GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 540
TO BE ANSWERED ON 5TH FEBRUARY, 2020

INTERNET FACILITY IN REMOTE VILLAGES OF MAHARASHTRA

†540. DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR:
SHRI SADASHIV KISAN LOKHANDE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether there is no internet facility in remote villages of Maharashtra and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the reaction of the Government thereto;

(b)   whether internet/broadband speed is very slow in remote areas where internet/broadband facility is available;

(c)   if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d)   the efforts made by the Government to overcome this problem?

ANSWER

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

(a)   Internet is currently being accessed mainly through mobile wireless 2G, 3G and 4G technologies which at present cover more than 95% of population of the country. As per data collected from the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) in 2019, it is estimated that out of total 40,959 inhabited villages (as per the Census 2011) in Maharashtra, 37,970 are covered by mobile services.

There are 36.84 rural internet subscribers per 100 population in Maharashtra as per "The Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicators" report of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) dated 8th January, 2020. The National Digital Communications Policy-2018 has been notified with strategic objectives which inter-alia includes provisioning of Broadband for all.

(b) & (c)   Internet speed depends inter-alia on various parameters such as the technology deployed, network coverage, number of simultaneous users accessing the internet, connectivity to the website being accessed etc. The speed of mobile internet is further dependent on a number of factors such as distance from the Base Transceiver Station (BTS) serving the customer, the number of simultaneous users being served by the BTS, the traffic handled by the BTS etc. As such, the mobile users may experience different speed at different locations and time of usage.

(d)   Following initiatives/actions have been taken by the Government towards provisioning and improving internet/broadband services:

(i) BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband/internet connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country, including Maharashtra. A total of 1,34,248 GPs have been made Service Ready as on 24.01.2020, including 15,534 in Maharashtra.

(ii) As part of BharatNet project, the last mile connectivity through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology to access internet/broadband services is to be provided at all the GPs in the country including Maharashtra.

(iii)Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) scheme for setting up of 25,000 public Wi-Fi hotspots including 3800 in Maharashtra using the infrastructure of telephone exchanges of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in rural areas.

(iv)Under Left Wing Extremist (LWE) Phase-II project, installation of 2217 mobile towers is planned for providing mobile connectivity covering the 10 States including 125 towers in Maharashtra.

****