

23

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(2025-26)**

EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
(DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2026-27)**

TWENTY-THIRD REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2026/ Phalguna, 1947 (Saka)

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(DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS)

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(2026-27)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 16 .03.2026

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16 .03.2026



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

March, 2026/ Phalguna, 1947 (Saka)

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**Composition of the Standing Committee on Communications and
Information Technology (2025-26)**

Dr. Nishikant Dubey - Chairperson

Lok Sabha

2. Shri C.N. Annadurai
3. Shri Anil Baluni
4. Dr. Rabindra Narayan Behera
5. Shri Anup Sanjay Dhotre
6. Shri Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer
7. Shri Sanjay Haribhau Jadhav
8. Shri S. Supongmeren Jamir
9. Shri Appalanaidu Kalisetti
10. Smt. Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam
11. Shri G. Kumar Naik
12. Shri Shafi Parambil
13. Dr. M.K. Vishnu Prasad
14. Ms. Kangna Ranaut
15. Shri Radheshyam Rathiya
16. Shri Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy
17. Shri Arun Kumar Sagar
18. Shri Devesh Shakya
19. Shri Vishnu Datt Sharma
20. Shri Rajesh Verma
21. Vacant

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Priyanka Chaturvedi
23. Shri Saket Gokhale
24. Shri Sujeet Kumar
25. Shri Amar Pal Maurya
26. Dr. Sasmit Patra
27. Shri Kanad Purkayastha
28. Shri S. Niranjana Reddy
29. Shri Kartikeya Sharma
30. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya
31. Shri K.T.S. Tulsi

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Shri Harish Chandra Bist | — | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. A. Jyothirmayi | — | Director |
| 3. | Shri Rajesh Mohan | — | Deputy Secretary |

Committee constituted w.e.f. 26th September, 2025 vide Para No.3282 of Bulletin Part-II dated 01st October, 2025.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology (2025-26), having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Twenty-third Report on Demands for Grants (2026-27) of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications).

2. The Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology (2025-26) was constituted on 26th September, 2025. One of the functions of the Standing Committee, as laid down in Rule 331E of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, is to consider the Demands for Grants of the Ministry concerned and make a Report on the same to the Houses.

3. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) for the Financial Year 2026-27 which were laid on the Table of the House on 11th February, 2026. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) on 25th February, 2026.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their Sitting held on 13th March, 2026.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) for appearing before the Committee and furnishing the information that the Committee desired in connection with the examination of the Demands for Grants.

6. The Committee would also like to place on record their appreciation for the assistance rendered to them by the officials of the Lok Sabha Secretariat attached to the Committee.

7. For facility of reference and convenience, Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in Part-II of the Report.

New Delhi;
13th March, 2026
22 Phalgun, 1947 (Saka)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Communications and Information
Technology.

Report

Part-I

I. Introductory

1. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is, inter-alia, responsible for Telecom Policy; Licensing and Coordination matters concerning telegraph, telephones, telecom wireless data; international cooperation in matters related to telecommunications; promotion of standardization and Research & Development (R&D) in telecommunications; and encouragement of private investment in the sector. DoT is also responsible for frequency management in the field of radio communication in close coordination with international bodies. Further, DoT enforces wireless regulatory measures by monitoring wireless transmissions of all users in the Country.

2. Various attached Subordinate and Field Offices of DoT are DBN (Digital Bharat Nidhi), Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC) which is the technical wing of DoT; Director General Telecom (DGT); Controller General of Communication Accounts (CGCA); Wireless Monitoring Organisation(WMO) which performs various functions relating to spectrum management; National Telecommunications Institute for Policy Research Innovation and Training (NTIPRIT) which is the telecom training institute of DoT; National Centre for Communication Security(NCCS) which works to establish and operationalize a framework of telecom security testing and certification within the Country; the National Institute of Communication Finance(NICF) and National Operations Control Centre (NOCC). There are several PSUs and autonomous bodies under DoT like BSNL, MTNL, ITI Limited, TCIL, BBNL (merged with BSNL), and C-DOT.

