

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3883
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18TH DECEMBER, 2024**

STRENGTHENING OF TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORK

†3883. Adv Gowaal Kagada Padavi:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any special schemes to strengthen the telecommunication network in the country, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government plans to improve internet connectivity across the country particularly in rural and remote areas of the country, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the initiatives taken by the Government for expansion of 5G services; and
- (d) whether the Government has any plan to increase the quality and coverage of television broadcasting services in India, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) To strengthen the telecommunications network and improve internet connectivity across the country particularly in rural and remote areas of the country, Government is implementing various schemes / projects under Digital Bharat Nidhi (erstwhile Universal Service Obligation Fund) for expansion of telecom connectivity through installation of mobile towers in rural, remote and hilly areas of the country. The 4G Saturation project is for provisioning of 4G mobile connectivity in 24,680 uncovered villages in the country. The project has a provision to include 20% additional villages on account of rehabilitation, new-settlements, withdrawal of services by existing operators etc. Further, the Union Cabinet has approved the Amended Bharat Net Program with funding of ₹ 1,39,579 crore for extending the scope of Bharat Net to provide broadband connectivity to all 2.64 lakh Gram Panchayats and approximately 3.8 lakh villages on demand basis across 28 States and 8 UTs.

(c) Government has taken various initiatives for the expansion of 5G services in the country such as assignment of sufficient spectrum for mobile services through auction, provisionally allot 2 carriers of 250 MHz each in E-band to the Telecom Service Providers, series of financial reforms resulting in rationalization of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) and Bank Guarantees (BGs), simplification of Procedure for SACFA (Standing Advisory Committee on Radio Frequency Allocations) clearance, launch of Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal for centralized Right of Way (RoW) approvals. This has resulted into availability of 5G services in 779 districts out of 783 districts in the country and till 31st Oct 2024, more than 4.6 lakh 5G Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) have been installed in the country.

(d) Government has approved a Central Sector Scheme, Broadcasting Infrastructure & Network Development (BIND) for the period 2021-26 at a total cost of ₹ 2539.61 crore under which modernization and upgradation of Doordarshan network across the country is undertaken. Presently, Doordarshan (DD) Free Dish, which is a free-to-air Direct to Home (DTH) service, has full coverage across the country and in Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) Islands, a special 10 channel C-Band Satellite DTH service is in operation. Further, some distribution platforms viz. Direct to Home (DTH) and Headend in the Sky (HITS) employ satellites and airwaves for distributing the TV channels and thus can easily provide services in remote and hilly locations ensuring pan-India coverage.
