

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 706
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03RD DECEMBER, 2021**

BHARAT BROADBAND NETWORK

706. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the coverage of the rural broadband project Bharat Broadband Network since its inception in terms of variety of uses, quantum of area covered and the number of persons benefitted;
- (b) the break up of usage of funds allocated for this scheme;
- (c) the targets set for future progress and expansion of this scheme, as well as the timeline and budget allocation proposed for it; and
- (d) the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) BharatNet project is implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) under Department of Telecommunications, is the Executing Agency for the project. As on 01.11.2021, a total number of 1,66,088 GPs are made Service Ready in the country.

The infrastructure created under BharatNet project is a national asset, accessible on a non-discriminatory basis to the Service Providers, and the same can be utilized for provisioning of broadband/internet services through Wi-Fi Hotspots, Fibre to the Home (FTTH) connections, leased lines, dark fibre, backhaul to mobile towers, etc. and provides benefits to the persons availing these services.

(b) The details of the breakup of funds, disbursed by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) under BharatNet project, up to 31.10.2021, are as follows:

(Figures in Rs. Crore)

Phase-I (CAPEX)	10285.97
Phase-II (CAPEX)	17823.47
Phase-I & II (OPEX)	1716.43
Last Mile Connectivity	1059.44
Total	30885.31

(c) & (d) On 30.06.2021, the scope of BharatNet was extended upto all inhabited villages beyond GPs. The Union Cabinet accorded approval for a revised strategy for implementation of BharatNet through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model in 16 States of the country covering about 3.61 lakh villages (including GPs) at a maximum cost of Rs. 19,041 Crore on Viability Gap Funding (VGF). Therefore, the total approved cost of BharatNet project is now Rs. 61,109 Crore (i.e. Rs. 42,068 Crore for BharatNet (Phase-I and Phase-II) and Rs. 19,041 Crore on VGF for PPP model in 16 States). The target date for completion of the project is August, 2023.
