

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1161
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 14.12.2022

UPGRADATION OF DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN RURAL VILLAGES

1161. SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN:

Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has considered or reviewed any new schemes or proposals for upgrading digital infrastructure, last mile connectivity and increasing digital literacy in rural villages and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has considered or reviewed any partnerships with other ministries or non-governmental organizations or private players for upgrading digital infrastructure, last mile connectivity and increasing digital literacy in rural villages and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the list of schemes and activities proposed by the Government towards this goal since 2014 and the details of their implementation and achievements itemised, State/UT-wise; and
- (d) the details of the achievements of the National Broadband Mission and the current status of goals like 'Broadband access to all villages by 2022, increasing tower density from 0.42 to 1.0 tower per thousand of population by 2024' itemised, State UT-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

- (a): Yes, Sir. As per the input received from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to create a network to connect Gram Panchayats (GPs)/ villages across the country with broadband. This infrastructure is leased to Telecom Service Providers /Internet Service Providers for providing of Internet connectivity in GPs / rural areas, including villages, government institutions, schools and private areas. Further, on 30.6.2021, in principle approval has been accorded for extending BharatNet beyond GPs upto villages in the country.
- (b): Yes, Sir. The following steps have been taken by DoT to enhance the utilisation of BharatNet in rural areas:
 - (i) About 108 agreements have been entered into with service providers for providing broadband services across various States by utilising BharatNet Phase-I network in the country. Out of these, six agreements have been signed for providing services at the pan-India level.

- (ii) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has developed a Franchisee Management System for on boarding franchisees and revenue-share partners of BSNL/Bharat Broadband Network Limited and over 1,946 franchisees have been engaged.
- (iii) Interactions have been held with the user Ministries/Departments to ascertain the demand for high-speed data connections for institutions running in rural areas.

- (iv) A demand registration portal (<https://ruralfiber.bsnl.co.in>) has been developed and shared with Ministries/Departments.
- (v) An online portal (<https://bharatnetlive.bbnlindia.in/UNMS/index.jsp>) has been developed for viewing the live network status upto the GP level:
- (vi) BSNL, on 30.5.2022, has circulated a draft agreement/proposal among user Ministries/Departments for providing Fibre To The Home (FTTH) at the GP level in government institutions on the BharatNet network.
- (vii) In eight States, State-led special purpose vehicles are responsible for utilisation.

India is among the largest Internet population with 82 crore out of 120 crore citizen online and the rest of the population too is expected to be online in the near future. For transforming citizen into digital nagriks. Government of India has approved a scheme titled Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) in February 2017, to usher in digital literacy in rural India by covering six crore rural households with one person per household. The scheme aims to enable the beneficiaries to operate computers/digital access devices (like tablets, smart phones, etc.), send and receive emails, browse the Internet, access government services, search for information, undertake cashless transactions, etc., and hence use information technology to actively participate in the process of nation-building. As on 8.12.2022, a total of around 6.61 crore beneficiaries have been enrolled and 5.67 crore have been trained, out of which 4.19 crore beneficiaries have been certified under the scheme. State-wise details are at Annex-I.

(c): Yes, Sir. A list of schemes and activities undertaken by the Government towards the said goals along with the details of their implementation and achievements, is at Annex-II.

(d): Under the BharatNet Project, 1,80,705 GPs have been made service-ready till November 2022. State/UT-wise information is at Annexure-III. State/UT-wise tower density is at Annex-IV.

