

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF FINANCE  
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES  
**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 5219**

Answered on Monday, April 04, 2022/ Chaitra 14, 1944 (Saka)

**Unbanked Gram Panchayats in Odisha**

5219. SHRI PINAKI MISRA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of Gram Panchayats in Odisha not having any banking outlets;
- (b) the steps taken by the Ministry to cover unbanked Gram Panchayats in the State of Odisha; and
- (c) whether any directions have been issued by the Ministry to extend digital payment infrastructure in all the districts of Odisha for promotion of financial inclusion and if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE  
(DR BHAGWAT KARAD)

(a) to (c) In terms of the revised guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) vide circular No DBR.BAPD.BC.69/22.01.001/2016-17 dated May 18, 2017 on 'Rationalization of Branch Authorization Policy' the term "Branch" has been substituted by "Banking Outlet (BO)" which includes both physical brick and mortar branches and Business Correspondent (BC) outlets, to enable banks in expanding their network even in remote rural areas in a cost-effective manner for hassle free services to customers.

In pursuance of extant RBI guidelines, rolling out of banking outlets in uncovered areas is a continuous process looked after by the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC), in consultation with the concerned State Government, member banks and other stakeholders. Banks, *inter-alia*, consider proposals for opening banking outlets in the light of RBI's instructions, their business plans and their commercial viability. To further assess the viability for opening a banking outlet, banks carry out survey as required.

In order to ensure availability of banking outlet (Bank branch/ Business Correspondent/ India Post Payments Bank) within 5 kilometres of all inhabited villages in country, the Government has launched a Geographic Information System (GIS) based App., namely, JDD App. Based on the data uploaded by the Banks on this App, as on 28.02.2022, there are 5,53,804 mapped inhabited villages in the country, out of which 5,53,571 (99.96%) are covered with a banking outlet. For the state of Odisha, out of the 44,982 inhabited villages mapped on this App, 44,977 villages (99.99 %) are covered with a banking outlet.

Further, as per Jan Dhan Darshak (JDD) App data, all Gram Panchayats (GPs) of Odisha are covered with banking outlets (Bank Branch/BC/IPPB Centre) within the radius of 5 kms.

With a view to expanding and deepening of digital payments ecosystem, RBI, *vide* its circular dated 07.10.2019, has advised all SLBCs/UTLBCs to identify one District in their respective States/UTs on pilot basis and allot the same to a bank having significant footprint, which would endeavour to make the District 100% digitally enabled. In this regard, as apprised by SLBC, Odisha, Cuttack & Bolangir Districts were identified as digital promotion Districts in Odisha State and they have achieved an overall 99% digital coverage.

RBI, *vide* its letter dated 14.07.2021 has further advised SLBCs/UTLBCs to select one or more Districts in the State to make them 100% digitally enabled in consultation with the State Govt. and other stakeholders. Accordingly, during the FY 2021-22, Sambalpur & Ganjam Districts of Odisha have been identified for undertaking digital coverage by Punjab National Bank & Union Bank of India respectively. As of December 2021, they have achieved an overall 70% digital coverage.

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