(c)   whether it is also a fact that many Post Offices were closed due to poor and pathetic condition of the buildings in which they were working; and

(d)   whether the closed Post Offices were later on reopened on public demand without carrying out repairs or renovating the buildings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) No, Sir. Department of Posts, being old one, operates from its old buildings which are maintained regularly. Only five of the postal buildings, so far, have been declared dilapidated, by Postal Civil Wing or Municipal Authority. Presently, Post Offices are not being operated from these buildings.

(b)   Yes, Sir. Conditions of the Post Offices buildings are assessed regularly through Postal Civil Wing on the basis of which periodic maintenance and renovation of Post Offices buildings are carried out by the Department. The buildings taken on rent, are maintained and renovated by their concerned landlords as per the requirement and request of the Department.

(c)   Yes, Sir. The Post Offices operating from the buildings declared dilapidated by Postal Civil Wing or Municipal Authority, have been closed immediately. In case of rented buildings, where the building was found unsuitable or in dilapidated condition, the Post Office has been shifted to a new suitable building.

(d)   No, Sir. No Post Office has been reopened in a building which has been declared dilapidated.

Poor internet facility in remote villages of Madhya Pradesh

2885. SHRI RAJMANI PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a)   whether there is no internet facility in remote villages of Madhya Pradesh and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the reaction of Government thereto;

(b)   whether internet/broadband speed is very slow in remote areas where internet/ broadband facility is available;

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

(d)   the efforts made by Government to overcome this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) to (d) As per data collected from the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) and Department of Telecommunications (DoT) field units in 2019, it is estimated that 2970 inhabited villages in Madhya Pradesh are not covered by mobile and internet services.

Internet/broadband speed depends *inter alia* on various parameters such as the technology deployed, network coverage, number of simultaneous users accessing the internet, connectivity to the website being accessed etc. The speed of mobile internet is further dependent on a number of factors such as distance from the Base Transceiver Station (BTS) serving the customer, the number of simultaneous users being served by the BTS, the traffic handled by the BTS etc. As such, the mobile users may experience different speed at different locations and time of usage.

Following initiatives/actions have been taken by the Government towards provisioning and improving internet/broadband services:–

(i)   The National Digital Communications Policy-2018 has been notified with strategic objectives which *inter alia* includes provisioning of Broadband for all by 2022.

(ii)   BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide internet/broadband connectivity to all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country. A total of 1,36,693 GPs (including Block Headquarters) have been made Service Ready as on 28.02.2020, including 13,059 in Madhya Pradesh.

(iii) As part of BharatNet project, the last mile connectivity through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology to access internet/broadband services is to be provided at all the GPs in the country including Madhya Pradesh.

(iv)   Under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), setting up of 25,000 public Wi-Fi hotspots, including 1778 in Madhya Pradesh, using the infrastructure of telephone exchanges of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in rural areas.

(v)   Under Left Wing Extremist (LWE) Phase-II project, installation of 2217 mobile towers is planned for providing mobile connectivity covering the 10 States including 23 towers in Madhya Pradesh.