State-wise status of the PMGDISHA Scheme

S. No.	State /Union Territory	Enrolled	Trained	Certified
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	3,847	1,739	990
2	Andhra Pradesh	18,46,580	14,77,696	10,42,646
3	Arunachal Pradesh	7,313	5,031	3,275
4	Assam	26,68,951	23,20,298	18,46,457
5	Bihar	71,94,401	63,70,649	46,52,762
6	Chandigarh	0	0	0
7	Chhattisgarh	25,04,227	21,55,181	14,12,000
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	9,851	7,301	5,309
9	Delhi	6,935	5,561	3,941
10	Goa	55,817	50,664	37,259
11	Gujarat	27,59,449	24,14,458	17,73,700
12	Haryana	18,70,129	15,86,848	11,99,025
13	Himachal Pradesh	4,80,639	3,63,134	2,65,428
14	Jammu and Kashmir	6,99,622	546725	394972
15	Jharkhand	24,62,522	19,99,143	14,63,887
16	Karnataka	12,68,143	9,49,884	6,15,888
17	Kerala	56,214	27,104	21,389
18	Lakshadweep	136	35	0
19	Madhya Pradesh	55,23,038	4894890	3617690
20	Maharashtra	55,82,878	47,77,943	34,38,837
21	Manipur	18,745	8,907	5,593
22	Meghalaya	1,45,780	1,00,718	67,542
23	Mizoram	26,655	20,030	12,304
24	Nagaland	6,620	4,612	3,182
25	Odisha	32,17,942	26,81,140	20,24,613
26	Puducherry	17,732	11,791	7,867
27	Punjab	16,81,508	14,46,893	11,09,947
28	Rajasthan	38,81,587	33,44,123	24,39,907
29	Sikkim	24,588	21,252	15,626
30	Tamil Nadu	14,12,781	11,26,252	8,21,623
31	Telangana	10,83,859	8,56,956	5,82,598
32	Tripura	3,16,201	2,45,479	1,96,927
33	Uttarakhand	7,55,389	638358	4,74,392
34	Uttar Pradesh	1,60,37,929	1,42,46,329	1,07,75,868
35	West Bengal	24,61,868	20,32,141	15,80,724
36	Ladakh	24,669	2,18,88	17,316
	Total	6,61,14,545	5,67,61,153	4,19,31,484

Source: HRD Division, MeitY

Annex-II

List of schemes and activities and details of their implementation and achievements

1. Mobile services in Uncovered villages in Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh (National Highways only) of North East Region and seamless coverage along National Highway

Under this scheme, mobile connectivity was to be provided by setting up 2,004 towers in the uncovered villages and along National Highways of Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh (National Highways only) of North-East Region. The Agreements were signed with Bharti Airtel Ltd. and Bharti Hexacom Ltd. on 8.12.2017 for implementation of the project. Though the Agreement with the Implementation Agencies (Bharti Airtel Ltd./Bharti Hexacom Ltd.) is for providing 2G services, the Implementation Agencies, on their own, have been providing 4G services, along with 2G services, at about 90% of the tower sites. A total of 1,358 sites have been installed and are providing services. The installation work is complete for feasible sites. State-wise details are as follows:

S. No.	State	No. of towers (as per agreement)	Towers installed and providing services	Coverage provided by towers	
				Villages covered	NH Covered
1	Assam	983	439	530	25
2	Sikkim	20	8	9	0
3	Manipur	437	404	382	55
4	Mizoram	246	214	213	17
5	Nagaland	160	152	112	45
6	Tripura	9	3	-	3
7	Arunachal Pradesh	149	138	-	138
Total		2,004	1,358	1,246	283

Note: A number of villages and NH Sites could not be covered due to various reasons, such as forest clearance, Defence clearance, accessibility issues, land record issues, villages washed out, villages not found, State mismatch, etc. About 332 villages could not be covered due pre-existence of mobile coverage.

2. Provision of 4G based mobile services in identified uncovered villages and along National Highways in Meghalaya

The project was approved on 23.05.2018 and as per the approval, the work has been awarded to M/s Bharti Hexacom Ltd for 1,164 uncovered villages and 11 sites along National Highways in Meghalaya on 4.9.2020 for provisioning of 4G mobile services at an estimated cost of Rs. 971.96 crore (Including add-on order dated 16.09.2022). As of October 2022, a total of 316 sites have been installed and commissioned, covering 475 villages. The project is targeted to be completed by March 2023. Further, 528 sites covering additional 723 villages have been added in the project targeted to be completed by May 2024.

3. Provision of 4G-based mobile services in identified uncovered villages in Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam (KarbiAnglong and Dima Hasao)

For provisioning of 4G mobile services at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,255.5 crore, the work has been awarded to M/s Bharti Hexacom Limited for 1683 villages of Arunachal Pradesh on 29.10.2021 and to M/s Reliance JioInfocomm Limited for 691 villages of 2 districts of Assam on 1.11.2021. As of October 2022, survey work in all 1,683 villages of Arunachal Pradesh and 680 villages out of 691 villages of two Districts of Assam have been completed. So far, in Arunachal Pradesh 32 sites have been installed and commissioned, covering 45 villages. In two districts of Assam, 58 sites have been installed and commissioned, covering 70 villages.

