

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.6117
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4TH APRIL, 2018**

BROADBAND SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

†6117. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of broadband penetration in the rural areas vis-a-vis the total broadband in the country;
- (b) the percentage increase in the rural broadband penetration during the last two years;
- (c) whether the broadband services in rural areas has not seen any progress so far despite huge progress in the telecommunication sector and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the reaction of the Government thereto and the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)**

- (a) The number of broadband connections in the country as on 31.12.2017 stood at 362.87 million of which the rural broadband connections were 93.04 million, constituting 25.64% of total connections.
- (b) The percentage increase in the rural broadband penetration during the last two years are as follows:

Figures in Millions

	Number of connections as on 31.12.2015	Number of connections as on 31.12.2016	% increase in 2016	Number of connections as on 31.12.2017	% increase in 2017
Rural Broadband	31.08	46.65	50.10	93.04	99.44

(c) & (d) The broadband services in rural areas has seen good progress on the back of substantial development in the telecommunication sector . The Government is implementing the flagship BharatNet project (in two phases), to link each of the 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats of India through optical fibre network. This is the largest rural connectivity project of its kind in the world, and is the first pillar of Digital India Programme. The first phase of the project has been completed. As on 25.03.2018, a total of 1,04,889 Gram Panchayats(GPs) have been made service ready.