Priority Schemes

3. The following are the priority DBN schemes of the Department during FY 2026-27:

- i. BharatNet (Phase-I, Phase-II and Amended BharatNet Programme);
- ii. 4G Saturation Project;
- iii. Schemes for Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages of Himalayan States, Western Border States and Aspirational Districts and (354 uncovered villages, 502 uncovered villages in Aspirational districts, 7287 uncovered villages in Aspirational Districts);
- iv. Border Out Posts (BOP)/ Border Intelligence Post (BIP);
- v. Scheme for Mobile Communication Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Affected Areas (LWE-I upgradation and O&M);
- vi. LWE Phase-II;

- vii. Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for the North-Eastern Region; and
- viii. Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Islands

As regards other Schemes, the Department in their written submissions have informed as follows:-

“Schemes such as Bharat Net, PLI (Production Linked Incentive), DIU (Digital Intelligence Unit) & DIU-Phase-II have been prioritised in 2026-27. In addition, schemes such as Optical Fibre Cable based network for Defence Services, TDIP (Technology Development and Investment Promotion) and Telecom Computer Emergency Response Team (T-Cert) are also important.”

Indian Telecom Scenario

4. The representative of the Department of Telecom while deposing before the Committee regarding the Telecommunications landscape in the Country submitted as follows:-

“On the sector overview, we have taken the evolution of the sector over a decade – from 2014 to 2025 – and we have also done some projections of demand for 2030; the idea being that we get a larger picture of where the sector is moving. On telecom infra, from 6.5 lakh base stations, we have moved to 31.9 lakh during the decade. As regards data price, we have seen a massive reduction of 97 per cent. We are now just at Rs. 8.27 per GB, which makes us one of the most affordable data providers in the world today.

On subscribers also, we have seen a substantial growth. As regards mobile, it has moved from 93 crore to 117 crore. As regards broadband, it has moved from six crore to 100 crore. By 2030, that is in another five years, we will be at 250 crore. Currently, we are already number two in the world. We also look at some additional data -- the monthly per capita mobile data. Again, the usage has increased from 0.06 GB to 36GB, expected to go up to 62 GB by 2030. We are number one in data use in the world today. There has been an AI-led data explosion in terms of data centre capacity. We were standing at just 0.3 gigawatts. We have now moved to one now and we are expected to move to 10 by 2030. In fact, our growth is 3x times faster than the rest of the world in this five-year period. The total revenues, as they stand today, are already at Rs. 4.6 lakh crore and are expected to increase to Rs. 7.4 lakh crore.

There are some initiatives also towards Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat. Again, the time period we are looking at is the same decadal period of 2014 to 2025. From zero startups, we are at 2400 startups in the pace of 10 years, and more than 1800 patents are now filed annually, which is a six-fold growth from 2014. As regards Make-in-India, again, we have seen an increase in annual telecom equipment exports from Rs. 5,400 crore to Rs. 18,400 crore, which means that we are again seeing a three-fold increase here. With regard to ease of doing business, we have taken some

initiatives, complex licensing and Right of Way issues have been simplified both through simplifying the framework and through bringing in a number of digital initiatives. For a healthy and a competitive sector, we have enhanced protection against fraud and we have also got multiple telcos including a PSU. Now, as regards access to digital services, today, in 4G and above, we stand at 95 crore subscribers; and in 5G, we have 40 crore subscribers”.

5. The digital revolution has ushered in a remarkable transformation in the realm of internet and broadband connectivity. Total Telephone subscriptions rose to 12345.32 lakhs as on 30.11.2025 from 9330.2 lakhs as on 31.03.2014 with a growth of 32.32 %. The number of mobile connections reached to 11738.82 lakhs as on 30.11.2025. The tele-density which was 75.23 % as on 31.03.2014 has reached 86.77% as on 30.11.2025. Urban Telephone connections rose to 6913.51 lakhs as on 30.11.2025 from 5552.3 lakhs as on 31.03.2014, a growth of 24.52 % while the growth in rural telephone connections was 43.78%, which is more than double of urban increase rising from 3777.8 lakhs as on 31.03.2014 to 5431.81 lakhs as on 30.11.2025. The rural tele density increased from 44% as on 31.03.2014 to 59.59% as on 30.11.2025. Internet connections jumped from 2515.9 lakhs as on 31.03.2014 to 10178.1 lakhs as on 30.09.2025, registering a growth of 304.55 %. Broadband connections rose from 608.7 lakhs as on 31.03.2014 to 10036.5 lakhs as on 30.11.2025, growing by 1548.84%. Average revenue realisation per subscriber per GB wireless data reduced to Rs 8.27 at the end of September, 2025 from Rs 268.97 at the end of December 2014, a reduction of more than 96.93%. Average Wireless Data usage (in GB) per data user per month increased to 25.24 GB at the end of September, 2025 from 0.27 GB at the end of December, 2014. The number of Mobile Base Receiver Stations (BTS) are 31.87 lakhs as on 31.12.2025. The number of mobile towers are 8.48 lakhs as on 31.12.2025.