4. Scheme for border areas and other priority areas

Tender for provision of mobile service in 354 uncovered villages of border villages of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttarakhand and other priority areas was floated on 17.10.2019. Agreement has been signed on 28.04.2020 with implementing agency, i.e., M/s Reliance JioInfocomm Ltd.

Further, an additional order for covering 55 uncovered villages under the scheme has been issued to M/s RJIL vide letter dated 6.9.2021. Implementation work is under progress and 294 villages have been covered by installing 273 mobile towers. Details are as follows:

S. No.	State/ Union Territory	Total no. of villages as per agreement	No. of deleted villages	No. villages added	Net total villages to be covered	No. of towers installed	No. of villages covered
1	Bihar	8	0	0	8	5	8
2	West Bengal	1	0	0	1	1	1
3	Gujarat	70	10	2	62	45	55
4	Himachal Pradesh	59	16		43	35	40
5	Jammu and Kashmir	87	13	11	85	61	63
6	Ladakh	57	5	10	62	56	56
7	Karnataka	3	0	0	3	3	3
8	Madhya Pradesh	1	1	0	0	0	0
9	Rajasthan	31	3	4	32	30	30
10	Uttar Pradesh	9	1		8	7	8
11	Uttarakhand	28	3	28	53	30	30
	Total	354	52	55	357	273	294

5. 502 Aspirational District villages (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar)

The scheme has been planned for provisioning of 4G based Mobile Service in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts of four states (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan) at an estimated cost of Rs. 686.71 crore. Tender for selecting the implementing agencies was floated on 19.5.2020. Agreement has been signed with the Project Implementing Agencies, i.e., M/s RJIL for Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh Bidding Unit, M/s Bharati Airtel Ltd. for Bihar bidding unit and M/s Bharati Hexacom Ltd. for Rajasthan bidding unit. So far, 106 villages have been covered by installing 132 mobile towers in the State. State-wise list of 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts of 4 states:

S. No.	State	No. of Aspirational districts	No. of villages to be covered	No. of towers to be installed	No. of Sites commissioned	No. of Villages covered
1	Bihar	5	80	62	23	40
2	Madhya Pradesh	8	232	221	51	56
3	Uttar Pradesh	6	22	20	19	19
4	Rajasthan	5	195	186	13	17
	Total	24	529	489	106	132

6. Remaining 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha)

A scheme for 7,287 uncovered villages has been approved by Cabinet on 17.11.2021 for provisioning of 4G-based mobile services in 44 Aspirational Districts of five States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha. Based on the outcome of a competitive bidding process, agreements with M/s RJIL for three States and M/s BAL for two States have been signed on 20.5.2022, at a cost of Rs. 3765.47 crore. Survey work has commenced. Completion targeted by November 2023. State-wise details of the 7,287 uncovered villages of 44 Aspirational Districts of five States are as follows:

S. No.	State	No. of Aspirational Districts	No. of villages to be covered
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	1218
2	Chhattisgarh	8	699
3	Jharkhand	19	827
4	Maharashtra	4	610
5	Odisha	10	3,933
	Total	44	7,287

7. Scheme for Mobile Communication Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Affected Phase-I

Total 2,355 sites were approved under LWE Phase-I Project. Out of these 2,343 sites are radiating. Project completed. State-wise status of installed mobile towers is as follows:

Sl. No.	State	Total identified sites under LWE Phase I Projected	Sites providing services
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1	Andhra Pradesh	62	62
2	Bihar	250	250
3	Chhattisgarh	532	525
4	Jharkhand	816	816
5	Maharashtra	65	65
6	Madhya Pradesh	22	22
7	Odisha	261	256
8	Telangana	173	173
9	Uttar Pradesh	78	78
10	West Bengal	96	96
Total		2,355	2,343

As per requirement, a proposal for upgrade from 2G to 4G technology at all LWE-I sites and operation and maintenance of existing sites till upgrade has been approved on 27.4.2022. The Action has been initiated for implementation of the project at estimated cost of Rs 541.80 crore and Rs 1,884.59 crore (excluding taxes and levies) respectively. The work has been awarded to BSNL as the sites were commissioned by BSNL. BSNL has floated the tender for award of the work.

