

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1111
TO BE ANSWERED ON 8TH FEBRUARY, 2023**

MOBILE CONNECTIVITY

1111. SHRI ANUMULA REVANTH REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that more than 25,000 villages lack mobile connectivity, if so, the details of such villages with the reasons thereof;
- (b) whether it is a fact that out of all the Government WiFi hotspots installed in the country, only 51 per cent of them provide service, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the time by which the remaining installed WiFi will start providing services; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to increase the internet connectivity among the villages apart from BharatNet Project?

**ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) As per data received from Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), Department of Telecom's field unit and State Governments as of March '2022, out of 6,44,131 villages (villages are as per data of Registrar General of India as of November 2019) in the country, around 6,05,230 villages are having mobile connectivity and 38,901 villages are not having any mobile coverage. The State/UT-wise details of the uncovered villages are attached as **Annexure-I**. The reasons for not having mobile coverage in these villages include, inter-alia, remote and tough terrain, areas diversely located with scattered population and commercially non-viable operations. Government through funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is implementing various schemes for providing mobile coverage in remaining uncovered villages of the country.

(b) & (c) As on date, Wi-Fi Access Points have been installed in 1,04,664 GPs. The operationability/availability of Wi-Fi hotspot depends on the multiple factors like availability of internet bandwidth, power, etc.

Also, Broadband connections in rural areas are also being provided through 108 revenue share agreements signed by BBNL and over 2,614 revenue share agreements signed by BSNL under Franchisee Management System (FMS). The modem installed for providing broadband services are also working as Wi-Fi hotspot for those premises.

Further, PM WANI framework aims to accelerate proliferation of internet services by setting up public Wi-Fi Access points in the country with the objective of building digital India and consequential benefit thereon. Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs) registered under the PM

WANI framework set up Public Wi-Fi Access Points based on their techno-commercial considerations.

In addition, entities having License for providing Internet Service / Unified License with Authorization for providing Internet Service, provide internet service in their respective Licensed service areas based on their techno-commercial considerations.

(d) Government and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) provide telecommunication connectivity in the country in a phased manner. Government through funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is implementing various schemes for providing internet coverage in the villages of the country. Details of schemes/projects apart from the BharatNet Project to improve the internet connectivity across the country are as below:

- Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the country. The estimated project cost is Rs. 26,316 Cr.
- Provision of 4G mobile services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas Phase-II. The estimated project cost is Rs. 2,211 Cr.
- Upgradation from 2G to 4G mobile technology of all LWE Phase-I sites. The estimated project cost is Rs. 2,425 Cr.
- Provision of 4G Mobile Services in North Eastern Region of the country under Comprehensive Telecom Development Program for NER. The estimated cost for schemes is Rs. 3,637 Cr.
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha) and provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts in four States (namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan). The estimated cost for projects is Rs. 7,152 Cr.
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 354 uncovered villages of J&K, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Border area & other priority areas. The estimated project cost is Rs. 337 Cr.
- Provision of 4G Mobile Coverage in 85 uncovered Villages and seamless 4G Mobile coverage of NH223 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The estimated project cost is Rs. 130 Cr.
- Laying of submarine optical fibre cable between Chennai and Andaman & Nicobar Islands for providing connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Submarine OFC connectivity between Kochi and Lakshadweep Islands.

Annexure-I

Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1111 to be answered on 08th February 2023 raised by Hon'ble Member of Parliament regarding "Mobile Connectivity"

State/UT-wise status of mobile uncovered villages of country (as of March'2022) is as below:

Sr. No.	State/UT Name	Total no. of Villages as per RGI Data(as of Nov'2019)	No. of mobile uncovered villages
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	559	261
2	Andhra Pradesh	17328	2971
3	Arunachal Pradesh	5993	3081
4	Assam	26429	2083
5	Bihar	44888	254
6	Chhattisgarh	20072	1887
7	Chandigarh	NA	NA
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu	95	33
9	Goa	392	41
10	Gujarat	18425	567
11	Haryana	6640	7
12	Himachal Pradesh	20852	1482
13	Jammu and Kashmir	6474	822
14	Jharkhand	32370	2072
15	Karnataka	29818	1121
16	Kerala	1438	53
17	Ladakh	243	119
18	Lakshadweep	27	4
19	Madhya Pradesh	55058	3092
20	Maharashtra	43931	3121
21	Manipur	2612	470
22	Meghalaya	7100	2428
23	Mizoram	867	241
24	Nagaland	1535	420
25	NCT of Delhi	55	0
26	Odisha	51176	6592
27	Puducherry	96	1
28	Punjab	12534	10
29	Rajasthan	46077	3316
30	Sikkim	461	304
31	Tamil Nadu	16488	384
32	Telangana	10203	203
33	Tripura	937	299
34	Uttar Pradesh	105531	274
35	Uttarakhand	16456	755
36	West Bengal	40971	133
Total		644131	38901
