

**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India  
Ministry of Communications & Information Technology**

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**BSNL to Launch Free Roaming From 15 June, 2015**

**Mechanism to Control Call-Drop to be Explored**

**Nation-Wide Mobile Portability by July**

**FDI in Telecom Reaches Highest in Four Year**

**Wi-Fi Hotspots at all Major Tourist Places -Taj to be Inaugurated Shortly**

Following is the opening statement of Sh. Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Communication & IT at the press conference on one year performance.

Ministry of Communications & IT was in the news in the past unfortunately for the wrong reasons for a variety of factors. After the new Government took over, it was important to create optimism and confidence to generate hope for growth. This, in return, required transparency, good governance and faster decision-making. By the collective effort of all, we can say with assurance that all these elements have become integral to decision making and policy formulation which has created a conducive atmosphere for investment and growth. Some of the key elements of these achievements are being enumerated hereunder.

**DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

- Highest ever auction proceeds of Rs. 1,09,874 crore, against the approved reserve price of Rs 80,277 crores. This could be achieved because of good governance practices, identification of Defence Band and release of Spectrum from Defence Ministry, which has been pending for more than six years.
- Crossed 100 crore telephone connections in April 2015, the fastest increase in the last 11 months as compared to the previous three years raising national teledensity to 79.85 as against 75.23 in March 2014, 73.32 in March 2013 and 78.6 in March 2012.
- Rural teledensity grew to 48.90%, an increase of 4.57% in the last 11 months. the highest increase in the last three years (43.18 in March 2014, 41.6 in March 2013 and 39 in March 2012)
- The number of broadband connections, i.e. connections with a speed of 512 kbps or higher, increased from 65.33 million in May 2014 to 99.20 million in March 2015 with unprecedented growth of 52% in the last 10 months.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow in the telecom sector touched \$ 2853 million in 2014-15 (upto February 2015). It was the highest in the last four years (\$1307 million in 2013-14, \$304 million in 2012-13, \$1997 million in 2011-12 and \$1665 million in 2010-11).

***Initiatives to revive BSNL and MTNL***

- BSNL revenue grew by 2.1% in 2014-15 reversing the trend of negative growth in previous years.
- BSNL added 47 lakh active subscribers and MTNL added 2.11 lakh subscribers in 2014-15 reversing the trend of negative growth in previous years.
- BSNL is in the process of setting up 25645 new base transceiver stations (BTSSs) in Phase-VII of its expansion plan at a cost of Rs 4,805 crore, its first such investment plan in over five years. 15000 such BTSSs installed in the last one year.
- BSNL replacing network of landline local exchanges by IP (Internet Protocol) enabled Next Generation Network. 432 telephone exchanges and 70 lakh telephone lines are being replaced.
- MTNL is setting up / upgrading 1080 3G sites in Delhi and Mumbai each and 850 2G sites in Delhi and 616 2G sites in Mumbai.
- BSNL and MTNL have launched unlimited free local calls from landlines to any landline/mobile during night hours effective from May 1, 2015.
- BSNL is launching free national roaming.
- Hundred (100) WiFi hotspots at important tourist locations like Varanasi Ghats, Hussain Sagar Lake-Hyderabad, Bangalore, Cochin, Vijayawada etc. have been established by BSNL.

**Other important initiatives**

- Full Mobile Number Portability (FMNP) notified to allow subscribers to retain their mobile number across the country and enable linking the mobile to Aadhar completing the JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhar-Mobile) trinity of unique identity.
- Bharat Net (National Optical Fibre Network - NOFN ) is the largest rural connectivity project of its kind in the world, seeking to link each of the 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats of the country, through a Broadband Optical Fibre Network. The work of laying optical fibre network has been speeded up (by 30 times) in the last 10 months. To make the entire project more effective in tune with the Digital India programme, a committee was constituted for further improvement and speedy implementation to serve the larger purpose of Broadband to all. Conference of State IT Ministers was held to discuss the report of committee. Many State governments have agreed in principle to effectively collaborate in implementation of Bharat Net.

**DEPARTMENT OF POSTS**

- Post offices modernized with 2590 Post Offices having 14.55 crore accounts migrated to Core Banking Solution and 115 Post Office ATMs commissioned.
- 13264 Post Offices have been migrated to Core Postal Life Insurance.
- Procurement of biometric solar charged mobile devices with wireless connectivity to 1,30,000 rural Post Offices is presently underway.
- Sukanya Samridhi Yojana launched on January 22, 2015, has now more than 47 lakh accounts with a total investment of more than Rs 570 crores.
- Kisan Vikas Patra re-launched on November 18, 2014 has attracted investment of about Rs 2600 crore.
- Speed Post revenue grew to Rs 1470 crore in 2014-15 from Rs 1369 crore in the previous year. In CAG report laid in Parliament on May 8, 2015, on the basis of a detailed test check in 8 States, it has been highlighted that the quality of Speed Post service is far better than that of private couriers.
- Parcel revenue growth which had dipped to -2% in 2013-14, registered a robust growth of 37% in 2014-15.
- Cash on Delivery collections increased five times to reach Rs 500 crore in 2014-15 as compared to Rs 100 crore in the previous year.

**DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS & IT****Electronics Manufacturing:**

- Modified Special Incentive Package (MSIPs): Till May 2015, 63 investment proposals worth Rs. 20,825 crore received. 40 proposals worth Rs. 9,565 crore approved. Till May 2014, only 8 proposals worth Rs. 1152 crore investment were approved.
- Electronic Manufacturing Clusters (EMCs): Till May 2015, 39 applications received, 21 approved in principle. Two EMCs at Bhopal and Jabalpur given final approval and foundation stone laid. Till May 2014, only 8 applications approved in principle.
- Electronic Development Fund approved by Cabinet on 10th December, 2014.

**New pro-people initiatives:**

- Digital India is a mission mode flagship programme, aimed at bridging the digital divide by providing a digital infrastructure for utility of citizens, digital delivery of services and digital empowerment.
- Jeevan Pramaan: 2.02 lakh Digital Life Certificates produced.
- Digital Locker: Beta version launched. 1.24 lakh lockers opened.
- E-Hospital Registration: Started on May 8, 2015. More than 5421 appointments given.
- National Scholarship Portal for one stop solutions for scholarships for students.
- eBasta: Supports publishers to upload content, schools to collate and students to download on tablet, PC and Phone.

**Digital Inclusion:**

- Rural BPOs: 48,000 seats across different states for Rural BPOs approved.
- North East BPOs: 5000 seats for BPOs in North East approved.
- Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISA): scheme expanded to cover 52.50 lakh candidates, when compared to a target of only 10 lakh last year.

**New Policy Initiatives:**

- Policy on Open Source Software approved in April, 2015.
- Policy on Collaborative Application Development sent for notification on 11.05.2015.
- Email Policy approved on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2015.
- e-Sign Framework has been initiated.
- Policy on use of IT resources approved on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2015.
- Policy on Internet of Things has been drafted.

**Promoting Indian Languages:**

- Updated Indian Languages Toolkit available in all 22 languages now. Earlier it was available only for 10 languages.

- Internationalised Domain Names: Domain name .bharat launched in 8 languages of Devnagari script and in Gujarati, Bengali and Manipuri.

NNK/MD