8. Scheme for Mobile Communication Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Affected Phase II

Tender was approved and agreements have been signed on 30-09-2021 with M/s Reliance JioInfocomm Ltd. (RJIL) for Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha on and on 01-10-2021 with M/s Bharti Airtel Ltd. (BAL) for Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. As of October 2022 a total of 224 mobile towers and associated infrastructure have been installed and commissioned, covering 232 locations in the State of

Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. The project cost is Rs. 2211.17 crore. State-wise details of the LWE Phase-II tower location are as follows:

S No.	State	No. of Districts	No. of Mobile Towers	No. of tower commissioned	Total no. of villages covered
1	Andhra Pradesh	9	346		
2	Bihar	7	16		
3	Chhattisgarh	15	971	147	155
4	Jharkhand	21	450		
5	Madhya Pradesh	2	23	3	3
6	Maharashtra	3	125	5	5
7	Odisha	5	483	69	69
8	Telangana	12	53		
9	Uttar Pradesh	1	42		
10	West Bengal	5	33		
Total		80	2542	224	232

9. Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the country

A USOF funded project for saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the country at a total cost of Rs. 26,316 crore was approved on 27.7.2022. The project aims to provide 4G mobile

services in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and difficult areas. The project has a provision to include additional villages on account of rehabilitation, new-settlements, withdrawal of services by existing operators etc. In addition, 6,279 villages having only 2G/3G connectivity are to be upgraded to 4G.

The project is being executed by BSNL using Atmanirbhar Bharat's 4G technology stack and is funded through the Universal Service Obligation Fund. The project cost of Rs. 26,316 which included capital and 5-year operational expenditure. BSNL has started the survey work with the target for completing the project by December 2023.

Uncovered villages under Saturation scheme		
S. No.	State/UT	No. of Villages
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	63
2	Andhra Pradesh	3,104
3	Arunachal Pradesh	1,250
4	Assam	525
5	Bihar	148
6	Chhattisgarh	728
7	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	66
8	Goa	30
9	Gujarat	286
10	Haryana	7
11	Himachal Pradesh	1,226
12	Jammu and Kashmir	297
13	Jharkhand	1,367
14	Karnataka	985
15	Kerala	214
16	Ladakh	192
17	Lakshadweep	1
18	Madhya Pradesh	3,043
19	Maharashtra	1,714
20	Manipur	287
21	Meghalaya	1,527
22	Mizoram	141
23	Nagaland	397
24	Odisha	1,792
25	Puducherry	1
26	Rajasthan	,2950
27	Sikkim	308
28	Tamil Nadu	346

29	Telangana	376
30	Tripura	242
31	Uttar Pradesh	229
32	Uttarakhand	716
33	West Bengal	124
	Grand Total	24,682

9. **BharatNetProject**

BharatNet project is implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. The infrastructure created under BharatNet project can be utilised by service providers, for providing of broadband/internet services. The scope of BharatNet project has been extended up to all inhabited villages beyond GPs in the country.

Status of BharatNet project (as on 28.11.2022)

S. No.	State/Union Territory	Total planned GPs	OFC laid (km)	Service-ready GPs on OFC	Service-ready GPs on satellite	Total service-ready GPs (OFC + satellite)
1	Andaman and Nicobar	70	207	47	4	51
2	Andhra*	13,420	33,095	4,270	11	4,281
3	Arunachal Pradesh	1,796	1,519	79	690	769
4	Assam	2,665	4,877	1,506	5	1,511
5	Bihar	8,404	27,413	8,300	16	8,316
6	Chandigarh	12	19	12		12
7	Chhattisgarh*	11,676	41,784	9,440	11	9,451
8	Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli	38	112	38		38
9	Goa#	191	0	0		0
10	Gujarat*	14,288	55,298	14,202	25	14,227
11	Haryana	6,256	11,901	6,082		6,082
12	Himachal Pradesh	3616	783	252	156	408
13	Jammu and Kashmir	4,299	860	413	678	1,091
14	Jharkhand*	4,399	16,745	4,333	2	4335
15	Karnataka	6,090	14,217	6,084		6,084
16	Kerala	978	829	977	1	978
17	Ladakh	193	0	0	192	192

