

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2768
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24TH MARCH, 2023**

MOBILE NETWORK IN NORTH EASTERN REGION

2768 Shri Bhubaneswar Kalita:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the mobile network is poor in the North Eastern Region, particularly in rural areas of Assam, if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) whether Government is taking any action to improve the mobile network in the rural areas, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

- (a) As per data provided by Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), Department of Telecom field units and State Governments as of March 2022, out of 45,934 villages in North Eastern Region of the country, 36,608 villages are covered with mobile network coverage and 35817 villages are having 3G or 4G mobile coverage. The State-wise coverage status of the North Eastern Region is as below:

State Name	Total no. of Villages as per RGI Data (31-11-2019)	No. of Villages having mobile connectivity	No. of villages having 3G /4G coverage
Arunachal Pradesh	5993	2912	2371
Assam	26429	24346	24266
Manipur	2612	2142	2081
Meghalaya	7100	4672	4598
Mizoram	867	626	623
Nagaland	1535	1115	1083
Sikkim	461	157	157
Tripura	937	638	638
Grand Total	45934	36608	35817

- (b) Government and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) provide telecommunication connectivity across the country including North Eastern Region in a phased manner. Government is implementing various schemes under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to enhance telecom connectivity

in the rural areas of the country including NER. Details of the USOF schemes/projects to improve mobile networks in the country are as below:

- USOF 4G Saturation Scheme to cover 24,680 uncovered villages with 4G and 6,279 villages having 2G/3G connectivity are to be upgraded to 4G. The estimated project cost is Rs. 26,316 Cr.
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha). The estimated cost for projects is Rs. 6466 Cr.
- Under LWE Phase-I scheme, 2,343 mobile towers have been installed in LWE areas. Provision for upgradation of LWE Phase-I from 2G to 4G has also been made. The estimated project cost is Rs. 3567 Cr.
- Under LWE Phase-II scheme, 2,542 mobile towers at Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) identified locations are approved across the LWE States for provision of 4G mobile services. The estimated project cost is Rs. 2211 Cr.
- Provision of 4G Mobile Services in North Eastern Region of the country under Comprehensive Telecom Development Program for NER. The estimated cost for schemes is Rs. 3637 Cr.
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 354 uncovered villages of J&K, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Border area & other priority areas. The estimated project cost is Rs. 337 Cr.
- Scheme for providing 4G mobile connectivity in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts in four States, namely, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The estimated project cost is Rs. 686 Cr.
- Provision of 4G Mobile Coverage in 85 uncovered Villages and seamless 4G Mobile coverage of NH223 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The estimated project cost is Rs. 130 Cr.
- Laying of submarine optical fibre cable between Chennai and Andaman & Nicobar Islands for providing connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The estimated project cost is Rs. 1224 Cr.
- Submarine OFC connectivity between Kochi and Lakshadweep Islands. The estimated project cost is Rs. 1072 Cr.
- BharatNet project to create network to connect all the Gram Panchayats and villages with broadband infrastructure. The total funding of the BharatNet (Phase-I and Phase-II), approved by the Cabinet, is Rs 42,068 crores (exclusive of GST, Octroi and local taxes).