II. Implementation Status of Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Eighth Report on Demands for Grants (2025-26) of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications)

6. The Eighth Report of the Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology on Demands for Grants (2025-26) of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) was presented to Lok Sabha on 21.03.2025 and laid in Rajya Sabha on 20.03.2025. The Department of Telecommunications furnished their Action Taken Notes on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Eighth Report on 11th June, 2025. The Sixteenth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Eighth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 19th August, 2025. All the 22 Recommendations contained in the said report were accepted by the Government. The final Action Taken Statement on the Recommendations contained in the Sixteenth Report have already been laid in Parliament on 12.12.2025.

III. DoT Budget (2025-26)

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) presented Demand No.13 for the Financial Year 2025-26 on 11.02.2026. The Actuals under Revenue and Capital

Sections for the years 2022-23 to 2025-26 (upto Dec 2025), Proposed, Budget Estimate (BE), Revised Estimate (RE) and Actuals for 2025-26 up to Dec 2025, proposed and BE during 2026-27 under Revenue and Capital are as under:

(Rs.in crore)

Major Head	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 BE	2025-26 RE	2025-26 Actual (upto Dec.2025)	2026-27 Proposed	2026-27 BE
Revenue Section	66,280.44	33,067.19	52,867.14	35,851.50	33,632.37	24,867.42	31,394.53	30,716.02
Capital Section	56,228.62	62,455.72	78,992.31	73,784.76	68,195.29	22,549.51	63,437.66	67,274.93
Grant Total	1,22,509.06	95,522.91	1,31,859.45	1,09,636.26	1,01,827.66	47,416.93	94,832.19	97,990.95

Budget at a Glance

A. Revenue Section

7. The BE (2025-26), RE (2025-26), BE (2026-27) of the Revenue Section of the Department are as under:-

BUDGET AT A GLANCE 2025-26 AND 2026-27					
REVENUE SECTION			(Rs in Cr)		
S. No.	Head Name	Major Head	BE 2025-26	RE 2025-26	BE 2026-27
1	Secretariat	3451	9.78	8.97	9.61
2	Directorate Genl. Admn.		375.21	345.79	328.26
3	Telecom Engineering Centre		41.14	39.11	37.50
4	Administrator, USO Fund		18.88	28.61	24.74
5	TERM Cells		269.95	240.41	243.66
6	Controller of Communication Accounts		252.88	240.46	235.27
7	Centralized Monitoring System		67.64	52.60	55.49
8	NTIPRIT		51.65	38.52	45.62
9	Controller General of Communication Account		16.48	17.87	18.01
10	DG (T)		11.81	11.29	12.27
11	NICF		16.77	11.90	13.49
12	Total	3451	1132.19	1035.53	1023.92

