

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2170
ANSWERED ON-06.08.2021

CONNECTIVITY OF GRAM PANCHAYATS

2170. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY:

Will the Minister of Panchayati Raj be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 87 given in the Rajya Sabha on 11 February, 2019 and state:

- (a) whether Phase I target of covering one lakh Gram Panchayats has been achieved;
- (b) whether target of Gram Panchayats which had to be covered by March, 2019, has been achieved; and
- (c) if not, the reasons for delay and by when they are likely to be covered?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ
(SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL)

(a) BharatNet project is being implemented by the Department of Telecommunication in phased manner for providing broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs). The Phase-I was completed in December 2017 under which more than 1 lakh GPs were connected. The implementation of the Phase-I (Revised workfront) is also almost complete as 1,18,649 GPs have been made Service Ready out of the targeted 1,20,392 GPs.

(b) The scope of BharatNet has been recently extended upto all inhabited villages beyond GPs with the target of completion as August, 2023. As on 09.07.2021, a total number of 1,57,919 GPs have been made Service Ready.

(c) The implementation of the project is affected mainly on account of:

- (i) GPs are widely dispersed across remote corners of the country, covering difficult terrains (including Hilly/ Rocky) and also difficulty for access in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas;
- (ii) Phase-I of the project began only in the second half of 2014 due to field survey of GPs and pilot testing of the technology model.

- (iii) In Phase-I, only one media (i.e. is underground Optical Fibre Cable) has been used to cover GPs, and Right of Way (RoW) issues impacted the implementation.
- (iv) Under BharatNet Phase-II, about 65,000 GPs in 8 States- Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Telangana are being implemented by the State Governments under State-led model. The implementation of the same is not meeting the targeted time-lines and affecting the completion of the Project.
- (v) Since March 2020, pursuant to lockdown and movement restrictions due to COVID-19, the progress of the project has been adversely affected.
