

Press Information Bureau
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Ministry of Communications & Information Technology

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Broadband Connectivity

Under Bharat Nirman, the government has a target of covering 2,47,864 village panchayats by December 2012. As on March 2012, a total of 1,47,463 (59.49 %) village panchayats had been covered.

A rural Wire-line Broadband Scheme has been launched under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to increase broadband penetration in rural and remote areas. Under this scheme, BSNL will provide 8,88,832 wire-line Broadband connections to individual users and Government Institutions over a period of 5-years. As on March 2012, a total of 3,58,978 broadband connections have been provided.

In states like MP, Chattisgarh and NE-II (as communicated by BSNL) the achievement of coverage of village panchayats under Bharat Nirman II is low (less than 25%). This is due to inaccessible & difficult terrain and law & order problems in some part of these states.

In its recommendations on National Broadband Plan (NBP), TRAI had proposed that a 100 % central government-owned , holding company National Optical Fibre Agency (NOFA) be formed. In October 2011, the Government approved the scheme for creation of National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), for providing Broadband connectivity to 2.5 lakh village Panchayats. The objective of this scheme is to extend the existing optical fiber network to Panchayats by utilizing the Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF).The project is proposed to be completed in 2 years.

NOFN project will be executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) i.e. Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), a company incorporated under Indian Companies Act 1956, fully owned by Central Government, with equity participation from Government, BSNL, Railtel and Power Grid. The Company has been incorporated on 25.2.2012 for this purpose. BBNL is currently working out modalities for implementation of this project (Bid document process, unit of work etc.).

The Minister of State for Communications and Information Technology Sh Milind Deora gave this information in Lok Sabha today.

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