

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1640
ANSWERED ON 29TH JULY, 2026**

INTERNET SERVICES IN HILLY AND HIGH-ALTITUDE AREAS

1640. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has assessed poor internet connectivity in hilly and high-altitude regions and if so, the details thereof including the gaps identified and reasons for continued digital exclusion despite flagship Digital India initiatives;
- (b) whether BharatNet and other rural connectivity schemes have failed in mountainous regions due to terrain challenges and if so, the details thereof including corrective measures taken and accountability fixed for delays and underperformance;
- (c) whether Government has data on villages in Himalayan and tribal regions still lacking reliable internet and if so, the details thereof including the details and timeline for achieving universal connectivity in such difficult terrains, State-wise;
- (d) whether high-altitude border areas face communication blackouts affecting security and civilians and if so, the details thereof including the steps taken to ensure robust telecom infrastructure and uninterrupted connectivity in strategic locations; and
- (e) whether private telecom operators are reluctant to invest in hilly regions due to low commercial viability and if so, the details thereof including the incentives or subsidies provided to expand coverage in these underserved areas?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) As of May 2026, out of 89,959 villages of State/Union Territories in predominantly hilly areas, around 87,485 villages are having mobile coverage including 86,538 villages having 4G connectivity. State/UTs wise details are at **Annexure-A**.

Mobile coverage for any uncovered area is provided by the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) based on the techno-commercial viability. However, there are various Digital Bharat Nidhi funded schemes of Government for expansion of mobile and internet facilities through installation of 4G mobile towers in the rural and remote areas of the country. In addition, BharatNet project has been approved to provide high-speed fibre broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages on demand basis. As on 30.06.2026, under BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II, 2,15,250 Gram Panchayats (GPs) had been connected. Additionally, under the Amended BharatNet Programme, 13,494 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been connected and upgraded.

Annexure-A

Annexure-A referred to in Part (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1640 for answer on 29.07.2026

S. No.	State	Total number of villages (as per RGI data of 2019)	Number of villages having mobile coverage	Number of villages having 4G Connectivity
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	5993	4885	4426
2.	Assam	26429	26273	26133
3.	Himachal Pradesh	20852	20357	20159
4.	Jammu and Kashmir	6474	6228	6210
5.	Ladakh	243	233	229
6.	Manipur	2612	2478	2471
7.	Meghalaya	7100	6986	6982
8.	Mizoram	867	817	816
9.	Nagaland	1535	1443	1426
10.	Sikkim	461	455	443
11.	Tripura	937	930	929
12.	Uttarakhand	16456	16400	16314
Total		89959	87485	86538
