

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1850
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH FEBRUARY, 2026**

**OPERATIONAL PUBLIC DATA OFFICES/PUBLIC DATA OFFICE AGGREGATORS
UNDER PM-WANI SCHEME**

1850. ADV GOWAAL KAGADA PADAVI:

MS. PRANITI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE:

SHRI VISHALDADA PRAKASHBAPU PATIL:

DR. BACHHAV SHOBHA DINESH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the total number of operational Public Data Offices (PDOs) and Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs) registered under the PM-WANI scheme;
- (b) the details and the total number of PM-WANI hotspots in rural areas and urban areas specifically for the State of Maharashtra;
- (c) the details of the steps being taken by the Government to control for the high cost of commercial broadband that small and medium-sized entrepreneurs cannot undertake, limiting the accessibility of fiber connections; and
- (d) whether the Government has taken any steps to incentivise last-mile connectivity in tribal and remote areas in Maharashtra, specifically in industrial districts in cities such as Solapur, Nandurbar, Bhandara, Sangli and Dhule?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Total number of Public Data Offices (PDOs) and Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs) registered under the PM-WANI scheme, as on 31.01.2026 is as below:

Total Count of PDOs : 4,06,874
Total Count of PDOAs : 207

- (b) Total number of PM-WANI hotspots in State of Maharashtra (including Rural and Urban area) are 34,112 as give below.

PM-WANI WIFI HOTSPOTS (Maharashtra)	Count
PM-WANI Hotspot in Rural	7,266
PM-WANI Hotspot in Urban	26,846
Total	34,112

(c) Under Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) scheme, to address the issues relating to proliferation of Public Wi-Fi Access Points, a series of interventions in the existing PM-WANI Framework and Guidelines for Registrations has been issued by Department of Telecommunication on 16.09.2024. One of the policy interventions was to allow Public Data Offices (PDOs) to offer PM WANI through a regular FTTH connection which will reduce their cost. Further, on 16.06.2025, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released a Telecommunication Tariff (71st Amendment) Order, 2025 related to tariff for retail broadband connectivity for Public Data Offices (PDOs). This order mandates that all retail FTTH broadband plans up to 200 Mbps must be offered to Public Data Offices (PDOs) at tariffs not more than twice the corresponding consumer broadband price.

Also, BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to create network to connect all the Gram Panchayats (GPs)/ Villages with broadband in the country. This infrastructure is leased to TSPs/ISPs for provision of internet connectivity in GPs/rural areas including villages/ Government institutions, schools, and private areas.

(d) Government initiatives for improving mobile network coverage / connectivity gaps in remote, underserved areas of the country including Maharashtra, are being implemented under the Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) scheme.

The status of FTTH connections provided in these districts is as under:

		No. of FTTH connections provided through BharatNet
Solapur	207	
Nandurbar	683	
Bhandara	347	
Sangli	461	
Dhule	305	

Also, in state of Maharashtra 31,389 FTTH connections have been provided under BharatNet project.

The mobile coverage status as on 31.12.2025 in the cities of Maharashtra state namely Solapur, Nandurbar, Bhandara, Sangli and Dhule are as under:

District	Total No of Villages	No of Villages with mobile coverage	No of Villages with 2G mobile coverage	No of Villages with 3G mobile coverage	No of Villages with 4G mobile coverage	No of Villages with 5G mobile coverage
Bhandara	885	876	817	45	865	773
Dhule	720	719	657	352	712	567
Nandurbar	960	913	723	347	889	732
Sangli	724	721	698	319	719	622
Solapur	1159	1158	1108	164	1153	1058
