

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1519
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 15.12.2023

IT INFOSTRUCTURE IN NORTH EAST REGION

1519 SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS and INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

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- (a) whether there is any IT infostructure in place in entire North East Region; and
(b) if not, whether any new project to establish IT infostructure to create job opportunities in the entire region?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

- (a) and (b): Several initiatives have been taken by the Government in North Eastern Region (NER) to enhance IT infrastructure and telecom connectivity in the NER. These include:
- (i). State Data Centres (SDCs) have been established in Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. In addition to these SDCs, a state-of-the-art National Data Centre in North-East Region (NDC-NER) is being setup at Amingaon, Kamrup district of Assam.
- (ii). Common Services Centres (CSCs) have been setup under an initiative of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, GoI. The CSC initiative aims to deliver e-services to rural citizens through CSCs and expand the CSC network till the Gram Panchayat level across India. As on 31.10.2023, 5,58,445 CSCs are functional across the country, including 20,335 CSCs functional in North-East States.
- (iii). Details of some of the key initiatives undertaken by Department of Telecom for improving digital infrastructure and Internet penetration in North East Region, is at Annexure-I.

Annexure-I

Details of some of the key initiatives undertaken by the Department of Telecommunications for improving digital infrastructure and Internet penetration in North East Region

1. BharatNet, is one of the biggest rural telecom projects of the world, is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity at all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2,64,000) in the country. The infrastructure created by BharatNet is a national asset and aims to provide non-discriminatory access to Telecom Service Providers under the project. As on 31.10.2023, 6,64,572km Optical Fibre Cable has been laid, and 1,98,864 GPs are Service Ready on OFC. In addition, 4829 GPs have been connected over satellite media. Details of GPs planned and service-ready under the project in North East Region are as under:

S.No.	State	No. of GPs planned	Service ready on OFC	Service ready on Satellite	Total Service ready (OFC + Satellite)
1	Assam	2665	1506	5	1511
2	Sikkim	184	26	9	35
3	Arunachal Pradesh	1956	77	925	1002
4	Nagaland	1006	116	116	232

5	Manipur	2936	315	1154	1469
6	Mizoram	783	41	455	496
7	Tripura	1113	598	142	740
8	Meghalaya	1854	122	571	693
	Total	12497	2801	2223	6178

2. For making available high quality and high-speed internet access to the States of North Eastern Region of the country, 20 Gbps International Bandwidth has been hired through BSNL for Internet Connectivity to Agartala from Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL), Bangladesh via Cox Bazar/Kuakata.

3. To expedite the setting up of mobile towers in uncovered villages in North-eastern Region (NER), the Department has implemented many targeted projects. Details of the major mobile services implementation projects as on 31.10.2023 are as follows:

- (i). Provision of 2G Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages and along National Highways (NHs) of Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh: Under this project 1358, 2G mobile towers have been installed & commissioned covering 1246 villages and 283 NH locations.
- (ii). Provision of Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages of Arunachal Pradesh and 2 Districts of Assam: Project was approved for provisioning of 4G based Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages of Arunachal Pradesh and 2 Districts of Assam (2374 villages and 1511 mobile towers) on 09.1.2020. Under this project 461, 4G mobile towers have been installed & commissioned covering 740 villages.
- (iii). Provision of 4G based Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages and National Highways of Meghalaya: Project was approved for provisioning of 4G based Mobile Services in uncovered Villages and National Highways of Meghalaya (1164 villages & 11 NH locations and 889 mobile towers) on 23.05.2018. Further, 723 uncovered villages were also added in the scheme for which 528 mobile towers have been planned. Under this project 362, 4G mobile towers have been installed & commissioned covering 534 villages and 3 NH locations.
- (iv). 4G saturation scheme: The Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 has approved 4G saturation scheme under which total 24,680 identified uncovered villages across the country are proposed to be covered with 4G services with provision of additional 20 % villages along with upgradation of existing 2G/3G sites at 6,279 villages to 4G services. State wise details of towers planned under 4G saturation scheme in NE region is as below:

Sl. No.	State/UT	Total new sites proposed	Total upgrades	Total sites planned (including upgrades)
1	Arunachal Pradesh	590	60	650
2	Assam	646	0	646
3	Manipur	154	12	166
4	Meghalaya	282	5	287
5	Mizoram	57	0	57
6	Nagaland	271	38	309
7	Sikkim	49	0	49
8	Tripura	134	8	142
	Total	2,183	123	2,306
