

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 654  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2026**

**LAST-MILE DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY**

**654 SMT. REKHA SHARMA:**

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) the progress made in expanding high-speed broadband and mobile connectivity in rural, border and aspirational districts under flagship initiatives;
- (b) whether improved digital connectivity has contributed to better access to education, healthcare and Government services, particularly for women and youth; and
- (c) the steps being taken to ensure quality of service and affordability of telecom services across regions?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) For expanding high-speed broadband and mobile connectivity in rural, border, and aspirational districts, a number of steps & flagship projects have been taken up by the Government. As of Dec-2025; 2,14,904 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been made service ready with broadband connectivity under BharatNet project and 23,694 mobile towers have been commissioned under 4G Saturation Project and other Mobile projects in the country.
- (b) Yes, improved digital connectivity has significantly contributed to better access to education, healthcare, and government services, particularly by bridging geographical gaps in remote and underserved areas. Digital transformation has fundamentally altered how citizens interact with essential services.
- (c) To ensure quality of telecom services, Quality of Service (QoS) benchmarks issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) and other global standards/practices have been adopted and performance of telecom service providers against these benchmarks is regularly monitored.

Further, to make telecom services affordable across regions, the Government has taken many steps including proactive policies, implementing the Telecommunications Act 2023 for regulatory ease, creation of Digital Bharat Nidhi (formerly Universal Service Obligation Fund) for providing financial support for establishing, operating, and maintaining telecom services in commercially unviable rural and remote areas etc.

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