

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1859
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH FEBRUARY, 2026**

INTERNET PENETRATION IN RURAL AREAS

1859.

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SHRI SUKANTA KUMAR
PANIGRAHI:**

**SHRI GODAM NAGESH:
SHRI AVIMANYU SETHI:
SMT. ROOPKUMARI
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SHRI BUNTY VIVEK SAHU:
SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH
JOSHI:
SHRI BIBHU PRASAD TARAI:
SHRI NALIN SOREN:
SHRI KALI CHARAN SINGH:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the current level of internet penetration in rural India, measured in terms of the total number of rural internet subscribers, broadband density, average data consumption and segregated data for fixed and mobile broadband including Telangana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh particularly in Chhindwara district, Chhattisgarh particularly in Bastar region, Odisha particularly in Kandhamal Lok Sabha Constituency, Karnataka particularly district of Dakshina Kannada, Rajasthan particularly in Pali Lok Sabha Constituency and Saran district of Bihar;
- (b) the year-wise growth in the number of rural internet subscribers during the last three years including Rajasthan, Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, Odisha and Kanthamal Lok Sabha Constituency, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh particularly in Chhindwara district and the State-wise ranking of Chhattisgarh in this regard;
- (c) the extent of existing disparities among States regarding rural internet access and the position of Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana in comparison with the national average thereof;
- (d) the names of districts in Chhattisgarh that still fall under the category of low-connectivity areas;
- (e) the various indicators used by the Government to assess the progress made towards achieving universal rural connectivity and the conclusions drawn based on these indicators in aspirational districts like Chhindwara;
- (f) the expenditure incurred on rural digital connectivity programmes in Odisha, including the Kandhamal Parliamentary Constituency, during the last three years and the budgetary provision made for the current financial year;
- (g) the number of rural areas in the Sidhi Parliamentary Constituency that still lacks internet access and the date by which internet connectivity is likely to become available in these areas;

- (h) whether the increase in Optical Fiber Cable length has contributed to improvement in broadband speed, network reliability and 4G/5G readiness and if so, the measurable outcomes observed in terms of network performance; and
- (i) whether the Government has any special measure to Western Ghats Areas and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) The State/UT wise total number of rural internet subscribers, rural broadband subscribers (segregated for fixed and mobile) and average data consumption per wireless subscriber is attached as **Annexure-I**.
- (b) & (c) The year-wise growth in number of rural internet subscribers during the last 3 years and existing disparities among States in comparison with national average may be seen at **Annexure-II**.
- (d) Bijapur, Narayanpur and Sukma districts of Chhattisgarh State have comparatively higher number of uncovered villages. There are various ongoing projects funded by DBN (Digital Bharat Nidhi) through which connectivity is being extended to remote, underserved areas.
- (e) Progress made towards achieving universal rural connectivity is reflected through various parameters such as access to mobile connectivity, internet and broadband. These parameters are only measured State-wise.
- (f) Government has disbursed an amount of ₹1814.32 crore under various DBN schemes to provide telecom services in rural and remote areas of Odisha, including in Kandhamal Parliamentary constituency during last 3 financial years. Further, in the current financial year 2025-26, an allotment of ₹9650 crore has been made for DBN projects in the country including Odisha.
- (g) 1895 out of 1960 villages in the Sidhi Parliamentary Constituency have access to internet and telecom services. Extension of coverage is a continuous and dynamic process culminating in saturation of services.
- (h) Government has taken multiple initiatives for proliferation of network infrastructure including increase in optical fiber cable length and improvement in telecom services. The measurable improvements across the country include increase in mobile broadband download speed from 13.67 Mbps in March 2022 to 132 Mbps in December 2025 (as per Ookla's Global Speedtest Index), 51.33% increase in 4G/5G Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) count from 16.91 lakh in March 31, 2022 to 25.59 lakh in December 31, 2025, and a general compliance of all QoS parameters by TSPs (as per the TRAI report for December 2025).
- (i) Government has initiated a number of projects to improve telecom connectivity in remote and rural areas of the country including Western Ghat areas. These include projects related to mobile connectivity and broadband connectivity through BharatNet.

Annexure-I

Annexure referred to reply to part (a) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question no. 1859 answered on 11th February 2026 regarding “Internet Penetration in Rural Areas”

State/UT wise total number of rural internet subscribers, rural broadband subscribers (segregated for fixed and mobile) and average data consumption per wireless subscriber.

