

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4088
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH JULY, 2019**

BROADBAND COVERAGE IN RURAL AREAS

†4088. SHRI RAJENDRA AGRAWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of broadband coverage in rural areas in comparison to total broadband coverage in the country;
- (b) the percentage increase of broadband coverage in rural areas during each of the last three years;
- (c) whether desired progress in broadband services has not been made in rural areas despite the large scale progress made in the telecom sector;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, LAW & JUSTICE AND
ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)**

- (a) The number of broadband connections in the country as on 31.03.2019 stood at 563.31 million of which rural broadband connections were 190.03 million, constituting 33.7 % of total connections.
- (b) The percentage increase of broadband coverage in rural areas during each of the last three years is as follows:

(in Millions)

	Number of connections as on 31.03.2016	Number of connections as on 31.03.2017	% increase during 2016-17	Number of connections as on 31.03.2018	% increase during 2017-18	Number of connections as on 31.03.2019	% increase during 2018-19
Rural Broadband	33.29	71.06	113.46	106.52	49.9	190.03	78.39

(c) to (e) Broadband services in rural areas have seen good progress on the back of substantial development in the telecommunication sector. With the objective of boosting telecom infrastructure in rural areas, 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. The first phase of the project has been completed. As on 04-07-2019 a total of 1,31,392 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been covered by laying 3,45,779 kms of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) and in 1,20,562 of these GPs equipment has also been installed.
