

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1440**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 20TH SEPTEMBER, 2020/BHADRAPADA 29, 1942 (SAKA)

INTERNET BLOCKADE IN KASHMIR

1440. SHRI UTTAM KUMAR REDDY NALAMADA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons due to which the Government has not yet completely lifted the internet blockade in Kashmir;

(b) the date by which the Government intends to restore unrestricted access to the internet in Kashmir considering the Supreme Court's ruling that an indefinite suspension of internet services is not permissible;

(c) the details of restrictions imposed on internet access in Kashmir, including a list of whitelisted sites, types of internet connectivity that have been restored, areas where access has and has not been allowed and internet speed restrictions; and

(d) the estimated economic loss caused by the internet blockade since it was imposed and the impact on services like healthcare, education as well as access to justice for concerned domiciles?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)**

(a) and (b): Considering the over all security scenario and in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the Government of Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir issues orders from time to time regulating telecom/internet services in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of the applicable rules and the

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principles laid down and directions contained in the judgment of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the matter of Anuradha Bhasin Vs Union of India & Ors.

The internet services are already available in Kashmir on fixed line (without any speed related restrictions) as well as Mobile Data services (at 2G speed) since 24.01.2020. Restrictions on accessing social media sites were also lifted on 04.03.2020. Further, high speed mobile data services too have been commenced in the districts of Ganderbal (Kashmir Division) and Udhampur (Jammu Division) with effect from 16.08.2020.

(c) Fixed line Internet connectivity is available without any speed related restrictions, with Mac-binding. The Mobile Data services are presently restricted to 2G speed in districts other than the two districts mentioned in (a) above. There is no restriction on accessing any sites, including the social media sites.

(d) The businesses have had access to internet through fixed line connectivity and internet kiosks opened in large numbers across the Valley without any speed restrictions.

The 2G mobile internet speed is not an impediment in covid control measures including dissemination of information to the general public as well as health workers. Also, e-learning apps and education/e-learning websites of the

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Government of India/ Government of J&K are accessible over 2G internet for downloading e-books and other study material. Further, the restriction on high speed mobile internet services has not been an impediment in the administration of justice and the Courts have taken special measures to conduct their proceedings during the pandemic by providing video links/URLs to the lawyers and the litigants.
