

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 710  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2023**

**BROADBAND SERVICE IN VILLAGES UNDER THE BHARAT NET PROJECT**

**710 # Shri Rambhai Harjibhai Mokariya:**

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of villages which have been provided broadband service under the BharatNet project till date and number of villages in Gujarat where broadband service has been started under Bharat Net project;
- (b) the timeline which has been set to provide broadband service in the remaining villages, the details thereof;
- (c) the objective of PM-VANI Scheme;
- (d) whether it was planned to install public Wi-Fi hotspots at more than 50,000 places in the country under this scheme; and
- (e) the number of places, where Wi-Fi hotspots have been installed under the scheme, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) Telecom connectivity in Gujarat has improved significantly in last 10 years resulting in provision of broadband services in the rural areas. The number of Base Trans-receivers Station (BTS) in the State has increased from 48,759 in March 2014 to 1,51,247 in March 2023. Accordingly, the number of mobile phone users has increased from 6 Crore in March 2014 to 8.24 Crore in March 2023 and the number of Mobile Broadband Subscribers have increased from 1.8 Crore in March 2014 to 5.03 Crore in March 2023. The Optical Fiber Cable (OFC) laid in Gujarat State has increased to 2,59,432 km.

BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. As on 13.11.2023, a total of 2,07,346 Gram Panchayats have been made service ready in the country including 14,287 Gram Panchayats in the State of Gujarat. The infrastructure created under BharatNet project is a national asset, accessible on a non-discriminatory basis to the Service Providers, and the same can be utilized to provide broadband services, such as Fiber to the Home (FTTH) connections, backhaul to mobile towers, etc. So far, 1,16,903 FTTH connections have been provided in Gujarat under BharatNet.

**(b)** Amended BharatNet Programme has been approved by the Union Cabinet on 04.08.2023 for up-gradation of existing network of BharatNet and extending BharatNet to all non-GP villages on demand basis, including 3,895 non-GP villages (approx.) in Gujarat.

**(c) to (e)** PM-WANI scheme is aimed to proliferate broadband through public Wi-Fi networks. As on 29.11.2023, 1,80,743 Wi-Fi hotspots have been installed under this scheme.

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