13	Pension & Other Retirement Benefits-DoT	2071	20133.42	19685.00	21064.00
14	2552-North Eastern Area	2552	640.00	458.72	420.00
15	Labour Employment and Skill Development	2230	0.40	0.21	0.33
16	Wireless and Planning Coordination	3275	22.63	19.59	19.83
17	Monitoring Services		47.85	55.92	63.40
18	Other schemes of USOF Subsidies		4619.00	2835.00	2761.40
19	USOF Professional Services		25.00	25.00	25.00
20	Compensation for Research & Development (R&D)		400.00	150.00	400.00
21	Total Compensation to Service Pro.		5044.00	3010.00	3186.40
22	Total Schedule caste sub-Plan (USOF+ C-DoT)		531.20	380.74	348.60
23	Total -Tribal Area Sub Plan (USOF+C-DoT)		275.20	433.25	180.60
24	Transfer to Reserve Fund		4000.00	4000.00	0.00
25	TDIP		39.74	24.00	39.72
26	Viability Gap Funding to BSNL for providing telecom connectivity during Shri Amarnath Yatra		1.00	1.00	0.01
27	Implementation of VRS of BSNL & MTNL		0.01	675.60	475.95
28	Special assistance for Swachhta Action Plan		2.00	1.80	1.63
29	International Co-operation		48.73	46.28	70.35
30	CDOT		309.60	454.47	464.40
31	TRAI		130.00	135.00	146.00
32	TDSAT		28.94	22.73	24.66
33	Training		65.78	28.00	33.45
34	Champion Service Sector Scheme		1.10	14.05	0.00
35	Production Linked Incentive Scheme		1965.50	1944.00	1950.00
36	Operational Cost of Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telcom Equipment (MTCTE)		1.20	1.20	0.00
37	Viability Gap Funding (VGF) to BSNL		1200.00	1200.00	1200.00
38	Waiver of Guarantee Fee BSNL/MTNL		231.01	0.00	0.00
39	SATCOM Monitoring Facility		0.00	5.28	2.77
	Total	3275	13945.49	12452.91	8207.77
	Total Revenue		35851.50	33632.37	30716.02

8. The Committee while examining the revenue expenditure pattern of the Department for FY 2025-26 observed shortfall in expenditure under Revenue Section in the Budget of the Department for the year 2025-26. The Revenue Expenditure in the year was estimated to be 35,851.50 Cr in BE 2025-26 which was decreased to Rs 33,632.37 in RE 2025-26. The Department could spend only Rs 24867.42 Cr till December 2025 which is less than the Revised Estimates for 2025-26.

9. When the Committee sought reasons for such a shortfall, the Department in their written replies informed as under:-

“Decrease in RE 2025-26 in Revenue section is Rs. 2,219.13 Cr (Rs 35,851.50Cr -Rs 33,632.37Cr). It is mainly due to decreased allocation in Compensation to service

providers (decrease of Rs. 2,000.00 Crores) and decreased allocation in compensation for R &D (decrease of Rs. 250.00 Crore).

The actual expenditure of the Revenue section is Rs. 24,867.42 Crore as on 31/12/2025 against allocation of Rs. 33,632.37 Crores in RE 2025-26, i.e. 73.94%.”

10. The Department during oral evidence submitted before the Committee as follows:-

“This is the aggregate picture of the Budget Estimates (BE). The BE for 2025–26 stood at Rs.1,09,637 crore. The RE stands at Rs.1,01,827 crore. As far as the expenditure is concerned, this is the data till 20th February, 2026; the overall expenditure stands at Rs.87,483 crore, which is about 86 per cent of the RE. Next year's BE stands at Rs.97,991 crore. In terms of distribution between capital and revenue, capital accounts for roughly 68 per cent both in BE and RE, and revenue accounts for the balance 32 per cent.”

11. The Secretary, Department of Telecommunications during deposition before the Committee stated as follows:-

“So, what we would like to say here is that this is till 20th February, 2026. By 31st March, 2026, we expect to substantially utilise the RE figures, barring some small residual items.”

12. The Department further informed the Committee during the oral evidence as follows:-

“This is a break-up of the capital budget and some areas that have been highlighted. The first is the revival plan of BSNL-MTNL, which is in three parts - the CAPEX, the Spectrum cost, and the AGR dues. On CAPEX, against the RE figure of Rs.5,198 crore, we are expecting it to be utilised by March. So, we will be able to use this amount. The spectrum cost is Rs.19,483 crore, which we have not been able to utilise this year.

“What has happened is that since MTNL was in breach of its obligations, it is operating only through an escrow account. So, as of date, the whole operations of MTNL are being run by BSNL, including whatever employees of MTNL are there. Till we clear those debt obligations through monetisation and other measures, that arrangement will have to continue. That is why the Cabinet decision was a common one.

