

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2556  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2024**

**PM--WANI SCHEME**

**2556. SHRI MOHITE PATIL DHAIRYASHEEL RAJSINH:  
SMT. SUPRIYA SULE:  
SHRI SANJAY DINA PATIL:  
SHRI AMAR SHARADRAO KALE:  
PROF. VARSHA EKNATH GAIKWAD:  
SHRI BHASKAR MURLIDHAR BHAGARE:  
DR. AMOL RAMSING KOLHE:  
SHRI BAJRANG MANOHAR SONWANE:  
SHRI NILESH DNYANDEV LANKE:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Public Data Offices (PDOs) established under the PM-WANI scheme in Maharashtra;
- (b) the districts with the highest and lowest number of PDOs in the State;
- (c) the timeline for expanding PM-WANI coverage across all districts of Maharashtra;
- (d) the number of PM-WANI Wi-Fi hotspots operational in rural and urban areas of Maharashtra;
- (e) the measures taken to ensure equitable access to Wi-Fi services in remote areas of the State;
- (f) whether the Government is providing any incentives to encourage participation in rural regions;
- (g) the total number of users who have availed Wi-Fi services under PM-WANI in Maharashtra since its inception;
- (h) the average data consumption per user in Maharashtra under the scheme;
- (i) whether the Government has collaborated with local entrepreneurs or small businesses in Maharashtra for the establishment of Public Data Offices (PDOs);
- (j) if so, the details of such collaborations; and
- (k) the financial or technical support extended by the Government to these stakeholders?

## ANSWER

### **MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. PEMMASANI CHANDRA SEKHAR)**

(a) to (d) The Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) framework aims to accelerate proliferation of internet services by setting up public Wi-Fi Hotspots in the country with the objective of building digital India and consequential benefits thereon.

Under the PM-WANI framework, Public Data Offices (PDOs) establish, operate and maintain WANI compliant Wi-Fi Hotspots based on their techno-commercial considerations and deliver internet services to subscribers. PDOs need to partner with a Public Data Office Aggregator (PDOA) to deliver internet services.

The total number of PM-WANI Wi-Fi hotspots installed in Maharashtra, as on 05.12.2024, are 16,362. The districts with highest and lowest number of PM-WANI Wi-Fi hotspots are Mumbai and Hingoli with 2218 and 11 Wi-Fi hotspots respectively. As on date, PM-WANI Hotspots are operational in all the districts of Maharashtra. Rural/Urban area-wise data is not maintained.

(e) & (f) To ensure equitable access to Wi-Fi services, Department, through its Field Units, promotes the PM-WANI scheme by organizing seminars, press briefs and advertisements. Till October, 2024 for PM-WANI awareness 516 workshops/ seminars, 298 press briefs and 172 advertisements have been undertaken by the Department.

Further, to provide access to internet in rural regions, the Union Cabinet has approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) on 04.08.2023 to be funded from Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN). The program envisages to provide optical fiber connectivity to 2.64 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) and to provide optical fiber connectivity to approximately 3.8 lakh non-GP villages on a demand basis. Additionally, the program plans to offer Internet Leased Line (ILL) bandwidth across 7,269 Blocks and ensure a minimum download speed of 25 Mbps for each Fiber to the Home (FTTH) subscriber. The program also envisages to provide 1.50 crore home fiber connections to rural households, institutions, and enterprises over a period of five years.

(g) & (h) Number of unique PM-WANI users in the country, as on 05.12.2024, are 18,19,674 and total data consumed is 58.55 PB (petabytes). State/UT-wise bifurcation of PM-WANI users and average data consumption per user, State/UT-wise, is not maintained.

(i) to (k) No such collaboration has been done by the Department. However, as stated above, the Department, through its Field Units, promotes the scheme by organizing seminars, press briefs and advertisements to raise awareness and enhance the scheme's outreach.

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