

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1822
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28TH DECEMBER, 2018**

ACHIEVEMENTS IN COMMUNICATION SECTOR

1822. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of major achievements of Government in communication sector during each of the last three years;
- (b) the details of the targets set in the said sector during the current financial year; and
- (c) the details of the action plan formulated by Government for the next two years to strengthen the aforesaid sector?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)**

- (a) The details of major achievement of the Department of Telecommunications are at **Annexure**.
- (b) The details of major targets set by the Department of Telecommunications during the current financial year are as under:
 - i. To start work under Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas Phase-II project, wherein 4072 mobile towers would be set up for providing mobile services in locations identified by MHA.
 - ii. To connect the balance Gram Panchayats with high speed broadband connection under BharatNet Phase II.
 - iii. To complete enhancement of satellite bandwidth from 1 Gbps to 2 Gbps in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
 - iv. To start work of laying of submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) connectivity between Chennai and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
 - v. To lay the balance OFC under the Network for Spectrum (NFS) project.
 - vi. To set up 25,000 Wi-Fi hotspots at existing rural exchanges of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL).
 - vii. To provide connectivity to uncovered villages of the North Eastern Region (NER).

- (c) The action plan proposed for the next two years are as under:
- i. The complete the ongoing projects such as: LWE Phase II, NFS, A&N Islands connectivity through submarine OFC, connectivity in the NER.
 - ii. To work for providing connectivity between Kochi and Lakshadweep Islands.
 - iii. To start work on the objectives of the National Digital Communications Policy -2018, in areas such as:
 - a) Provide Universal broadband connectivity to every citizen.
 - b) Provide 1 Gbps connectivity to all Gram Panchayats of India by 2020 and 10 Gbps by 2022.
 - c) Enable 100 Mbps broadband on demand to all key development institutions; including all educational institutions.
 - d) Achieve 'unique mobile subscriber density' of 55 by 2020 and 65 by 2022.
 - e) Enable deployment of public Wi-Fi Hotspots; to reach 5 million by 2020 and 10 million by 2022.
 - f) Provide connectivity to all uncovered areas.

**Major Achievements of the Department of Telecommunications
during the last three years**

Some of the major achievements are:

1. National Digital Communications Policy-2018

The National Digital Communications Policy-2018 (NDCP-2018) approved by the Union Cabinet was notified in the Gazette of India on 22.10.2018.

The NDCP-2018 envisions supporting India's transition to a digitally empowered economy and society by fulfilling the information and Communications needs of citizens and enterprises by establishment of a ubiquitous, resilient and affordable Digital Communications Infrastructure and Services. The key objectives of the policy are:

- i. Provisioning of Broadband for all;
- ii. Creating 4 Million additional jobs in the Digital Communications sector;
- iii. Enhancing the contribution of the Digital Communications sector to 8% of India's GDP from ~ 6% in 2017;
- iv. Propelling India to the Top 50 Nations in the ICT Development Index of ITU from 134 in 2017 and
- v. Enhancing India's contribution to Global Value Chains; and ensuring Digital Sovereignty.

These objectives are to be achieved by 2022.

2. Most Transparent Spectrum Auctions

- i. Cumulative 1,736 MHz of Spectrum was auctioned between 2014 and 2016 in the 700, 800, 900, 1800, 2100, 2300 & 2500 MHz bands
- ii. Spectrum auction fetched highest ever upfront payment of nearly Rs. 65,000 Crores in 2015 and 2016
- iii. DoT received an Excellence Award from CVC in November 2017 for "*Transparency in e-auction of spectrum in 2016*"

3. Key Reforms in the Telecom Sector

- i. Spectrum trading and sharing allowed to boost competition
- ii. Spectrum harmonization undertaken that resulted in freeing up of 197 MHz spectrum
- iii. Sharing of Passive (e.g. fibre, towers) and Active (e.g. BTSs) infrastructure allowed
- iv. Deferred payment of liabilities allowed for Telecom Service Providers to reduce financial stress in sector
- v. Easing of Right of Way (RoW) Rules and charges through notification
- vi. Full Mobile Number Portability enabled
- vii. Virtual Network Operators (VNOs) license introduced for effective infrastructure utilization and to boost services in under-served areas

4. Telecom Infrastructure

- i. No. of mobile BTS increased almost three times from 7.9 Lakh in 2014 to 20.07 Lakh as on date.
- ii. More than **3 Lakh KM OFC** (optical fibre cable) laid by Department
- iii. Average of more than **200 KM of OFC** laid per day
- iv. 1 lakh Gram Panchayats connected through High Speed OFC network under Phase-I of BharatNet programme. Phase-II of the project in under implementation. As on date, a total of 1,22,512 GPs have been connected by laying 3,04,846 Km of OFC. Of this, 1,16,590 GPs are now service ready.

- v. Significant boost to Make-in-India; Telecom equipment deployed in BharatNet has been fully designed, developed and manufactured in India.
- vi. Triggered ITI turnaround; turned Profitable for first time in 16 years

5. Improved Coverage of Telecom Services

- i. Overall Tele-density in the country increased to from 79.36% in March 2015 to 91.18% in October, 2018.
- ii. Mobile Internet subscriptions rose sharply from 283.29 million in March 2015 to 538.76 Million in September 2018.
- iii. Broadband connections increased by almost five times, from 99 million in 2015 to over 481.70 million in September 2018.
- iv. Monthly data usage recorded a quantum jump, from 0.26 GB per person at the end of 2014, to over 3.2GB at the end of June 2018.
- v. Internet traffic also witnessed phenomenal growth, touching highest ever data usage of 22.43 million terabytes in December 2017.
- vi. Cheapest tariff globally –Rs19 per GB

6. Economic Impact

- i. Huge jump in FDI inflows in Telecom Sector – from \$1.3 Bn in 2015-16 to \$6.1 Bn in 2017-18. FDI inflows during April-June 2018 stood at \$1.6 billion.
- ii. Total spend on Telecom sector, both by government and private entities, in the last three years exceeded **INR 3 Lakh Crores. This is ~ 30% of the entire spend on Telecom sector till date of ~ INR 10 Lakh Crores**

7. Other Projects being undertaken

(A) Network for Spectrum

- i. Almost 92% of the targeted OFC has been laid in the past three years.
- ii. Project being implemented with revised estimate of ~ INR 24,664 Crores
- iii. On completion of this project, Defence Forces will have a fully dedicated and secure network with in-built redundancy

(B) Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas

- i. 2,335 Towers installed in Phase I, with a total outlay of Rs. 4,781 Cr
- ii. 4,072 Towers approved for installation in Phase II by 2020, with total outlay of Rs. 7,330 Cr

(C) North East Region

- i. Biggest ever Telecom spend in North East Region of Rs. 10,834 Crores (ongoing and planned projects)
- ii. 7,000 telecom towers to be installed for connectivity to over 8,600 villages
- iii. 3,200 KM of OFC network to be laid

(D) Submarine Cable Connectivity

- i. Submarine cable connectivity to mainland Andaman & Nicobar islands
- ii. Intra island connectivity for Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands
- iii. Total outlay of Rs. 2,250 Crores

(E) Provisioning of Wi-Fi Services

- i. 25,000 hot spots by BSNL in rural exchanges
- ii. 7,000 hot spots (e-Choupals) by Common Service Centers