S. No.	State/Union Territory	Total planned GPs	OFC laid (km)	Service-ready GPs on OFC	Service-ready GPs on satellite	Total service-ready GPs (OFC + satellite)
18	Lakshadweep	10	0	0	9	9
19	Madhya Pradesh	22,841	67,722	17,743	33	17,776
20	Maharashtra*	28,238	83,176	23,592	5	23,597
21	Manipur	2,782	634	315	1,143	1,458
22	Meghalaya	1,792	1,069	122	559	681
23	Mizoram	762	689	41	411	452
24	Nagaland	983	2,000	116	116	232
25	Odisha*	6,796	32,373	6,741	38	6,779
26	Puducherry	110	93	98		98
27	Punjab	13,337	24,463	12,664	4	12,668
28	Rajasthan	11,352	30,139	8,740	30	8,770
29	Sikkim	185	942	18	8	26
30	Tamil Nadu*\$	12,524	4,893	499		499
31	Telangana*	12,769	29,102	8,716		8,716
32	Tripura	1,114	1,686	585	142	727
33	Uttar Pradesh	59,365	1,03,950	39,785	33	39,818
34	Uttarakhand	7,936	3,828	1,598	162	1,760
35	West Bengal	3,348	9,493	2,504	3	2,507
	Total	2,64,635	6,05,911	1,79,912	4,487	1,84,399

*The Phase-II is being implemented under a State-led model in these States.

*\$Tamil Nadu State Government signed the MoU with Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) only on 31.3.2017 for implementation of the BharatNet project. Phase-I of BharatNet was therefore, not taken up in Tamil Nadu and the State's GPs are being implemented in Phase-II under the State-led model.

Goa had its own similar broadband network and therefore, has not been taken up under Phase-I and Phase-II of the BharatNet Project.

Note: Delhi has no GPs and thus not taken up under BharatNet Project.

11. USOF scheme for setting up of 25,000 public Wi-Fi hotspots using the infrastructure of BSNL's telephone exchanges in rural areas

Public Wi-Fi hotspots had been set up by BSNL in around 24,000 telephone exchanges in rural areas. The project cost was Rs. 634.90 crore. At each exchange, one Access Point (AP) with backhaul bandwidth of 2 Mbps was to be provided. Wi-Fi hotspots have been set up /installed in 24,333 rural exchanges/BTS.

S. No.	BSNL Circle	Total no. of exchanges/ BTS sites	No. of Wi-Fi hotspots providing service
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S. No.	BSNL Circle	Total no. of exchanges/ BTS sites	No. of Wi-Fi hotspots providing service
1	Andhra Pradesh	1,492	1,492
2	Assam	409	409
3	Bihar	895	895
4	Chhattisgarh	410	410
5	Gujarat	1,881	1,834
6	Haryana	779	773
7	Himachal Pradesh	647	647
8	Jammu and Kashmir	201	201
9	Jharkhand	199	183
10	Karnataka	2,071	2,037
11	Kerala	1,066	1,066
12	Madhya Pradesh	1,778	1,675
13	Maharashtra (including Goa)	3,746	3,567
14	NE-I (Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura)	129	85
15	NE-II (Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Nagaland)	141	114
16	Odisha	752	752
17	Punjab	1,195	1,188
18	Rajasthan	1,645	1,589
19	Tamil Nadu	1,276	1,276
20	Telangana	910	910
21	Uttar Pradesh	1,964	1,964
22	Uttarakhand	427	282
23	West Bengal	987	984
Total		25,000	24,333

12. Hiring of 20 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala from BSCCL, Bangladesh via Cox Bazar

For making available high quality and high-speed internet access to the States of North Eastern Region of the country, financial support of Rs. 17.15 crore is to be provided to Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for hiring of 20 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala from Bangladesh Submarine Cable Company Limited (BSCCL), Bangladesh via Cox Bazar/Kuakata. The first 10 Gbps link was commissioned on 26.11.2021 and the second 10 Gbps link was commissioned on 21.04.2022.

