

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2874
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20TH DECEMBER, 2023**

BHARATNET PROJECT IN ODISHA

2874. SHRI JUAL ORAM:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has envisioned BharatNet Project digitally to connect all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages in India by way of laying OFC up to GPs level;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is any plan to connect all the 2,50,000 GPs in Odisha;
- (d) if so, the number of broadband connections working in Odisha and the action being taken for providing broadband facility in all GPs under Phase I and II;
- (e) the plans to connect all villages with internet connectivity;
- (f) the steps being taken to provide mobile connectivity in uncovered villages; and
- (g) whether there is any proposal received from the State Government of Odisha in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) to (g) Telecom connectivity in Odisha has improved significantly in the last 10 years.
- The Number of Base Trans-receivers Stations (BTS) have increased from 16,416 in March 2014 to 77,750 in March 2023.
 - The number of mobile phone users has increased from 2.51 Crore in March 2014 to 3.28 Crore in March 2023.
 - The number of internet users have increased from 27.9 lakh to in March 2014 to 2.27 Crore in March, 2023.
 - Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) laid in km has increased from 40,756 km in March 2014 to 1,21,694 km in March 2023.

Further, Government has planned more than 5,333 towers in uncovered areas of Odisha to provide connectivity to more than 7,400 villages at the cost of more than Rs 5,033 Cr.

BharatNet was approved in the year 2011, but the actual implementation of the project started in year 2014. In the last nine years, 2,07,346 Gram Panchayats (GPs) across India have been connected under BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II, including 6,785 GPs of Odisha. As on June, 2023, a total of 22.28 lakh broadband connections have been provided in Odisha, including the connections provided under BharatNet. Recently, Government has amended the BharatNet Program to cover all the inhabited villages at an outlay of Rs 1.88 lakh crores as follows:

- i) Upgradation of existing BharatNet network.
- ii) Focus on utilization of the network through BharatNet Udyamis i.e. village level entrepreneurs.
- iii) Operation and Maintenance of the entire network through professional agencies for ten years.
- iv) Dedicated Network Operation centre.
- v) Expanding scope to connect all inhabited villages.
- vi) To provide 1.5 crore home fibre connections.

BharatNet Phase-II in Odisha is being implemented through Government of Odisha. The maintenance and utilization of the Phase-II network is the responsibility of Government of Odisha.
