

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1494
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15TH DECEMBER, 2023**

PRESCRIBED INTERNET SPEED

1494 DR. SANTANU SEN:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has prescribed minimum internet speed for the service providers, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of the current average internet speed in the country, State-wise;
- (c) whether it is a fact that India has one of the world's slowest mobile internet speed, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) details of the steps being taken by Government since 2018 to increase the internet speed in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Speed for mobile internet in India has improved from 1.30 Megabits per second (Mbps) in March 2014 to 75.8 Mbps in October, 2023. As per Ookla website, ranking of India has improved from 119th in September, 2022 to 28th in October, 2023 in median mobile internet download speed. In addition, mobile data rates in India are one of the most affordable.

Government has taken multiple initiatives in last 10 years to enhance telecom connectivity and quality. These include:

- (i) Rationalization of definition of Adjusted Gross Revenue.
- (ii) Spectrum Reforms like allowing leasing of spectrum, rationalization of Spectrum Usage Charge (SUC) and incentivising spectrum sharing.
- (iii) Ensuring adequate spectrum availability through open and transparent auctions, spectrum re-farming and spectrum harmonization, etc.
- (iv) Permission for 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in telecom sector under automatic route subject to safeguards.
- (v) Launch of PM Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal for faster Right of Way (RoW) approvals.
- (vi) Issuance of amendments to Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules 2016 from time to time for faster and easier rollout of telecom infrastructure.
- (vii) Procedure for Standing Advisory Committee for Radio Frequency Allocation (SACFA) clearance for telecom towers eased significantly.

As a result, the number of Base Trans-receivers Stations (BTSs) have increased from 6.49 lakhs in March, 2014 to 25.42 lakhs in March, 2023 and the number of internet users have increased from around 25.15 crore in March, 2014 to around 91.82 crore in September, 2023. The cost of mobile data has reduced from Rupees (Rs.) 269 per GigaByte (GB) in March 2014 to Rs. 9.94 per GB in March 2023. India has seen the fastest rollout of 5G services in the world with 3.99 lakhs Base Trans-receivers Stations (BTSs) deployed across 738 districts. Approximately 100 million mobile subscribers have started using 5G services in the country.

In addition to the above, BharatNet project is being implemented, using Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country.

(i) As on 11.12.2023, a total of 2,12,537 Gram Panchayats have been made service ready under BharatNet project in the country. BharatNet scope has been recently expanded to cover all the inhabited villages at an outlay of ₹ 1.88 lakhs crores. State/UT-wise, details of Service Ready GPs under BharatNet is available on Department of Telecommunications (DoT) website.

(ii) Government has planned to provide the telecom coverage to all uncovered 54,808 villages at an outlay of more than ₹ 41,331 crores for installing 41,160 towers in the country under various USOF schemes. 6,394 Mobile towers have already been commissioned covering 7,535 villages/locations and rest are in progress. Details of the same are available on DoT Website.
