GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 16
ANSWERED ON 29TH JANUARY, 2026

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY IN RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS

16 SHRI RATANJIT PRATAP NARAIN SINGH:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to expand high-speed internet connectivity in rural and remote areas particularly in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the measures implemented under the BharatNet project to enhance digital infrastructure and ensure uninterrupted broadband services;

(c) the initiatives undertaken to promote digital literacy and adoption of internet-based services in rural communities;

(d) the technical and regulatory actions taken to secure rural digital networks against cyber threats and service disruptions; and

(e) whether a framework has been established to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these digital connectivity programmes and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) BharatNet is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs). The total number of GPs undertaken under BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II are 2,22,341 GPs, out of which 2,14,904 are Service Ready which includes 46,746 GPs of Uttar Pradesh. Further, Government has approved the Amended BharatNet Program on 04.08.2023 through which Optical Fiber Connectivity is to be provided to ~2.64 lakh GPs of the country and ~3.8 lakh non-GP villages of the country on demand basis which includes all GPs and 44,530 non-GP villages of Uttar Pradesh.

4G mobile connectivity has been planned in 39,799 rural and remotely uncovered villages across country including 1,359 villages of Uttar Pradesh through Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN). As on 31.12.2025, out of planned villages, 33,044 villages are covered including 1,199 villages of Uttar Pradesh.

(b) In Amended BharatNet Program (ABP), a revised implementation model has been worked out with the following features to upgrade the network architecture and improve reliability of the network:

(i) Creation and Upgradation of BharatNet network in ring architecture

(ii) Operations & Maintenance of the entire network based on Service Level Agreement (SLA)

(iii) Single Project Implementation Agency (PIA) for construction and O&M of the network in each Package

(iv) Dedicated Network Operation Centre

(v) Remote Fiber Monitoring System

(c) Government has launched the Digital India programme with the vision of transforming India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-based economy, by ensuring digital access, digital inclusion, digital empowerment and bridging the digital divide. The details are available on the Digital India website (https://www.digitalindia.gov.in). Schemes like Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) were launched under the Digital India Programme to achieve digital literacy leading to training of 6.39 crore individuals across the country. Various digital literacy courses are also being provided through National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT).

(d) Telecom – Cyber Security Incident Response Team (T-CSIRT) is the sectoral incident response and cyber-security coordination function for the telecom communications ecosystem. Its core purpose is to enable timely detection, analysis, coordination and mitigation of cyber incidents and vulnerabilities impacting telecom networks, telecom service providers (TSPs), ISPs and associated critical telecom infrastructure.

(e) Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO), which is an attached office of NITI Aayog maintains the Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) which includes indicators for digital connectivity programs including DBN funded projects. The details are available on the DMEO website (https://dmeo.gov.in/output-outcome-framework?ministry=55&tid_1=223).

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