The spectrum cost is Rs.19,483 crore in the BE. In the RE, we have not been able to utilise it. We have requested it again in the BE for 2026–27. The reason was that some time was taken in indigenous technology development, and there were proofs of concept for sector-specific captive networks, which are still being completed.

Apart from that, on BharatNet, against a BE of Rs.22,000 crore, the RE is Rs.5,500 crore, out of which we have spent Rs.3,510 crore till date.”

13. According to the Department, though it had proposed Rs 31,394.53 Cr as Revenue Expenditure in the Budget 2026-27, the proposed expenditure was scaled down and Rs 30,716.02 Cr has been allocated in the Demands for Grants.

B. Capital Section

14. The BE (2025-26), RE(2025-26) & BE(2026-27) of the Capital Section of the Department are as under-:

BUDGET AT A GLANCE 2025-26 & 2026-27 (Contd.)					
	Capital Section				(Rs in Cr)
S. No.	Head Name	Major Head	BE 2025-26	RE 2025-26	BE 2026-27
1	Capital Outlay on NE Area (OFC)	4552	145.63	70.60	97.50
2	Capital Outlay on NE Area (BharatNet)	4552	2200.00	550.00	2000.00
3	ITI Revival (Equity Investment)	4859	105.50	60.00	39.50
4	Capital Infusion for BSNL/MTNL	5275	33757.58	6885.00	28473.00
5	Direction & Administration	5275	162.89	26.61	85.74
6	Major Work Building		4.00	1.64	1.96
7	Other Communication Services	5275			
8	Major Work Building (WMO)		4.00	2.00	10.25
9	WPC		25.00	0.10	35.00
10	Monitoring Services		50.00	13.00	44.75
11	Provision for Schedule Caste Sub Plan (BharatNet)		1826.00	456.50	1660.00
12	Provision for Tribal Area Sub Plan		946.00	236.50	860.00
13	OFC Based Network for DS		1310.62	635.40	877.50
14	BharatNet		17028.00	4257.00	15480.00
15	Transfer to Reserve fund		16000.00	5500.00	17063.00
16	Additional transfer to Reserve fund		0.00	10500.00	0.00
17	Wireless Sets and Equipment's (TEC)		0.37	0.16	0.13
18	Training		62.46	24.48	50.43
19	Telecom Testing and Security Certification Centre		8.00	3.77	7.54
20	Telecom Computer Emergency Response Team (T-Cert)		73.00	72.98	97.62
21	Sampann 2.0		5.00	3.00	3.38
22	TRAI Building		1.00	9.00	3.00
23	Digital Intelligence Unit Project		52.00	40.00	30.00
24	Digital Intelligence Unit Project Phase-II		0.00	25.51	29.00
25	MTCTE		0.20	0.20	0.00
26	Prevention of Spoofed Incoming International Calls System 'CIOR'		7.50	5.65	7.00

27	Unified Portal		10.00	15.02	25.00
28	IP addressing and Routing Registry (IPARR)		0.00	10.90	1.36
29	Command and Control IP (C2C IP) Blocking Portal		0.00	10.78	2.23
30	SATCOM Monitoring Facility		0.00	0.00	190.03
31	Loans to MTNL on invocation of Government Guarantee		0.01	1829.49	0.01
32	Conversion of Outstanding Spectrum Auction Dues into equity (Vodafone Idea Ltd.)		0.00	36950.00	0.00
33	Centralized Monitoring System 2.0		0.00	0.00	100.00
	Total Capital Section		73784.76	68195.29	67274.93
	Total Capital & Revenue Section (Gross)		109636.26	101827.66	97990.95

15. The Department in its written submissions has stated that “BE 2025-26 in Capital section was Rs.73,784.76 crores and RE 2025-26 in capital section is Rs. 68,195.29 Crores. There is a decrease of Rs. 5,589.47 Crores. The decrease is mainly due to less allocation in the Bharat Net (decrease of Rs. 16,500.00 crore), Capital infusion to BSNL/MTNL (decrease of Rs. 26,872.58 crore), OFC based network of Defence Services (decrease of Rs. 750.25 crore). And increased allocation in conversion of outstanding spectrum auction dues into equity (Vodafone Idea Ltd) (increase of Rs. 36,950.00 crore) and loans to MTNL on invocation of Government Guarantee (Rs. 1,829.48 core). The actual expenditure of Capital section is Rs. 22,549.51 Crores as on 31/12/2025 against allocation of Rs. 68,195.29 Crores in RE 2025-26 which is 33% of RE 25-26.”

