

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1997
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 05.08.2021

DIGITAL DIVIDE IN THE COUNTRY

1997 SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Government has estimated the latest level of internet penetration or any such proxy, State-wise, in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether there exists a digital divide between rural and urban India at present; and
- (c) if so, the steps being taken to address this gap?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR)

(a): As per Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) as on 31st March 2021 there are 82.53 crores (825.301 million) internet subscribers in the country. The service area wise rural and urban internet users in the country as on 31st March, 2021 is at **Annexure 1**.

(b) and (c): Specific to address the objective of increasing internet availability and access in rural India, Government of India has implemented BharatNet project in all the Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages of the country. As on 01.07.2021, a total number of 1,57,383 GPs have been made service ready with high speed internet/ broadband infrastructure. Till date 5,25,706 km optical fiber is laid down across the country.

In addition, various schemes are being implemented under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to enhance mobile internet services in the rural and remote areas of the country including North Eastern Region (NER), areas affected by Left Wing Extremism(LWE), Border areas, Aspirational Districts and Islands.

Annexure-1**Service Area-wise, Rural/Urban subscriber-base of Internet as on 31st March 2021
[Subscribers in Millions]**

Telecom Service Area	Narrowband		Broadband		Total (Mar 2021)	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Andhra Pradesh	1.71	1.65	26.37	34.49	28.08	36.14
Assam	0.61	0.30	9.08	6.22	9.69	6.52
Bihar	2.97	1.11	31.65	19.68	34.62	20.79
Delhi	0.11	3.11	0.65	41.09	0.76	44.20
Gujarat	0.75	0.95	14.72	34.13	15.47	35.08
Haryana	0.38	0.45	7.31	10.41	7.69	10.86
Himachal Pradesh	0.16	0.14	4.09	2.33	4.25	2.47
Jammu & Kashmir	0.28	0.17	3.35	4.55	3.64	4.72
Karnataka	1.30	1.40	16.64	30.75	17.94	32.15
Kerala	0.66	0.87	11.81	17.08	12.46	17.95
Kolkata	0.10	1.17	1.34	16.51	1.44	17.68
Madhya Pradesh	1.73	1.57	20.90	31.22	22.63	32.79
Maharashtra	1.70	1.86	27.19	40.38	28.88	42.24
Mumbai	0.07	1.88	1.82	28.53	1.89	30.41
North East	0.24	0.19	4.41	4.23	4.65	4.41
Orissa	0.85	0.28	13.08	7.39	13.94	7.66
Punjab	0.46	0.69	8.70	18.64	9.16	19.34
Rajasthan	1.40	1.15	20.08	22.78	21.47	23.93
Tamil Nadu	1.59	1.69	13.68	39.78	15.26	41.46
UP (East)	3.24	1.33	30.33	26.53	33.57	27.87
UP (West)	1.19	1.11	15.30	24.14	16.49	25.25
West Bengal	1.78	0.84	17.00	17.78	18.78	18.62
Grand Total	23.29	23.92	299.48	478.61	322.77	502.53
	47.21		778.095		825.301	
