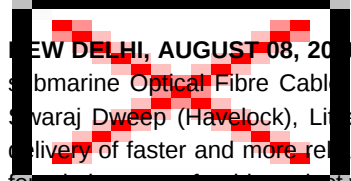


PM to inaugurate submarine cable connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands

By TIOL News Service

 NEW DELHI, AUGUST 08, 2020: **PRIME** Minister, Narendra Modi, will inaugurate and dedicate to the Nation through video conferencing the submarine Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) connecting Chennai and Port Blair on Monday. The submarine cable will also connect Port Blair to Swaraj Dweep (Havelock), Line Andaman, Car Nicobar, Kamorta, Great Nicobar, Long Island, and Rangat. This connectivity will enable delivery of faster and more reliable mobile and landline telecom services to Andaman & Nicobar Islands, at par with other parts of India. The foundation stone for this project was laid by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 30th December 2018 at Port Blair.

Once inaugurated, the submarine OFC link will deliver bandwidth of 2 x 200 Gigabits per second (Gbps) between Chennai and Port Blair, and 2 x 100 Gbps between Port Blair and the other islands. Provision of reliable, robust, and high-speed telecom and Broadband facilities in these Islands will be a landmark achievement from the viewpoint of consumers, as well as for strategic and governance reasons. 4G mobile services, which were constrained due to limited backhaul bandwidth provided via satellite will also see a major improvement.

Enhanced telecom and Broadband connectivity will boost tourism and employment generation in the Islands, give an impetus to the economy and raise standards of living. Better connectivity will also facilitate delivery of e-Governance services such as telemedicine and tele-education. Small enterprises will benefit from opportunities in e-commerce, while educational institutions will utilize the enhanced availability of bandwidth for e-learning and knowledge sharing. Business Process Outsourcing services and other medium and large enterprises will also reap the benefits of better connectivity.

The project is funded by the Government of India through the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) under the Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) executed this project while Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) are the Technical Consultants. About 2300 Kms of Submarine OFC cable has been laid at a cost of about Rs 1224 Crore, and the project has been completed in time.