

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2283  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST, 2023**

**IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS IN BORDER REGIONS**

**2283. SHRI RAJU BISTA:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the steps being taken by the Government to improve communications and network connectivity in border regions of Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts;
- (b) the details of the Landline and Mobile network coverage under BSNL in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and North Dinajpur districts of West Bengal;
- (c) the details of the Panchayats covered under BharatNet projects in the Darjeeling, Kalimpong and North Dinajpur districts; and
- (d) the details of the steps being taken by the Government is taking to augment the existing networks in the districts of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and North Dinajpur and cover all Panchayats in Darjeeling Lok Sabha constituency through BharatNet?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Government and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) provide the telecommunications connectivity across the Country in a phased manner including border region of Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts. Government through funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is implementing various schemes for providing telecom connectivity to all uncovered villages of the country including Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts of West Bengal. 58 villages of Darjeeling ,Kalimpong and North Dinajpur district are planned under USOF funded 4G saturation scheme and BOP/BIP scheme. Further 203 BTSs in Darjeeling and 33 BTSs in Kalimpong districts are planned to be upgraded to 4G by BSNL.

BSNL is providing mobile coverage in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and North Dinajpur district through 172 nos. , 14 nos. and 86 nos. of tower respectively. Regarding landline, at present 7596 landline connections in Siliguri Operational area (Darjeeling, Kalimpong district) and 2656 landline connections in Raigunj Opeartional area (North Dinajpur district) are working in BSNL network.

The number of panchayats covered under Bharatnet projects in the three districts are as below.

Sr. No.	District	Covered under Bharatnet Project
1	Darjeeling	22
2	Kalimpong	0
3	North Dinajpur	73

Further, all the uncovered panchayats in Darjeeling Lok Sabha constituency will be planned to be covered through expanded BharatNet.

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