

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 245
ANSWERED ON 27.11.2024

DIGITALIZATION OF GRAM PANCHAYATS

245. SHRI MANOJ KUMAR JHA :

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to State:

- (a) whether Government is aware that out of 2,71,102 Gram Panchayats, only, 2,19,889 have computers with them, if so, the reasons thereof;
- (b) whether Government is aware that of the 1.92 lakh Gram Panchayats that are service ready, only 80,742 have active internet connection, if so, the reasons thereof; and
- (c) whether Government has a timeline to achieve its target roadmap regarding Digitalization of gram Panchayats and Digital India Programme, if so, the details thereof ?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL)

- (a) Panchayat being State subject, providing computers for Gram Panchayats (GPs) is primarily the responsibility of States. However, under the revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) scheme approved for implementation from 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2026, has been supplementing the efforts of all States/UTs, with focus on North Eastern States, towards supporting functioning of GPs by providing computers as proposed by States/UTs in their Annual Action Plan. These plans, based on approval by Central Empowered Committee, serve to provide computers on a limited scale. As per the information available, out of 268974 Gram Panchayats (GPs)/ Traditional Local Bodies (TLBs), 213158 GPs /TLBs currently have computers.
- (b) The internet connections to Gram Panchayats from BharatNet network is being provided on the submission of demand by the Panchayats or State Government officials. Wherever Optical Fiber Cable is damaged due to developmental activities undertaken, it is being repaired.
- (c) Following steps have been taken to provide broadband connections in GPs/rural areas including villages/ Government institutions, schools, post offices and private areas.
- i. The BharatNet infrastructure is leased to TSPs/ISPs on non-discriminatory manner for provision of internet connectivity.
 - ii. Interactions have been held by BBNL/BSNL with the User Ministries/Departments

- to seek the demand for high speed data connections for the institutions running in rural areas.
- iii. Demand registration portal '<https://ruralfiber.bsnl.co.in>' has been developed and shared with the Ministries/Departments.
 - iv. BSNL has developed Franchisee Management System (FMS) for on boarding the franchisees and revenue share partners for proving FTTH connection in rural areas including GPs.
 - v. To improve the network availability at GPs (a) Planned Maintenance Agencies and Fibre Maintenance Agencies have been appointed for restoration of faulty/damaged optical fibre cable (b) Amended BharatNet Programme has been approved by Cabinet on 04.08.2023, for up-gradation of existing network of BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II, creation of network in balance 42,000 GPs (approx.), Operation and Maintenance for 10 years for which tendering is under process.
 - vi. The timeline for completion of the Amended BharatNet Programme is March 2027.
