

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 55
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2ND FEBRUARY, 2024**

AVAILABILITY OF HIGH QUALITY INTERNET AND MOBILE CONNECTIVITY

55 Shri Satish Chandra Dubey:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the measures taken by Government to ensure the availability of high-quality and high speed internet access to forest area of Bihar States;
- (b) the steps taken by Government to enhance connectivity in North Eastern States, the islands of the nation; and
- (c) the details of actions taken by Government to improve mobile connectivity in challenging and remote terrains and border regions to facilitate connectivity for armed forces personnel and local people?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) Telecom connectivity in Bihar has improved significantly in last 10 years:

- Total number of Base Transceiver Stations (BTSS) in Bihar Licensed Service Area (LSA) have increased from 34,176 in March 2014 to 1,99,887 in December 2023.
- Total mobile subscribers have increased from 6.15 Cr in March 2014 to 9.35 Cr in November 2023.
- Internet subscribers have increased from 1.29 Cr in September 2014 to 6.76 Cr in June 2023.

Telecom connectivity in North Eastern Region (NER) has improved significantly in last 10 years.

- The number of Base Trans-receivers Station (BTS) in NER has increased from 20,106 in March 2014 to 1,09,128 in December 2023.
- Accordingly, the number of mobile phone users has increased from 2.47 crore in March 2014 to 3.8 crore in November 2023.
- The Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) laid in NER has increased from 35,315 kms in March 2014 to 1,35,306 kms in September 2023.
- This has boosted roll out of 4G/5G mobile services in the region.
- Total 2,229 number of towers have been commissioned as on 31.12.2023 in the NER region under various schemes undertaken by the Government.
- Two Internet International links each of 10 Gbps (Giga Bits Per Second) have been hired in November 2021 and April 2022 from Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL), Bangladesh via Cox Bazar/Kuakata to Agartala for making available high quality and high-speed internet access to the States of North Eastern Region.

To further improve telecom connectivity in the country, Government is implementing various schemes.

- A total of 41,160 mobile towers have been sanctioned with an outlay of Rs. 41,331 Cr to provide 4G connectivity to about 55 thousand villages.
- Scope of BharatNet program has been expanded to connect all inhabited villages with an outlay of 1.88 Lakh Cr.
