

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1497
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15TH DECEMBER, 2023**

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

**1497 DR. SIKANDER KUMAR:
DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE:**

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of growth in the total number of telephone connections over the last decade;
- (b) the details of growth in Internet and broadband penetration during this period; and
- (c) details regarding any increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the sector?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) Telecom connectivity in India has improved significantly in the last 10 years.

S.No.	Parameter	As on 31.03.2013	As on 31.03.2023	Growth
1	Telephone connections	89.80 crores	117.23 crores	31%
2	Internet subscribers	16.48 crores	88.13 crores	435%
3	Broadband subscribers	1.51 crores	84.66 crores	5,507%
4	BTS	6.49 lakh (as on 31.03.2014)	25.42 lakh	292%
5	OFC Laid (km)	10.62 lakh (as on 31.03.2014)	37.27 lakh	251%
6	Bharatnet Service ready Gram Panchayats (GPs)	58	2.07 lakh (as on 13.11.2023)	3,57,393%

(c) Telecom Sector has been one of the largest recipients of Foreign Direct Investment. Telecom Sector has received FDI of 24.8 Billion US dollars in the period 2014-2023 as against 12.8 Billion US dollars in the period 2004-14.

This has been made possible by several policy interventions & reforms undertaken in the Indian telecom sector. Some of the major reforms are as below:

- (i) Rationalization of definition of adjusted gross revenue.
- (ii) Allowing spectrum trading/sharing
- (iii) Incentivizing spectrum sharing
- (iv) Ensuring adequate spectrum through open and transparent auction.
- (v) Permission for 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) in telecom sector under automatic route subject to safeguards
- (vi) Launch of Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal for centralized Right of Way (RoW) approvals.

- (vii) To facilitate faster and easier deployment of telecom infrastructure, the Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules (RoW), 2016 amended on 17th August 2022 and 7th August 2023.
- (viii) Simplification of Standing Advisory Committee for Radio Frequency Allocation (SACFA) clearance process for installing telecom towers.
- (ix) With an aim to achieve Ease of Living and Ease of Doing Business, 104-compliance burdens removed or reduced.
