

**Press Information Bureau
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Ministry of Communications**

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High Speed Internet

Broadband/Internet services are provided in a phased manner by the Government and Telecom Services Provider (TSPs) in the uncovered villages of the country, including Scheduled caste, Scheduled Tribe dominated remote villages. The Government, with funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), has schemes namely Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for North Eastern Region, Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Affected Area schemes, Aspirational Districts Schemes, Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Islands, etc. to extend Broadband/Internet services through setting up of towers in the uncovered villages of the country, including Scheduled caste, Scheduled Tribe dominated remote villages. About 4,330 mobile towers have been installed under various USOF schemes.

The Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 approved a project for saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the country at a total cost of Rs. 26,316 Cr. The project will provide 4G mobile services in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and difficult areas. The project has a provision to include 20% additional villages on account of rehabilitation, new-settlements, withdrawal of services by existing operators etc. In addition, 6,279 villages having only 2G/3G connectivity shall be upgraded to 4G.

BharatNet project is implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country, including Scheduled caste, Scheduled Tribe dominated remote villages, as on 25.07.2022, total 1,78,044 GPs have been made Service Ready. The infrastructure created under BharatNet project can be utilized by Service providers, for provisioning of broadband/internet services. The scope of BharatNet has been recently extended up to all inhabited villages beyond GPs in the country with the timeline as 2025.

This information was given by the Minister of State for Communications, Shri Devusinh Chauhan in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha today.

RKJ/M