

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 553  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019**

**BROADBAND COVERAGE**

**553. SHRIMATI APARAJITA SARANGI:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by the Government to expand internet coverage in the country, especially in the State of Odisha;
- (b) whether the Government has provided/propose to provide any incentives to Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) to set up communication towers in thinly populated areas and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the broadband coverage in the country, State/UT-wise along with its comparison with other countries; and
- (d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to rationalize the cost of broadband services in the country?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (c) As per “The Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicators” report released by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India TRAI on 01<sup>st</sup> October 2019 for the period April-June, 2019, there were total 665.31 million internet subscribers in the country. Out of these, 594.38 million are broadband and 70.72 million are narrowband internet subscribers. Out of these 665.31 million internet subscribers, there are 427.05 million urban internet subscribers and 238.26 million rural internet subscribers in the country.

For expanding the internet / broadband services in rural areas, BharatNet (one of the biggest rural telecom projects of the world) is being implemented in a phased manner for providing Broadband infrastructure to all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country, including Odisha.

As on 07.11.2019, a total of 1,40,668 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been connected by laying 3,80,988 km underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) and 1,28,376 GPs have been made Service Ready, and in the remaining GPs the project is under implementation.

In Odisha, a total of 3944 (including Block Head Quarters) GPs have been connected under BharatNet project by laying 12201 Km OFC as on 24.09.2019, out of which 3,656 GPs are Service Ready.

Further, as part of this flagship project, the Last Mile connectivity, through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology to access broadband /internet services, is provided at all the GPs in the country. As on 07.11.2019, 95 active Wi-Fi connections and 685 Fiber to the Home (FTTH) connections have been installed under BharatNet.

Under Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-II project Scheme, 158 Mobile towers at MHA identified locations are proposed in Odisha.

Licensed Service Area wise internet penetration (Internet Subscribers per 100 population) in the country as on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 is enclosed as **Annexure**.

As per some reports available in the public domain, India is the second highest user of internet in the world.

(d) As per provisions of TRAI Act 1997 as amended in the year 2000, subject matter of tariff falls under the jurisdiction of TRAI. Presently, tariff for data services is under forbearance and Telecom Service Providers have the flexibility to fix the prices of data services.

**Licensed service area wise number of internet penetration (Internet Subscribers per 100 population) in the country as on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2019**

<b>License Service Area</b>	<b>number of internet subscribers per 100 population</b>
Andhra Pradesh	57.33
Assam	36.62
Bihar	29.19
Delhi	158.64
Gujarat	62.78
Haryana	53.42
Himachal Pradesh	73.60
Jammu & Kashmir	54.20
Karnataka	65.92
Kerala	69.66
Madhya Pradesh	39.93
Maharashtra	65.36
Mumbai	
North East	49.01
Orissa	38.61
Punjab	75.11
Rajasthan	50.11
Tamil Nadu	64.92
Uttar Pradesh (East)	34.01
Uttar Pradesh (West)	
Kolkata	45.91
West Bengal	
Total	50.52

Notes: Data/information for Andhra Pradesh includes Telengana, Madhya Pradesh includes Chhatisgarh, Bihar includes Jharkhand, Maharashtra includes Goa, Uttar Pradesh includes Uttarakhand, West Bengal includes Sikkim and North-East includes Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland & Tripura states

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