

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 33  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024**

**RURAL TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY**

**33 SMT. PHULO DEVI NETAM:**

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Gram Panchayats connected under the BharatNet Project, State-wise and year-wise;
- (b) the reasons due to which Government fail to achieve the target of connecting all 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats;
- (c) the challenges faced in expanding telecommunications infrastructure in rural and remote areas, particularly in the North Eastern States; and
- (d) the steps undertaken by Government to improve the quality of internet services in rural regions and to bridge the urban-rural divide?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN  
REGION  
(SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA)**

- (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF RAJYA SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 33 FOR 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2024 REGARDING “RURAL TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY.”**

(a) State-wise and Year-wise total number of Gram Panchayats (GPs) connected by Optical Fiber Cable (OFC)/Satellite link under the BharatNet Project is given in **Annexure-I**.

(b) BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (around 2.64 lakh) in the country. Till Oct end, 2024, under BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II; 2,14,283 GPs are service ready. This is against the planned network of 2,22,341 GPs in Phase-I and Phase-II.

(c) Challenges were faced in expansion of telecommunications infrastructure in rural and remote areas, such as:

- (i) Difficult terrains (including Hilly/ Rocky) and widely dispersed villages, especially in northeastern states;
- (ii) Limited working season especially in northeastern states;
- (iii) Difficulty in getting Right of Way (RoW) in various states.
- (iv) Non-availability of stable power supply at GPs.

(d) Steps taken to improve quality of internet services:

- (i) 4G Saturation of uncovered Villages and upgrade of 2G/3G Mobile coverage to 4G.
- (ii) Providing submarine cable connectivity to Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- (iii) Engaging agencies to address the issue of fibre cut for existing BharatNet network Phase I/II.
- (iv) Approval of Amended BharatNet Program to provide high speed broadband connectivity to all inhabited villages in the country. The design improvement, at a cost of Rs. 1,39,579 crore, in Amended BharatNet Program addresses several shortcomings of earlier BharatNet which is as follows:
  - a. Optical fiber connectivity from Block to GP in Ring topology.
  - b. IP- MPLS network with Routers at Blocks and GPs.
  - c. Provision of optical fiber connectivity to non-GP villages on demand basis.
  - d. Provision for Operation and maintenance for 10 years, including monitoring of network uptime through Centralized Network Operating Centre (CNO) and payment to Project Implementation Agency (PIA) as per Service Level Agreement (SLA).
  - e. Provision of Power backup of adequate level at GPs and Blocks.
  - f. Provision of Remote Fibre Monitoring System (RFMS) at Block for fibre monitoring.

Annexure referred to in Part (a) of the Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 33 for answer on 28.11.2024

**State-wise and Year-wise total number of Gram Panchayats connected under the BharatNet Project**

S. No.	Name of States	Mar-13	Mar-14	Mar-15	Mar-16	Mar-17	Mar-18	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-21	Mar-22	Mar-23	Mar-24	Till end of Oct-24
1	Andaman & Nicobar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	23	29	72	72	72
2	Andhra Pradesh	13	13	13	13	13	13	1398	1639	1700	1716	5209	12955	12955
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	13	105	327	657	769	964	1104	1123
4	Assam	0	0	0	88	329	1397	1496	1496	1497	1511	1511	1511	1507
5	Bihar	0	0	0	204	416	4692	5525	7961	8293	8307	8316	8340	8340
6	Chandigarh	0	0	0	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
7	Chhattisgarh	0	0	0	495	1250	3533	4017	4773	7534	8971	9584	9695	9695
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	14	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
9	Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	16	16	18	18	18	18
10	Gujarat	0	0	0	116	491	4764	5375	11680	13303	14144	14260	14316	14316
11	Haryana	0	0	0	149	640	5757	6069	6071	6081	6082	6082	6082	6082
12	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	164	222	275	365	406	408	409	410
13	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0	168	646	863	997	1078	1092	1099	1101
14	Jharkhand	0	0	0	121	356	1455	2261	2427	3522	4279	4357	4384	4390
15	Karnataka	0	0	32	2864	4825	6069	6080	6080	6080	6083	6084	6084	6084

16	<b>Kerala</b>	0	0	295	977	977	977	977	977	977	978	978	978	978
17	<b>Ladakh</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	167	184	190	192	193	193
18	<b>Lakshadweep</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9	9	9
19	<b>Madhya Pradesh</b>	0	0	0	145	2559	11560	12547	12942	15169	17652	17837	17850	17850
20	<b>Maharashtra</b>	0	0	0	127	1597	13572	14976	15644	18955	22124	23951	24253	24575
21	<b>Manipur</b>	0	0	0	0	24	121	316	947	1423	1436	1467	1469	1469
22	<b>Meghalaya</b>	0	0	0	0	0	122	187	256	580	652	682	695	697
23	<b>Mizoram</b>	0	0	0	0	0	18	32	235	422	452	452	507	532
24	<b>Nagaland</b>	0	0	0	0	0	61	98	129	222	232	232	232	236
25	<b>Odisha</b>	0	0	0	104	462	2482	3524	4021	5818	6672	6782	6785	6785
26	<b>Puducherry</b>	0	0	0	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
27	<b>Punjab</b>	0	0	0	0	237	6758	7887	12539	12664	12668	12668	12668	12668
28	<b>Rajasthan</b>	30	30	30	282	1188	8014	8352	8598	8759	8770	8770	8776	8776
29	<b>Sikkim</b>	0	0	0	0	0	4	13	22	22	24	35	35	35
30	<b>Tamil Nadu</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1922	8405	10295
31	<b>Telangana</b>	0	0	0	105	125	1996	1996	1996	3647	7260	9410	10800	10825
32	<b>Tripura</b>	15	15	15	73	75	477	506	665	711	726	731	740	740
33	<b>Uttar Pradesh</b>	0	0	0	186	1392	27082	27859	28759	31069	36911	41780	46408	46729
34	<b>Uttarakhand</b>	0	0	0	183	284	1365	1480	1502	1537	1653	1863	1983	1991
35	<b>West Bengal</b>	0	0	0	0	205	1990	2039	2187	2262	2350	2593	2676	2677
	<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>6342</b>	<b>17555</b>	<b>104748</b>	<b>116178</b>	<b>135331</b>	<b>154619</b>	<b>174282</b>	<b>190441</b>	<b>211661</b>	<b>214283</b>

Note: Delhi has no GPs and thus not taken up under BharatNet Project. Goa had its own similar broadband network and thus not taken up under Phase-I and Phase-II of BharatNet Project.

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