

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2988
ANSWERED ON 6TH AUGUST, 2025**

PROMPT SERVICE AND ACTIVE UTILISATION OF CONNECTIVITY

†2988. SMT. BHARTI PARDHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the BharatNet project has been frequently delayed and whether the timelines fixed for the years 2014, 2015, 2019 and 2023 have been lapsed;
- (b) if so, the revised timeline fixed to achieve 100% Gram Panchayat connectivity;
- (c) the specific measures being taken to avoid further delays especially in the areas facing challenges;
- (d) the current status of 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats targeted under the BharatNet project particularly with regard to prompt service and active utilisation of connectivity provided by July 2025, State-wise including those in Madhya Pradesh;
- (e) whether CAG and other reports have highlighted underutilisation of funds and infrastructure created under BharatNet; and
- (f) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to ensure optimal utilisation of existing infrastructure and to address lack of awareness and digital literacy among the targeted beneficiaries?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) BharatNet is a mega project, widely dispersed across remotest corners of the country, covering difficult terrains (Hilly/ Rocky) and also difficult to access Left-wing extremism (LWE) affected areas. The project implementation of BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II faced challenges due to various reasons like delay in obtaining Right of Way permissions from State agencies especially in forest areas, movement restrictions due to Covid- pandemic, damage of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) due to development works such as water pipe line laying, road widening and other construction activities. As on 30.06.2025, 2,14,325 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been made service ready out of planned 2,22,343 GPs under BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II.

In the meanwhile Amended BharatNet Program is approved by Cabinet in August' 2023, under which appointment of BSNL as Project management agency, setting up of Central and State Network operation centre (NOC) for monitoring, OFC connectivity from block to GP in ring topology and use of alternative technology to ensure its smooth implementation. The government has notified Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules, 2024 that has streamlined RoW clearance process. The timeline for completion of the construction phase under the Amended BharatNet Program is three years from date of signing of agreement and then O&M for seven years will start.

(d) Total number of Gram Panchayats (GP) made service-ready under BharatNet across the country including Madhya Pradesh is 2,14,325. State/UT-wise list of Gram Panchayats (GPs) provided with broadband connectivity under the BharatNet project is available on Digital Bharat Nidhi website (<https://usof.gov.in/en/home>).

(e) & (f) No CAG audit report on BharatNet has been received in this Ministry till date.