16. The Department while deposing before the Committee placed the Budget and Expenditure statement upto December 2025 of the Revenue and the Capital Section as under:

Budget and Expenditure statement upto Dec 2025 (Revenue Section)				
	Revenue Section			(Rs in Crore)
Major Head	Head Name	RE 2025-26	BE 2026-27	Expenditure upto Dec' 25
3451	Secretariat	8.97	9.61	6.85
	Directorate Genl. Admn.	345.79	328.26	214.39
	Telecom Engineering Centre	39.11	37.50	28.68
	Administrator, USO Fund	28.61	24.74	16.09
	TERM Cells	240.41	243.66	179.36
	Controller of Communication Accounts	240.46	235.27	181.08
	Centralized Monitoring System	52.60	55.49	18.38
	NTIPRIT	38.52	45.62	27.82
	Controller General of Communication Account	17.87	18.01	13.92
	DG (T)	11.29	12.27	9.22
	NICF	11.90	13.49	9.13
	Total	1035.53	1023.92	704.92
2071	Pension & Other Retirement Benefits-DoT	19685.00	21064.00	14783.28

2552*	North Eastern Area	458.72	420.00	0.00
2230	Labour Employment and Skill Development	0.21	0.33	0.10
3275	Wireless and Planning Coordination	19.59	19.83	15.30
	Monitoring Services	55.92	63.40	42.54
	Other schemes of USOF Subsidies	2835.00	2761.40	2320.05
	USOF Professional Services	25.00	25.00	12.39
	Compensation for Research & Development(R&D)	150.00	400.00	21.16
	Total Compensation to Service Pro.	3010.00	3186.40	2353.60
	Total Schedule caste sub Plan(USOF+ C-DoT)	380.74	348.60	36.74
	Total -Tribal Area Sub Plan(USOF+C-DoT)	433.25	180.60	279.20
	Transfer to Reserve Fund	4000.00	0.00	4000.00
	TDIP	24.00	39.72	12.25
	Viability Gap Funding to BSNL for providing telecom connectivity during Shri Amarnath Yatra	1.00	0.01	0.00
	Implementation of VRS of BSNL &MTNL	675.60	475.95	433.99
	Special assistance for Swachhta Action Plan	1.80	1.63	1.29
	International Co-operation	46.28	70.35	6.65
	CDOT	454.47	464.40	262.20
	TRAI	135.00	146.00	121.30
	TDSAT	22.73	24.66	18.04
	Training	28.00	33.45	12.95
	Champion Service Sector Scheme	14.05	0.00	1.08
	Production Linked Incentive Scheme	1944.00	1950.00	700.98
	Operational Cost of Mandatory Testing and Certification of Telecom Equipment (MTCTE)	1.20	0.00	1.01
	Viability Gap Funding (VGF) to BSNL	1200.00	1200.00	1080.00
	Waiver of Guarantee Fee BSNL/MTNL	0.00	0.00	0.00
	SATCOM Monitoring Facility	5.28	2.77	0.00
3275	Total	12452.91	8207.77	9379.12
	Total Revenue Section	33632.37	30716.02	24867.42

Further, it was informed that the Revenue expenditure till February 2026 was Rs 26,924 Cr. In Pension and Other Retirement expenditure till Feb 2026 was Rs 16,351 crore. In PLI scheme, expenditure till 20 Feb, 2026 was Rs 862 cr.

17. The Department further added that:

“BE was Rs. 35,851 crore in the revenue budget, RE was Rs. 33,632 crore. Expenditure till 20th February 2026 is Rs. 26,924 crore. We are roughly at 80 per cent. Next year's BE is Rs. 30,716 crore... The BE was Rs. 76,862 crore in non-tax revenue receipts of the Department. The RE increased to Rs. 138,942 crore. Essentially, this is due to Rs. 36,950 crore of Vodafone Idea's dues into equity, representing the first installment. That came in the middle of the year.”

