GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

**LOK SABHA**
**STARRED QUESTION NO. 82**
ANSWERED ON 08.02.2018
**Internet/e-Panchayat Facility**

*82.     SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR:
         SHRI HARI OM PANDAY:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has proposed to provide internet/ e-Panchayat facility in all the Panchayats of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which this initiative will be helpful to the Panchayats in transparent and speedy trial of cases;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any proposal for modernization of Panchayats in the districts of Purnea and Ambedkar Nagar is under consideration; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

**ANSWER**
**MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ**
**(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)**

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (a) to (e) OF REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 82 FOR 08.02.2017, REGARDING INTERNET/E-PANCHAYAT FACILITY**

(a) to (c):     Yes, Government has taken initiatives to provide internet/e-Panchayat facility in all Panchayats in the country. The Ministry of Panchayat Raj (MoPR) has been implementing e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project (MMP) that seeks to transform the functioning of all the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), making them more transparent, accountable and effective as organs of decentralized self-governing institutions. Under e-Panchayat, a suite of core software applications has been developed to address various aspects of Panchayats' functioning including planning, budgeting, implementation, accounting, monitoring, social audit and delivery of citizen services like issue of certificates, licences, tax collection etc. Together these constitute the Panchayat Enterprise Suite (PES). Further, under the Fourteen Finance Commission, a provision has also been made to permit Gram Panchayats (GPs) to use upto 10% of the grant for operation and maintenance including internet connectivity.

Further, Department of Telecommunication (DoT) has been implementing BharatNet project to provide broadband connectivity to all GPs in the country and to provide non-discriminatory access of this network to the Service Providers for provisioning of broadband services in rural areas. As part of this project, the last mile connectivity, through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology is to be provided at all GPs in the country. BharatNet project (Phase-I) has been implemented to provide broadband connectivity to 1,00,000 GPs in the country. As on 21.01.2018, optical fibre connectivity has been provided to 1,10,848 GPs by laying 2,58,635 km Optical Fibre Cable and 1,01,936 GPs have been made service ready under the BharatNet project (Phase-I). Government approved a modified implementation strategy of BharatNet on 19.07.2017, at an estimated cost of Rs. 42,068 crore. Phase-II of the project, that aims to connect the remaining 1.5 lakh GPs, is targeted to be completed as per the modified strategy by March, 2019.

Furthermore, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)  also commenced a project namely "Common Services Centre (CSC) 2.0" in August, 2015 under Digital India Programme for a period of four years, which aimed to set up at least one CSC at GP level to cover all GPs across the country. The key objective of CSCs is to deliver various citizen centric services, such as, Government to Citizen (G2C), Business to Citizen (B2C) services, financial inclusion services, educational services, skill development services etc. Till December,

2017, there are 2,71,311 CSCs functioning across the country; among which, 1,73,853 CSCs are at GP level. The project is to be completed within 4 years - by August, 2019. Moreover, according to MeitY, Common Services Centre Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC-SPV) has been directed by Telecom Commission to enable Wi-Fi Choupal project at BharatNet enabled 5000 GPs, with an aim of provisioning & enhancing Wi-Fi connectivity in rural India through end delivery points i.e. CSCs.

The aforesaid initiatives regarding internet/e-Panchayat are helpful in providing in accessing Panchayat Enterprise Suite (e-Panchayat) from Panchayat itself and Internet Service to Panchayats. These facilities are focussed to implementation of scheme, Gram Panchayat Development Plan and achieving transparency. In very few States, Panchayats have judicial power to dispose legal cases and in these States also internet/e-Panchayat have very limited role in helping speedy trial of legal cases.

(d) & (e):      The PES applications developed under e-Panchayat MMP have also been rolled out in Purnea and Ambedkar Nagar districts by the respective State Governments. However, no specific proposal from these districts has been received by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj so far, for modernisation of Panchayats. Regarding Purnea District, Government of Bihar has informed that in total 2500 GPs, internet service has been tested and 36 out of these are in Purnea district. The internet connectivity will enable the implementation of PES applications developed under e-Panchayat MMP. For Ambedkar Nagar district, Government of Uttar Pradesh has informed that all the initiatives of e-Panchayat programs are being implemented in Ambedkar Nagar District *e.g.* Laptop distributed to 96 Panchayat Secretaries for e-Panchayat works, training of PES Applications to functionaries, internet facility getting provided through BharatNet and Dongles are issued to Panchayat Secretaries, fully online service delivery through CSCs and Plan Plus, PRIA Soft and Action Soft Softwares implemented in 927 Gram Panchayats.

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