

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2396
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26TH DECEMBER, 2018
RURAL-URBAN MOBILE OWNERSHIP GAP

2396. SHRI J.J.T. NATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the country's rural-urban mobile ownership gap is worse than Pakistan and Bangladesh;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether over 40,000 inhabited villages in the country do not have mobile phone services;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has any scheme for addressing the said situation and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) There are studies on mobile ownership available on the internet/public domain by some private agencies. As per a report based on surveys of households and individuals conducted by LIRNEASIA and RESEARCH ICT AFRICA, the urban-rural gap in mobile phone ownership (as % of population aged 15-65 years) in India is 22% as compared to 7% in Bangladesh and 5% in Pakistan. However, the Government has not carried out or commissioned any such study and hence is not in a position to authenticate their findings.

(c) & (d) At present there are 43,088 villages in the country that do not have mobile services. The details are given at **Annexure**.

(e) Ensuring connectivity in remote and rural areas remains a priority of the Government. Key projects are being implemented from Universal Service Obligation Fund for this purpose.

The Department of Telecom executed a project for providing Mobile Services in 2,335 locations in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, which are affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE). As part of LWE Phase-2, Government has decided to install additional 4,072 mobile towers.

The Government has created a comprehensive telecommunication development plan for the entire North East Region for providing mobile connectivity in 8,621 villages. The Government is also strengthening significantly the connectivity with Andaman and Nicobar Islands by laying 2164.23 km of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable between Mainland (Chennai) and Port Blair and five other islands namely Car Nicobar, Little Andaman, Havelock, Kamorta and Great Nicobar Islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

The Department is also implementing the flagship BharatNet project in a phased manner for providing connectivity to all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country through optimal mix of media like optical fibre cable (OFC), satellite and radio. Phase I of BharatNet for connecting 1 lakh GPs has been completed in December 2017. Phase II of the project is under implementation.

The list of villages without mobile services (Based on 2018 Survey)

Sl. No.	State Name	No. of inhabited villages as per census 2011	No. of inhabited villages without mobile services
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	396	165
2.	Andhra Pradesh	16158	2745
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	5258	2215
4.	Assam	25372	915
5.	Bihar	39073	263
6.	Chandigarh	5	0
7.	Chhattisgarh	19567	3563
8.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	65	0
9.	Daman & Diu	19	0
10.	Delhi	103	0
11.	Goa	320	47
12.	Gujarat	17843	1262
13.	Haryana	6642	8
14.	Himachal Pradesh	17882	211
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	6337	328
16.	Jharkhand	29492	1222
17.	Karnataka	27397	869
18.	Kerala	1017	0
19.	Lakshadweep	6	1
20.	Madhya Pradesh	51929	5558
21.	Maharashtra	40959	6117
22.	Manipur	2515	877
23.	Meghalaya	6459	2691
24.	Mizoram	704	314
25.	Nagaland	1400	328
26.	Odisha	47677	9940
27.	Punjab	12168	4
28.	Puducherry	90	0
29.	Rajasthan	43264	1402
30.	Sikkim	425	13
31.	Tamil Nadu	15049	83
32.	Telangana	10128	647
33.	Tripura	863	16
34.	Uttarakhand	15745	552
35.	Uttar Pradesh	97813	295
36.	West Bengal	37478	437
	TOTAL	5,97,618	43,088