13. Provision of 4G mobile services in 85 uncovered villages and seamless mobile coverage along NH-4 (erstwhile NH 223) in Andaman and Nicobar Islands (82+42 NH towers)

- (i) Agreement signed between USO Fund and M/s RJIL on 15.03.2021 for setting up of 82 towers to provide mobile services on 4G Technology in identified 85 uncovered villages with population over 10 and 42 towers for providing 4G mobile services to bridge the gaps in mobile connectivity along uncovered National Highway. As on 30.6.2022, survey report for 70 tower sites 42 Villages, 23 Highway have been approved by USO, out of the 100 tower site survey report 55 Villages and 45 Highways submitted by M/s RJIL. M/s RJIL has been given in-principle approval for consolidated 52 BTS along NH4 and the list of villages to be covered in lieu of the proposal of deletion of 20 sites.
- (ii) The target for completion of project has been extended upto 20.5.2023 on the request of M/s RJIL due to pending forest permissions and non-availability of land and backhaul, which is under consideration. Satellite bandwidth to RJIL for the project has been allocated by ISRO.

14. Satellite bandwidth at Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep Islands

- (i) For Andaman & Nicobar Islands work has been awarded to BSNL on nomination basis for satellite bandwidth augmentation from 2 Gbps to 4 Gbps in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Satellite bandwidth augmentation to 4 Gbps has been successfully implemented by BSNL on 9.9.2021.
- (ii) For Lakshadweep Islands, work has been awarded to BSNL on nomination basis for satellite bandwidth augmentation from 318 Mbps to 1.71Gbps. Satellite bandwidth augmentation to 1.71 Gbps has been successfully implemented by BSNL on 14.8.2021. Further augmentation of the satellite bandwidth from 1.71 Gbps to 3.46 Gbps utilizing GSAT-31 capacities through NSIL and BSNL on nomination basis was approved on 13.4.2021. However, based on a request from the Union Territory Administration for dropping the scheme, NSIL and BSNL have been instructed not to proceed further with the project.

15. Submarine OFC connectivity between Mainland (Kochi) and LD Islands (1869 km) (total 11 islands; Kavaratti, Kalpeni, Agatti, Amini, Andrott, Minicoy, Bangaram, Bitra, Chetlat, Kiltan and Kadmat

- (i) The proposal for “Provision of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity between mainland (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Island (KLI Project)” was approved on 9.12.2020. BSNL and TCIL have been nominated as Project Execution Agency and Technical Consultant respectively. BSNL floated tender on 10.3.2021 and issued the purchase order to M/s NECCIPL, the successful bidder, on 28.9.2021. Total financial implication is about Rs. 1072 crore (excluding taxes), which includes capital expenditure of Rs. 837 crore to be funded by USO, while operational expenditure of Rs. 235 Crore for five years is to be funded by Ministry of Home Affairs / UT Administration of Lakshadweep Islands. Land has been allocated by Lakshadweep UT Administration at Kavaratti, Kiltan, Bangaram and Bitra for construction of new Cable Landing Station (CLS) building to USO/DoT.
- (ii) Marine survey commenced on 14.12.2021. Deep Water Marine Route Survey been completed for all segments on 31.3.2022.
- (iii) The survey and baseline data collection work for seeking EIA/ CRZ etc. clearance has been completed by M/s EQMS. EIA /CRZ applied for both Kochi and Lakshadweep. From Kerala Coastal Zone Management Authority (CZMA), a case has been forwarded to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, New Delhi on 24th March 2022. For Lakshadweep, the Coastal Zone Management Authority meeting was held on 18th April 2022. Minutes of the meeting were issued on 28.4.2022. The Ministry of Environment,

Forest and Climate Change CRZ meeting was held on 6.7.2022 and the project has been recommended with certain conditions/actions.

- (iv) Land OFC pipe laying has been completed. Cable blowing has been done for 28km out of 78 km. Completion of the project is targeted by May 2023.

16. Re-provisioning of Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPTs) provided to MHA agencies (CAPFs), MoD agencies (Army, BRO) and other agencies using VSAT connectivity under BharatNet Project

BSNL was providing DSPTs services to MHA agencies (CAPFs), MoD agencies (Army, BRO) and other agencies. These DSPTs were provided in remote, rural, far-flung, difficult terrain areas where no coverage from any other operator is available. The DSPTs were working on NSS-6 satellite. However, due to closure of NSS-6 satellite, the services of all the 1,409 DSPTs provided to MHA Agency/ Armed/ Paramilitary Forces etc. under subsidy support from USO Fund were disrupted with effect from 13.05.2019.

