

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2357
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST AUGUST, 2018**

INTERNET PENETRATION

2357. SHRI P. KUMAR:
SHRI SANKAR PRASAD DATTA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the internet penetration in the country in terms of percentage, State/UT-wise and the target fixed by the Government for increasing the said percentage along with the initiatives taken by the Government in this regard;
- (b) the steps taken by the Government towards finalization of policy on Net Neutrality along with the impact of Net Neutrality on the internet coverage across the country;
- (c) the number of households in rural areas which are currently having access to internet services;
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to increase the availability of high speed internet services in rural areas; and
- (e) the measures taken to ensure digital literacy among students and adults in rural areas along with the current status of the said efforts?

ANSWER

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

(a) As per information furnished by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), Licensed Service Area wise internet penetration (Internet Subscribers per 100 population) in the country as on 30th April 2018 is enclosed as **Annexure**.

In the National Telecom Policy, 2012, an objective was fixed for achieving 175 million broadband connections in the Country by the year 2017. As per Telecom Subscription Data released by TRAI, there were 432 Million broadband subscribers in the Country as on 31st May, 2018.

Further, Government has allocated 965 MHz spectrum through auction in October 2016 to various telecom service providers for access services in the country. Telecom Service Providers are continuously rolling out their networks using this spectrum, which is resulting into proliferation of affordable internet services and enhancement of internet penetration in the Country.

(b) Government is committed to the fundamental principles and concept of Net Neutrality and strives for non-discriminatory access to Internet for all citizens of the country. Recently, the Telecom Commission has granted its approval to the recommendations of Telecom Regulatory

Authority of India (TRAI) on Net Neutrality, with minor modifications, upholding the principles of Net Neutrality.

As such, net neutrality does not have any direct bearing on the internet coverage in the Country.

(c) As per the information provided by TRAI, there were 15.96 internet subscribers per 100 population in rural areas in the Country as on 30th April, 2018.

Further, National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) had conducted survey on “Social Consumption: Education” during its 71st round (January-June, 2014). Survey results show that 16.1 per cent of households with at least one member of age 14 years and above had access to use internet facility in rural areas. There were 1675.44 lakhs estimated rural households having at least one member of age 14 years and above as per this survey. In the 75th round (July 2017-June 2018) of National Sample Survey, information on whether household has internet facility has been included and survey is underway.

(d) Government has planned the BharatNet project to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media to be completed by March 2019. Upto 22nd July 2018, 2,84,157 Kms of Optical Fibre Cable has been laid and 1,13,355 GPs have been made service ready.

(e) The initiatives taken by the Government to promote digital literacy in rural areas throughout the country are as under:

- (i) Two Schemes entitled “National Digital Literacy Mission” (NDLM) and “Digital Saksharta Abhiyan” (DISHA) were implemented with a target to train 52.50 lakh candidates (Age Group: 14 – 60 Years) in digital literacy across the country including rural India. Under these two schemes, a total of 53.67 lakh beneficiaries were trained, out of which around 42% candidates were from rural India.
- (ii) The “Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA)” approved in February, 2017 aims at ushering in digital literacy in rural India by covering 6 crore rural households (one person per household) by 31.03.2019. To ensure equitable geographical reach, each of the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats would be expected to register an average of 200-300 candidates. Digitally literate persons would be able to operate computers/digital access devices (like tablets, smart phones, etc.), send and receive emails, browse internet, access Government Services, search for information, undertake cashless transactions, etc. and hence use IT to actively participate in the process of nation building. So far, 1.24 crore candidates have been trained, out of which more than 64.84 lakh candidates have been certified under this scheme.

Annexure

Licensed service area wise internet penetration (Internet Subscribers per 100 population) in the country as on 30th April, 2018

License Service Area	Number of internet subscribers per 100 population
Andhra Pradesh	42.26
Assam	27.33
Bihar	18.94
Delhi	134.25
Gujarat	48.34
Haryana	42.55
Himachal Pradesh	57.80
Jammu & Kashmir	42.38
Karnataka	51.45
Kerala	56.49
Madhya Pradesh	25.74
Maharashtra	49.91
Mumbai	
North East	39.14
Orissa	27.73
Punjab	59.69
Rajasthan	34.86
Tamil Nadu	51.12
Uttar Pradesh (East)	23.35
Uttar Pradesh (West)	
Kolkata	33.46
West Bengal	
Total	37.46

Notes: Data/information for Andhra Pradesh includes Telangana, Madhya Pradesh includes Chhattisgarh, Bihar includes Jharkhand, Maharashtra includes Goa, Uttar Pradesh (West) includes Uttarakhand, West Bengal includes Sikkim and North-East includes Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland & Tripura states.
