

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2785
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH DECEMBER, 2023**

TELEPHONE CONNECTIONS

†2785. **SHRI RAMESH CHANDER KAUSHIK:**

SHRI Y.S. AVINASH REDDY:

SHRI RAVINDRA KUSHWAHA:

SHRI SATYADEV PACHAURI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the district-wise details of data regarding increase in the total number of telephone connections in the country including Sonapat Parliamentary Constituency of Haryana during the last three years;
- (b) the details of the increase in accessibility of Internet and Broadband during the said period; and
- (c) the details of any increase in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the said sector?

ANSWER

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

(a) Telephone connectivity in Haryana licensed service area in last 10 years has improved significantly:

| S.No. | Parameter | As on 31.03.2014 | As on 31.03.2023 |
|-------|---|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | Base Transceiver Station (BTS) | 14,709 | 56,703 |
| 2 | Optical Fiber Cable Laid (OFC) (km) (State) | 29,315 | 78,303 |
| 3 | Bharatnet Service ready Gram Panchayats (GPs) (State) | NIL | 6,082 |
| 4 | Telephone connections | 2.18 crores | 2.71 crores |
| 5 | Internet subscribers | 54.0 lakhs | 190 lakhs |
| 6 | Broadband subscribers | 10.4 lakhs | 182 lakhs |

(b) to (c) The number of internet and broadband subscriptions in the country has also significantly improved as given below:

| S.No. | Parameter | 31.03.2014 | As on 31.03.2023 |
|-------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|
| 1 | Internet subscribers | 25.16 crores | 88.12 crores |
| 2 | Broadband subscribers | 6.09 crores | 84.66 crores |

Government has taken multiple steps to accelerate the growth in the telecom sector which includes:

(I) Various structural and procedural reforms implemented by the government in last few years to promote healthy competition, infuse liquidity, encourage investment, reduce regulatory burden on Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) and protect interests of consumers. These are as follows:

- (i) Rationalization of definition of Adjusted Gross Revenue.
- (ii) Spectrum Reforms like allowing sharing, trading of spectrum and rationalization of Spectrum Usage Charge (SUC).
- (iii) Incentivising Spectrum Sharing.
- (iv) Ensuring adequate spectrum availability through open and transparent auction.
- (v) Permission for 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in telecom sector under automatic route subject to safeguards.
- (vi) Launch of PM Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal for faster Right of Way (RoW) approvals.
- (vii) Issuance of Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules 2016 and amendment rules from time to time for faster and easier rollout of telecom infrastructure.
- (viii) Procedure for Standing Advisory Committee for Radio Frequency Allocation (SACFA) clearance for telecom towers eased significantly.

(II) In addition to the above:

- BharatNet project is being implemented, using Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. As on 13.11.2023, a total of 2,07,346 Gram Panchayats have been made service ready under BharatNet project in the country. Further, on 04.08.2023, the Union Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program for extending the scope of BharatNet beyond Gram Panchayats (GPs) to all inhabited villages.
- Various projects including Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for the North-Eastern Region, Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Islands and Mobile connectivity projects are implemented under USOF for connectivity of Rural and Remote areas of the country including Aspirational Districts, Left Wing Extremism (LWE) area, Border Areas and other unconnected/ underserved areas.
- Implementation of the project for saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the country at a total cost of Rs. 26,316 Cr. for providing 4G mobile services in uncovered villages in remote and difficult areas of the country.
- Government of India has launched a Scheme for the year 2022-23 named as “Scheme for Special Assistance to states for Capital Investment 2022-23”. The support has been made available to states for capital projects on Optical fibre Cable and approval has been given for projects amounting Rs 2716 crores in respect of 24 states.
- Rs 19,000 Crore has been disbursed during last three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) under various USOF Projects to improve Telecom Services/ Internet Services in Rural/ Remote/ Uncovered areas of the country.

As a result, India has seen the fastest rollout of 5G services in the world with 3.99 lakhs Base Transceivers Stations (BTSs) deployed across 738 districts. Median speed for mobile broadband has also improved from 1.30 Megabits per second (Mbps) in March 2014 to 75.80 Mbps in October, 2023.

Telecom Sector has been one of the largest recipients of Foreign Direct Investment. Telecom Sector has received FDI of 24.8 Billion US dollars in the period 2014-2023 as against 12.8 Billion US dollars in the period 2004-14.
