

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

**LOK SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 123  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019**

**BROADBAND /INTERNET FACILITY**

**†\*123. SHRI KRUPAL BALAJI TUMANE:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large part of rural population is deprived of broadband/internet facility, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the number of villages provided with internet connectivity under the BharatNet Project so far, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has not been successful in achieving the target fixed for providing internet/broadband connectivity to villages and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has reviewed the broadband project design for rural areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the expert committee related to the National Optical Fibre Network has suggested measures to revive the Bharat Broadband Network and demanded to set up an empowered project group and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) whether the Government has asked the States to submit the report on BharatNet project and certain States have proposed their own broadband network model, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, LAW & JUSTICE AND  
ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)**

- (a) to (e)      A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) to (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. \*123 FOR 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019 ON “BROADBAND /INTERNET FACILITY”.**

(a) & (b) Internet is being currently accessed mainly through mobile wireless technologies, which at present cover more than 95% of population of the country. As of June 2019, the total number of internet and broadband subscribers were 23.8 crore and 20.3 crore respectively in the rural areas of the country. As per data collected from the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) in 2019, it is estimated that out of total 5,97,618 inhabited villages (as per the Census 2011) in the country, 5,69,897 are covered by mobile services. Mobile coverage in remaining villages is being provided by the Government and Telecom Service Providers in a phased manner.

BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband/internet connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (approx. 2,50,000) in the country. As on 07.11.2019, a total of 1,28,376 GPs have been made Service Ready. The State-wise details are given in **Annexure-I**.

As part of BharatNet project, the Last Mile connectivity, through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology, to access broadband /internet services, is to be provided at all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. Accordingly, the provisioning of 2 Wi-Fi Access Points (APs) for about 1.25 lakh GPs under Ph-I is under implementation. As of now, Wi-Fi hotspots have been installed in 45,769 GPs and services are being provided in 16,151 GPs. The State-wise details are given in **Annexure-I**. Under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) scheme, 25,000 public Wi-Fi hotspots are being set up using the infrastructure of telephone exchanges of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in rural areas of the country. As of October 2019, Wi-Fi hotspots have been set up /installed in 24,118 rural exchanges and out of them, Wi-Fi services are being provided at 23,082 rural exchanges.

(c) & (d) In order to review the strategy and approach to align National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) with the vision of Digital India and towards speedy implementation of NOFN, an Expert Committee was constituted by the Government of India in January, 2015. The Expert Committee recommended, inter alia, for renaming the project as “BharatNet”. The Expert Committee also recommended the creation of an Empowered Project Group, mainly to take decisions on matters referred to it by Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), which are beyond the purview of BBNL to decide.

Based on the recommendations of the Expert Committee and implementation experience of Phase-I, the Union Cabinet in the year 2017 approved a modified implementation strategy for the project (renamed as BharatNet).

(e) In the modified strategy approved by the Union Cabinet, the State-led model is also included for implementation of BharatNet Phase-II. Accordingly, based on the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) submitted by the States, the Telecom Commission (Now known as Digital Communications Commission) has approved the implementation of BharatNet Phase-II under State-led Model in 8 States namely Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Odisha and Telangana. The Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) have been signed with the States and the project execution is at different stages of implementation.

**Annexure referred to in Part (a) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. \*123 for Answer on 27.11.2019.**

**Status of BharatNet connectivity**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>State/UT</b>	<b>Service Ready GPs (Including BHQs)</b>	<b>No. of GPs where Wi-Fi hotspots installed</b>
1	Andhra Pradesh	1589	0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	230	142
3	Andaman & Nicobar	8	0
4	Assam	1622	4
5	Bihar	7406	295
6	Chandigarh	13	12
7	Chhattisgarh	4536	517
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	21	0
9	Daman & Diu	18	0
10	Gujarat	8442	26
11	Haryana	6188	1063
12	Himachal Pradesh	241	330
13	Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh	977	739
14	Jharkhand	2425	312
15	Karnataka	6235	2569
16	Kerala	1129	731
17	Lakshadweep	0	0
18	Madhya Pradesh	12752	1350
19	Maharashtra	15245	776
20	Manipur	326	161
21	Mizoram	41	0
22	Meghalaya	192	70
23	Nagaland	127	0
24	Odisha	3697	111
25	Puducherry	101	81
26	Punjab	10996	0
27	Rajasthan	8713	8813
28	Sikkim	18	0
29	Tamil Nadu	0	0
30	Telangana	2047	0
31	Tripura	558	80
32	Uttar Pradesh	28738	27223
33	Uttarakhand	1525	353
34	West Bengal	2220	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>128376</b>	<b>45769</b>

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