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Title: Need to allocate Rs. 31 crore to Lakshadweep for upgradation of BSNL broadband connectivity in the Union Territory.

MOHAMMED FAIZAL (LAKSHADWEEP): Thank you, Madam Speaker, to give me an opportunity to speak in this House on an important issue of network coverage pertaining to my constituency, Lakshadweep.

Madam, Lakshadweep is scattered in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Kerala. As of now the network provider in Lakshadweep is BSNL. The network provided by BSNL is very feeble in the islands. There was a proposal from the Lakshadweep Administration to BSNL to augment the present infrastructure, which is in putting around Rs.41 crore to put new infrastructure in the present situation.

As is known, Lakshadweep is a very small populated area, the BSNL, which is a public sector company, fears about getting the money back. Lakshadweep administration may be suggested for giving a viability gap funding of Rs.31 crore to BSNL so that the existing system can be improved for providing good network.

At the same time, there was a proposal from the Government of India, which is known as National Knowledge Network. It is implemented all over India. But, a glimpse of that has not reached Lakshadweep.

The final thing that I would like to submit for the final settlement of this network issue is this. Lakshadweep is now being connected through satellite, which is very expensive. For any small calls, internal or outside, the network is through the satellite. Will Lakshadweep Administration consider submarine optical fibre connectivity under the Digital India Programme.

My request with the Government of India is to include it and expedite the submarine proposal as early as possible to improve the network connectivity in Lakshadweep. Thank you, Madam.