

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5355
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25TH MARCH, 2026**

SPREAD OF INTERNET IN SC/ST GRAMA SABHAS

5355. SHRI P V MIDHUN REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the resultant internet penetration in Gram Sabhas with SC/ST majority population as a result of the Government's BharatNet project during the last five years;
- (b) whether the Government has taken steps to increase internet literacy along with access to quality internet; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) BharatNet project is implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages beyond GPs on demand basis across the country, including Gram Sabhas with SC/ST majority population. As of February, 2026, a total of 14,54,197 Fiber to the Home (FTTH) connections have been provided in the country, including Gram Sabhas with SC/ST majority population under the BharatNet project.

(b) & (c) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India launched Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) in 2017 to ensure digital literacy. Under the scheme, a total of 6.39 crore individuals were trained across the country against the target to train 6 crore individuals. Out of these, approximately 1.17 crore trained candidates belong to the Scheduled Castes (SC), and approximately 56.23 lakh candidates belong to the Scheduled Tribes (ST). The scheme ended on 31st March 2024.

National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT), an autonomous scientific society under the MeitY is also providing training on digital literacy and has trained more than 43 Lakh candidates across the country.