18. When the Committee sought to know from the Department regarding sharing of infrastructure between BSNL and Vodafone and save expenditure, the Secretary DoT replied as follows:-

“Discussions have started between the two of them. The Department will report progress regarding this by next year”.

19. When specifically asked about the share of Government in Vodafone, the Secretary informed the Committee that the stake of Government in Vodafone was 49 percent.

20. CAPITAL SECTION

				(Rs in Crore)
		RE 2025-26	BE 2026-27	Expenditure upto Dec'25
4552**	Capital Outlay on NE Area (OFC)	70.60	97.50	0.00
	Capital Outlay on NE Area (BharatNet)	550.00	2000.00	0.00
4859	ITI Revival (Equity Investment)	60.00	39.50	0.00
5275	Capital Infusion for BSNL/MTNL	6885.00	28473.00	1687.18
	Dte & Administration-	26.61	85.74	11.35
	Major Work Building	1.64	1.96	0.00
	Other Communication Services			
	Major Work Building (WMO)	2.00	10.25	1.95
	WPC	0.10	35.00	0.06
	Monitoring Services	13.00	44.75	0.62
	Provision for Schedule Caste Sub Plan (BharatNet)	456.50	1660.00	406.25
	Provision for Tribal Area Sub Plan (Bharat Net)	236.50	860.00	137.03
	OFC Based Network for DS	635.40	877.50	125.00
	BharatNet	4257.00	15480.00	2466.07
	Transfer to Reserve fund	5500.00	17063.00	16000.00
	Additional transfer to Reserve fund	10500.00	0.00	0.00

Wireless Sets and Equipment's (TEC)	0.16	0.13	0.00
Training	24.48	50.43	23.57
Telecom Testing and Security Certification Centre	3.77	7.54	0.94
Telecom Computer Emergency Response Team (T-Cert)	72.98	97.62	49.04
Sampann 2.0	3.00	3.38	2.32
TRAI Building	9.00	3.00	0
Digital Intelligence Unit Project	40.00	30.00	32.14
Digital Intelligence Unit Project Phase II	25.51	29.00	0.00
Mandatory Testing and certification of Telecom Equipment (MTCTE)	0.20	0.00	0.00
Prevention of Spoofed Incoming International Calls System (CIOR)	5.65	7.00	2.67
Unified Portal	15.02	25.00	10.00
IP Addressing and Routing Registry (IPARR)	10.90	1.36	0.00
Command and Control IP (C2C IP) Blocking Portal	10.78	2.23	0.00
SATCOM Monitoring Facility	0.00	190.03	0.00
Centralized Monitoring System 2.0	0.00	100.00	0.00
Loans to MTNL on invocation of Government Guarantee	1829.49	0.01	1593.32
Conversion of Outstanding Spectrum Auction Dues into equity (Vodafone Idea Ltd.)	36950.00	0.00	0.00
Total Capital Section	68195.29	67274.93	22549.51
Total Capital & Revenue Section (Gross)	101827.66	97990.95	47416.93

* The amount provided for MH- 2552- North Eastern Area is re-appropriated to functional Head 32750010301- Compensation to Service Providers and 32750018801- Centre for Development of Telematics head under which expenditure is booked.

**The amount provided for MH- 4552- North Eastern Area is re-appropriated to functional Head 52750080003- OFC Based Network for Defence Services and 52750010105- Bharat Net under which expenditure is booked.

Under BharatNet, Expenditure till 20 Feb, 2026 is Rs 3510 cr. Total Capital section expenditure till Feb 2026 is Rs 60, 560 cr.

