

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2458
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16TH MARCH, 2022**

BHARATNET SCHEME

2458. SHRI VELUSAMY P.:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the total amount spent from the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for connecting villages under Bharat Net for the past three years and for the current year;
- (b) the estimated cost of the completion of the entire project of connecting all the villages under different phases;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of the villages covered with free WiFi till date under BharatNet scheme and the time to be taken to complete the coverage of all the villages; and
- (e) the details of the Panchayats covered under the BharatNet Scheme?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) Rs. 17,565.35 crore has been disbursed upto February, 2022 under the BharatNet Project from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during last three years (2018-19 to 2020-21) and the current year (2021-22).

(b) to (e) BharatNet project is implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to approximately 2.6 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. Now, the scope of the project has been extended up to all inhabited villages beyond GPs.

As on 28.02.2022, total 1,72,361 GPs have been made Service Ready. USOF has no scheme to cover villages with free Wi-Fi. As on 28.02.2022, Wi-Fi hotspots have been installed in 1,04,288 GPs from BharatNet network.

The total approved cost of BharatNet project is now Rs. 61,109 crore. This includes Rs. 42,068 Crore for BharatNet (Phase-I and Phase-II for providing connectivity to Gram Panchayats) and a maximum of Rs. 19,041 crore on Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for implementation of the Public Private partnership (PPP) model for extending BharatNet upto all inhabited villages in 16 States.