S.No	State/Union Territory	Internet Subscribers (in mn) September 2025	Broadband Subscribers (in mn) September 2025	Fixed Broadband Subscribers (in mn) September 2025	Mobile Broadband Subscribers (in mn) September 2025	Average wireless data usage per wireless data subscriber (in MB) November 2025
1	Andhra Pradesh	18.28	17.86	0.89	16.97	26,182
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.73	0.73	0.02	0.71	36,134
3	Assam	14.20	14.09	0.16	13.93	29,507
4	Bihar	40.03	39.32	0.50	38.83	30,311
5	Chhattisgarh	9.39	9.31	0.11	9.20	23,415
6	Goa	0.66	0.65	0.04	0.62	22,866
7	Gujarat	21.35	21.16	0.43	20.73	33,657
8	Haryana	10.31	10.14	0.42	9.72	24,742
9	Himachal Pradesh	4.36	4.33	0.14	4.19	28,897
10	Jharkhand	11.74	11.61	0.17	11.44	31,018
11	Karnataka	22.32	21.09	0.44	20.65	25,786
12	Kerala	17.99	17.46	2.14	15.32	21,880
13	Madhya Pradesh	21.87	21.61	0.28	21.33	24,713
14	Maharashtra	34.58	34.17	0.47	33.69	27,242
15	Manipur	0.83	0.82	0.08	0.75	27,540
16	Meghalaya	1.64	1.64	0.02	1.61	25,646
17	Mizoram	0.49	0.49	0.02	0.46	22,717
18	Nagaland	0.74	0.73	0.02	0.72	30,325
19	Odisha	17.97	17.82	0.29	17.53	27,410
20	Punjab	9.96	9.82	0.90	8.92	26,495
21	Rajasthan	26.55	26.22	0.42	25.81	30,020
22	Sikkim	0.38	0.38	0.01	0.37	35,065
23	Tamil Nadu	19.07	18.72	0.55	18.17	26,994
24	Telangana	13.34	13.11	0.32	12.79	26,394
25	Tripura	1.30	1.29	0.02	1.27	28,743
26	Uttar Pradesh	68.61	67.22	0.94	66.29	27,513
27	Uttarakhand	4.86	4.77	0.12	4.65	28,052
28	West Bengal	27.33	26.96	0.72	26.24	27,813
29	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.23	0.19	0.02	0.17	20,246

30	Chandigarh	0.04	0.04	0.01	0.03	24,598
31	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	0.32	0.32	0.00	0.31	33,864
32	Delhi	0.33	0.29	0.01	0.28	16,813
33	Jammu and Kashmir	5.13	5.06	0.16	4.90	26,756
34	Ladakh	0.32	0.32	0.00	0.32	25,062
35	Lakshadweep	0.06	0.04	0.00	0.04	13,957
36	Puducherry	0.38	0.36	0.02	0.34	25,766
All-India		427.70	420.15	10.85	409.29	27,141

Annexure-II

Annexure referred in reply to part (b) and (c) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question no. 1859 answered on 11th February 2026 regarding “Internet Penetration in Rural Areas”

State/UT wise count of rural internet subscribers (in million) during the last three years

S.No	State/Union Territory	March 2023	March 2024	March 2025
1	Andhra Pradesh	16.79	17.89	17.98
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.46	0.53	0.54
3	Assam	10.98	12.75	13.38
4	Bihar	32.27	37.03	37.57
5	Chhattisgarh	7.48	8.39	8.55
6	Goa	0.71	0.83	0.63
7	Gujarat	17.04	18.56	19.18
8	Haryana	8.53	9.96	10.11
9	Himachal Pradesh	3.87	4.03	4
10	Jharkhand	9.84	10.98	10.94
11	Karnataka	19.29	20.79	21.47
12	Kerala	15.03	15.88	18.22
13	Madhya Pradesh	17.88	20.17	21.13
14	Maharashtra	31.64	33.76	32.84
15	Manipur	0.91	0.95	0.98
16	Meghalaya	1.22	1.32	1.34
17	Mizoram	0.49	0.53	0.54
18	Nagaland	0.93	0.98	0.98
19	Odisha	14.79	16.15	17.1
20	Punjab	9.04	9.81	9.6
21	Rajasthan	22.19	25.75	26.07
22	Sikkim	0.39	0.31	0.37
23	Tamil Nadu	16.04	17.23	18.01
24	Telangana	12.15	13.1	13.08
25	Tripura	0.98	1.06	1.07
26	Uttar Pradesh	54.16	63.77	65.41
27	Uttarakhand	4.26	4.9	4.81
28	West Bengal	22.68	25.15	25.61
29	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.21	0.2	0.23
30	Chandigarh	0.04	0.04	0.03
31	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	0.25	0.29	0.3
32	Delhi	0.77	0.29	0.31
33	Jammu and Kashmir	4.21	4.33	4.58
34	Ladakh	0.16	0.24	0.32
35	Lakshadweep	0.05	0.06	0.05
36	Puducherry	0.26	0.36	0.36
All-India		357.99	398.35	407.69
