

- (iii) Payments Banks cannot accept Non Resident Indian (NRI) deposits.
- (iv) Payments Banks cannot set up subsidiaries to undertake non banking financial services activities.

(c) and (d) The total project cost as approved by the Cabinet is ₹ 1435 crores which is adequate for setting up of India Post Payments Bank.

**Target of setting up of BSNL mobile towers in each gram panchayat**

547. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has earmarked any target of setting up of atleast one BSNL mobile tower in each of the Gram Panchayats of the country with a view to augment its mobile network so that hasslefree telephone connectivity, including 4G network, can be given to BSNL subscribers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has earmarked any funds for this to be spent in coming years;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (e) No target or fund has been earmarked by Government for setting up of atleast one mobile tower of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in each of the Gram Panchayats of the Country. BSNL installs the mobile towers on the basis of technical feasibility and commercial viability.

**Internet connectivity in gram panchayats under BharatNet**

548. SHRI D. KUPENDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of targets planned to provide high-speed internet connectivity in Gram Panchayats under BharatNet at its launching and the targets achieved, so far, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that these targets have already missed various deadlines and there is still failure in its operationalization;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken to operationalize the BharatNet network?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) BharatNet is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by March 2019. BharatNet Phase I to connect 1,00,000 Gram Panchayats (GPs) has been completed in December 2017. As on 09.12.2018, 1,16,492 GPs are Service Ready. The State-wise details are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) to (d) For expediting the implementation of BharatNet project, on 19.07.2017, the Union Cabinet approved a modified strategy for implementing BharatNet under which, the remaining 1,50,000 (approx.) Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country are to be provided connectivity through an optimal mix of media (i.e. OFC, radio and satellite), and by the three models of implementation; i.e. State-led model, Private Sector, CPSU model. As per the above Cabinet approval, BharatNet project is targeted to be completed by March 2019.

Network Operating Centre (NOC) is set up to monitor the operation of the network and the project is presently in the implementation phase. The NOC reports are being monitored on a regular basis. To monitor project implementation, the progress is also being monitored closely.

To ensure better utilization of BharatNet, a Wi-Fi network is being set up under the project. On an average, 3 Government Institutions at GP level such as Police Station, Post Office, School, Hospital and citizens at GP are being connected and average 5 Wi-Fi Access Points (AP) are being set up at each GP. So far Wi-Fi hotspots have been installed at 39,359 GPs and out of them, services are being provided in 10,775 GPs, catering to more than 11 lakh subscribers with a data usage of over 50 TB per month.

***Statement***

*Status of Provision of High Speed Broadband/Internet under BharatNet*

Sl. No	State/UT	GPs where Optical Fiber cable laid and equipment installed (Service Ready)
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1183
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	43

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1	2	3
3.	Andaman and Nicobar	0
4.	Assam	1589
5.	Bihar	5865
6.	Chandigarh	13
7.	Chhattisgarh	4052
8.	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	21
9.	Daman and Diu	17
10.	Gujarat	5113
11.	Haryana	6186
12.	Himachal Pradesh	226
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	263
14.	Jharkhand	2309
15.	Karnataka	6110
16.	Kerala	1129
17.	Madhya Pradesh	12689
18.	Maharashtra	15126
19.	Manipur	248
20.	Meghalaya	122
21.	Mizoram	23
22.	Nagaland	86
23.	Odisha	3496
24.	Puducherry	101
25.	Punjab	7911
26.	Rajasthan	8451
27.	Sikkim	14
28.	Telangana	2047
29.	Tripura	527

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1	2	3
30.	Uttar Pradesh	27940
31.	Uttarakhand	1511
32.	West Bengal	2081
TOTAL		116492

#### **Insurance arm of India Post**

549. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India Post is considering to come up with an insurance arm as a special business unit in two years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that India Post has invited bids for consultancy in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Bids for consultancy in this regard were invited and the consultant has been selected.

#### **Call drops of MTNL and BSNL**

†550. SHRI RAKESH SINHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for substantial call drops on MTNL and BSNL networks as compared to networks of private companies; and

(b) the steps being taken to improve the position of MTNL and BSNL in the competitive market of communications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) As per Performance Monitoring Report (PMR) of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for the quarter ending September 2018, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is meeting the benchmarks for all the Quality of Services (QoS) parameters

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.