

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2033
TO BE ANSWERED ON 8TH AUGUST, 2024**

STATUS OF MOBILE AND DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY IN ODISHA

2033 SHRI DEBASHISH SAMANTARAY:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of mobile and digital connectivity in rural and remote areas of Odisha;
- (b) the initiatives undertaken by Government to improve mobile and digital connectivity in Odisha, particularly in underserved regions;
- (c) the challenges, if any, faced in expanding mobile and digital infrastructure across Odisha;
- (d) the measures taken to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to digital services in Odisha; and
- (e) the Government's future plans and strategies to further enhance mobile and digital connectivity in Odisha, including any proposed projects or investments in infrastructure development?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. PEMMASANI CHANDRA SEKHAR)**

(a) As of April 2024, out of 51,176 villages in the Odisha (villages data as per Registrar General of India), 47,323 villages are having mobile coverage and out of these, 46,050 villages are having 3G/4G mobile connectivity.

As of March 2024, there are more than 3.37 Cr. mobile subscribers (2.23 Cr. in rural areas) and as of July 2024, out of 6,788 Gram Panchayats (GPs) under BharatNet in Odisha, 6,785 are service-ready.

(b) to (e) Government through funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is implementing various schemes, including 4G Saturation Scheme, for providing mobile network coverage in all uncovered villages in the country, including Odisha.

BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages on demand in the country, including Odisha. The infrastructure created under BharatNet project is a national asset, accessible on a non-discriminatory basis to the Service Providers. On 04.08.2023, the Union Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program expanding the scope of BharatNet project.

Further, the Government has taken other initiatives for quick deployment of telecom infrastructure and to improve mobile & digital connectivity across the country including Odisha. These include: -

- Launch of National Broadband Mission to fast-track growth of digital communications infrastructure.
- Issuance of Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules 2016 and amendment rules for faster and easier rollout of telecom infrastructure.
- Launch of Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal for faster Right of Way (RoW) approvals.