As a short-term measure, INMARSAT terminals were provided to MHA agencies (CRPF, BSF, ITBP and SSB) and MoD agencies (Indian Army and BRO) to meet their critical communication need. On 20.12.2019 the proposal for re-provisioning of Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPT) provided to MHA agencies (CAPFs), MoD agencies (Army, BRO) and other agencies through the ongoing tender of VSAT connectivity under BharatNet Project was approved. Further, approval was also accorded for providing VSATs in Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC). The approval was conveyed to BBNL for provision of DSPTs. As of now, 1391 sites have been operationalised. Details are as follows:

Agency-wise status of DSPT re-provisioning (as on 21.11.2022)

Agency	Total Sites	Delivered		Installed
		VSAT	SPV	
ARMY	207	207	207	204
BRO	75	75	75	75
BSF	336	336	336	336
CRPF	326	326	326	326
ITBP	207	207	207	207
SSB	103	103	103	103
LAHDC	18	18	18	18
Ladakh DSPT	137	124	124	122
Total	1,409	1,392	1,396	1,391

State/ Union Territory- wise service -ready Gram Panchayats as on 30.11.2022

S.No	State/Union Territory	Service-ready Gram Panchayats
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	52
2	Andhra Pradesh	4,424
3	Arunachal Pradesh	77
4	Assam	1,506
5	Bihar	8,300
6	Chandigarh	11
7	Chhattisgarh	9,441
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman Diu	38
9	Gujarat	14,203
10	Haryana	6,082
11	Himachal Pradesh	252
12	Jammu & Kashmir	413
13	Jharkhand	4,339
14	Karnataka	6,081
15	Kerala	977
16	Madhya Pradesh	17,742
17	Maharashtra	23,754
18	Manipur	315
19	Meghalaya	122
20	Mizoram	40
21	Nagaland	113
22	Odisha	6,741
23	Puducherry	98
24	Punjab	12,664
25	Rajasthan	8,740
26	Sikkim	18
27	Tamil Nadu	763
28	Telangana	8,796
29	Tripura	585
30	Uttar Pradesh	39,894
31	Uttrakhand	1,615
32	West Bengal	2,509
	Total	1,80,705

Source : USOF/DoT

State/ UT wise Tower density as on 30.11.2022

Sl. No.	State/UT	Towers	Projected population 2022 (In thousands)	Tower Density per 1000 Population
1	Andaman and Nicobar	345	402	0.86
2	Andhra Pradesh	25,992	52,972	0.49
3	Arunachal Pradesh	1,546	1,548	1.00
4	Assam	17,254	35,378	0.49
5	Bihar	40,788	1,24,919	0.33
6	Chandigarh (UT)	1,183	1,219	0.97
7	Chattisgarh	15,186	29,836	0.51
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli (UT) and Daman Diu	447	1,170	0.38
9	Delhi	23,546	20,965	1.12
10	Goa	1,649	1,567	1.05
11	Gujarat	43,494	70,648	0.62
12	Haryana	24,052	29,846	0.81
13	Himachal Pradesh	8,810	7,431	1.19
13	Jammu and Kashmir	10,738	13,505	0.80
15	Jharkhand	20,894	38,969	0.54
16	Karnataka	46,970	67,268	0.70
17	Kerala	20,673	35,633	0.58
18	Laddakh	546	299	1.83
19	Lakshadweep (UT)	33	68	0.49
20	Madhya Pradesh	38,263	85,548	0.45
21	Maharashtra	78,083	1,25,411	0.62
22	Manipur	2,581	3,194	0.81
23	Meghalaya	2,305	3,318	0.69
24	Mizoram	1,234	1,227	1.01
25	Nagaland	1,575	2,213	0.71
26	Delhi	23,546	20,965	1.12
27	Odisha	24,692	45,987	0.54
28	Puducherry (UT)	747	1,608	0.46
29	Punjab	22,918	30,535	0.75
30	Rajasthan	39783	80,153	0.50
31	Sikkim	735	683	1.08
32	Tamil Nadu	46,514	76,631	0.61
33	Telangana	28,353	37,907	0.75
34	Tripura	2,531	4,109	0.62
35	Uttar Pradesh	89,470	2,33,297	0.38
36	Uttarakhand	9,244	11,518	0.80
36	West Bengal	47,373	98,604	0.48
	Total	740547	13,75,586	0.54
