic energy sector;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the follow-up action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) and (b) There are presently twenty two (22) reactors with a capacity of 6780 MW in operation in the country. In addition, nine (9) reactors, with a total capacity of 6700 MW are presently under construction. The Government has also accorded administrative approval and financial sanction for twelve (12) more reactors with an aggregate capacity of 9000 MW in June-2017.

The Capital investment for the nuclear power projects is being funded with a debt to equity ratio of 70:30.

The equity part is funded from internal resources of NPCIL and Government Budgetary Support.

(c) to (g) The present policy (Consolidated FDI Policy of Government) puts atomic energy in the list of prohibited sectors. However, there is no restriction on FDI in the nuclear industry for manufacturing of equipment and providing other supplies for nuclear power plants and related other facilities. Government of India has amended the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 in 2015 to enable the licensing of NPCIL's Joint Ventures for setting up nuclear power projects. To boost domestic investment, Joint Ventures have been formed by NPCIL with public sector majors National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO).

Foreign Direct Investment in nuclear power sector in India

482. DR. SASMIT PATRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is considering allowing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the nuclear power sector in India;
- (b) whether it is a fact that legal opinion in this regard has been sought by Government; and