

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2931
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH MARCH, 2020**

NATIONAL BROADBAND MISSION

†2931. **SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has launched National Broadband Mission Scheme in the country;
- (b) if so, the details and the main characteristics thereof;
- (c) the reasons for not connecting many parts and villages of the country with the communication facility despite the availability of satellite media;
- (d) whether this scheme will enable the availability of quality and concessional digital communication services in the country and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the reasons for not achieving the objective of Bharat Net project in the time line fixed by the Government?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS,
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)**

(a) & (b) National Broadband Mission (NBM) was launched on 17th December 2019 with a vision to enable fast track growth of digital communications infrastructure, bridge the digital divide for digital empowerment and inclusion, and provide affordable and universal access of broadband for all. Following are the main objectives of the National Broadband Mission:

- i. To facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services for growth and development throughout the country and especially in rural and remote areas
- ii. To address policy and regulatory changes required to accelerate the expansion and creation of digital infrastructure and services
- iii. Creation of a digital fiber map of the digital communications network and infrastructure, including Optical Fiber Cables (OFC) and towers, across the country
- iv. Work with all stakeholders including the concerned Ministries/ Departments/agencies and Ministry of Finance, for enabling investment for the Mission
- v. Work with the Department of Space, to make available adequate resources required for extending connectivity to far flung areas of country through satellite media

- vi. To encourage and promote adoption of innovative technologies for proliferation of broadband especially by the domestic industry
- vii. Seek cooperation from concerned stakeholders by developing innovative implementation models for Right of Way(RoW)
- viii. To work with States/Union Territories (UTs) for having consistent policies pertaining to expansion of digital infrastructure including for RoW approvals required for laying of OFC
- ix. To develop a Broadband Readiness Index(BRI) to measure the availability of digital communications infrastructure and conducive policy ecosystem within a State/UT
- x. Promote direct and indirect employment as a result of development of digital communications infrastructure across the country and through the digital economy.

(c) The connectivity to the uncovered areas is being provided through various schemes of Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) and by the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) as part of the expansion of their own network in a phased manner, using various types of media depending upon techno-commercial feasibility.

Under BharatNet project, about 6407 Gram Panchayats (GPs) located in difficult, hilly and far flung areas have been planned on Satellite media for provision of broadband connectivity.

(d) Point covered in reply to para (a) and (b) above.

(e) BharatNet is a project of mega nature and the GPs are widely dispersed across the country in rural and remote areas. The delay in the implementation of the project is mainly on account of:

(i) There was an initial delay in the commencement of the project as the work on the project began in the second half of 2014 due to field survey of GPs and pilot testing of the technology model.

(ii) In Phase-I, only one media, that is, underground OFC was used to connect GPs, and there were several Right of Way (RoW) issues.

(iii) Under Phase-II, about 65,000 GPs in 8 States are being implemented under State-led model. The delay in their implementation is also adversely affecting the completion of the Project.
