

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2608
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH MARCH, 2021**

INTERNET SUBSCRIBERS AND DIGITAL DIVIDE

2608. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the number of internet subscribers in rural areas per 100 inhabitants is below 30 as per Telecom Statistics India Report 2019 and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (b) the economic loss assessed by the Government in the GDP of the country on account of the aforesaid digital divide prevalent between rural and urban areas;
- (c) the number of internet subscribers that have increased in rural areas where new optic fibre cables under National Broadband Mission have been laid during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise;
- (d) the percentage increase in internet subscribers in these areas compared to the time when there were no optic fibre cables;
- (e) whether persons residing in areas which are newly provided with optic fibre cables have access to devices that can be connected to the internet and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether the Government can achieve its National Broadband Mission by 2022 and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) The internet subscribers in rural areas per 100 inhabitants is 25.36 as per Telecom Statistics India Report 2019 and in urban areas, it is 97.94. The total number of Internet subscribers in rural and urban areas as of March, 2019 were 227.01 million and 409.72 million respectively. The number of internet subscribers in rural areas registered a growth of 33.19% during March, 2019 to September, 2020, as compared to 15.72 % growth in urban areas during the same period, thus the digital divide is being bridged.

(c) to (e) The service area-wise number of internet subscribers in rural areas during the last three years and current year is given at **Annexure-I**. The National Broadband mission was launched on 17th December, 2019. The increase in number of internet subscribers in rural areas during December, 2019 to September, 2020 and the percentage increase is given at **Annexure-II**. During this period, 33.92 million internet subscribers in rural areas have been added. These new subscribers are able to access internet using various devices.

(f) The Government is committed to time bound implementation of the National Broadband Mission and to provide each and every village of India with access to broadband by 2022 through utilization of appropriate technologies, including optical fiber, radio networks and satellite.

ANNEXURE-I

Annexure referred to in reply to part (c) to (e) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2608 to be answered on 10th February 2021 regarding Internet Subscribers and Digital Divide

Service Area wise number of Internet Subscribers in rural areas during the last three years and current year as on 30th September, 2020.

(figures in million)

Sr.No.	Service area	As on 31st March 2018	As on 31st March 2019	As on 31st March 2020	As on 30th September 2020
1	Andhra Pradesh	12.83	19.94	25.51	26.69
2	Assam	5.04	5.68	8.31	8.90
3	Bihar	13.51	22.62	30.53	32.83
4	Delhi	0.72	0.7	0.75	0.76
5	Gujarat	8.27	11.44	13.67	14.67
6	Haryana	3.8	5.54	6.81	7.08
7	Himachal Pradesh	2.04	3.21	3.79	4.09
8	Jammu & Kashmir	1.91	2.57	3.45	3.45
9	Karnataka	6.69	11.93	17.01	17.17
10	Kerala	7.49	10.04	10.75	11.50
11	Kolkata	1	1.53	1.42	1.44
12	Madhya Pradesh	6.94	15.69	19.75	20.84
13	Maharashtra	12.79	20.21	25.16	26.86
14	Mumbai	0.75	1.21	1.53	1.95
15	North East	2.38	2.78	3.97	4.31
16	Orissa	5.67	9.64	12.36	13.10
17	Punjab	4.58	7.13	8.43	8.66
18	Rajasthan	9.47	15.57	20.02	20.49
19	Tamil Nadu	9.31	11.37	13.82	14.63
20	UP (East)	14.46	22.81	28.91	30.52
21	UP (West)	7.03	11.9	13.34	14.90
22	West Bengal	9.14	13.49	16.65	17.52
23	Total	145.83	227.01	285.97	302.35

Source: TRAI

ANNEXURE-II

Annexure referred to in reply to part (c) to (e) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question no. 2608 to be answered on 10th February 2021 regarding Internet Subscribers and Digital Divide

Service Area-wise increase in number of internet subscribers in rural areas during December, 2019 to September 2020

(Subscribers in million)

Sr.No.	Service area	Rural internet subscribers as on 31st December 2019	Rural internet subscribers as on 30th September 2020	Rural Internet subscribers added during Dec-19 to Sep-20	% increase from Dec 2019 to Sep 2020
1	Andhra Pradesh	23.93	26.69	2.76	11.53
2	Assam	7.71	8.90	1.19	15.43
3	Bihar	26.78	32.83	6.05	22.59
4	Delhi	0.75	0.76	0.01	1.33
5	Gujarat	13.04	14.67	1.63	12.50
6	Haryana	6.58	7.08	0.50	7.60
7	Himachal Pradesh	3.74	4.09	0.35	9.36
8	Jammu & Kashmir	1.52	3.45	1.93	126.97
9	Karnataka	15.69	17.17	1.48	9.43
10	Kerala	10.64	11.50	0.86	8.08
11	Kolkata	1.38	1.44	0.06	4.35
12	Madhya Pradesh	18.71	20.84	2.13	11.38
13	Maharashtra	24.09	26.86	2.77	11.50
14	Mumbai	1.43	1.95	0.52	36.36
15	North East	3.85	4.31	0.46	11.95
16	Orissa	11.74	13.10	1.36	11.58
17	Punjab	8.25	8.66	0.41	4.97
18	Rajasthan	19.11	20.49	1.38	7.22
19	Tamil Nadu	13.33	14.63	1.30	9.75
20	UP (East)	26.97	30.52	3.55	13.16
21	UP (West)	13.16	14.90	1.74	13.22
22	West Bengal	16.03	17.52	1.49	9.30
23	Total	268.43	302.35	33.92	12.64

Source: TRAI