21. Details of variation in BE 25-26 from RE 25-26 in the Capital Section as informed by the Department is detailed in the table below:-

(Rs. in Crore)					
S. No.	Head Name	Major Head	BE 2025-26	RE 2025-26	Expenditure upto Dec. 2025
1	ITI Revival (Equity Investment)	4859	105.50	60.00	0.00
2	Capital Infusion for BSNL/MTNL	5275	33757.58	6885.00	1687.18
3	Direction & Administration	5275	162.12	26.29	11.35
4	Major Work Building		4.00	1.64	0.00
5	Other Communication Services	5275			
6	Major Work Building		4.00	2.00	1.95
7	WPC		25.00	0.10	0.06
8	Monitoring Services		50.00	13.00	0.62
9	OFC Based Network for DS		1456.25	706.00	125.00
10	BharatNet		22000.00	5500.00	3009.35
11	Transfer to Reserve fund		16000.00	5500.00	16000.00
12	Additional transfer to Reserve fund		0.00	10500.00	0.00
13	Wireless Sets and Equipments (TEC)		0.37	0.16	0.00
14	Training		62.46	24.48	23.57
15	Telecom Testing and Security Certification Centre		8.00	3.77	0.94
16	Telecom Computer Emergency Response Team (T-Cert)		73.00	72.98	49.04
17	Sampann 2.0		5.00	3.00	2.32

18	TRAI Building		1.00	9.00	0.00
19	TDSAT		0.77	0.32	0.00
20	Digital Intelligence Unit Project		52.00	40.00	32.14
21	Digital Intelligence Unit Project Phase-II		0.00	25.51	0.00
22	MTCTE		0.20	0.20	0.00
23	Prevention of Spoofed Incoming International Calls System 'CIOR'		7.50	5.65	2.67
24	Unified Portal		10.00	15.02	10.00
25	Loans to MTNL on invocation of Government Guarantee		0.01	1829.49	1593.32
26	IP Addressing and Routing Registry (IPARR)		0.00	10.90	0.00
27	Command and Control IP (C2C IP) Blocking Portal		0.00	10.78	0.00
28	Conversion of outstanding Spectrum Auction Dues into equity (Vodafone Idea Ltd.)		0.00	36950.00	0.00
	Total Capital Section		73,784.76	68,195.29	22,549.51

The expenditure is being regularly monitored and all-round efforts are being made for full utilization of the allocated fund.

The Department during the oral evidence further informed the Committee that the Capital expenditure till February 2026 was Rs 60,560 Cr.

22. The Scheme- wise proposed allocation, BE, RE and Actual Expenditure upto December, 2025, pertaining to the Annual Plan 2025-26 and 2026-27 is given below:

Name of Schemes/Programmes	Annual Plan 2025-26					Annual Plan 2026-27				
	Proposed by DoT	BE	RE	Actual Exp. Upto Dec. 2025	%age of utilization w.r.t. RE	Proposed by DoT	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	%age of utilization w.r.t. RE
Central Sector Schemes										
A. IEBR										
BSNL	500.00	500.00	500.00	1002.47	200.49	500.00	500.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
MTNL	85.00	85.00	75.00	12.35	16.47	75.00	75.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
ITI LTD.	12.61	12.61	12.61	0.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
C-DOT (IR)	150.00	150.00	150.00	140.00	93.33	150.00	150.00	0.00	0.00	N/A
TCIL	0.00	102.20	54.93	0.00	0.00	0.00	156.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total IEBR (A)	747.61	849.81	792.54	1154.82	145.71	735.00	891.00	0.00	0.00	N/A
B. GBS										
Compensation to Service Providers for creation and augmentation of Telecom Infrastructure – USOF	6000.00	6000.00	4000.00	2610.58	65.26	3600.00	3600.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compensation to R & D - Research & Development	400.00	400.00	150.00	21.16	14.11	400.00	400.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
BharatNet	22000.00	22000.00	5500.00	3009.35	54.72	20000.00	20000.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Defence Spectrum – Optical Fibre Cable Based Network for Defence Services	1553.94	1456.25	706.00	125.00	17.71	975.00	975.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	29953.94	29856.25	10356.00	5766.09	55.68	24975.00	24975.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
DOT Projects/Schemes										

Wireless Planning & Coordination/Monitoring Services										
(a) Wireless Planning & Coordination (WPC)	91.98	47.63	0.10	0.06	60.00	70.00	35.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
(b) Monitoring Services (WMO)	192.81	101.85	15.00	2.57	17.13	120.76	55.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Telecom Engineering Centre (TEC)	0.37	0.37	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.13	0.13	N/A	N/A	N/A
Technology Development & Investment Promotion (TDIP)	55.24	39.74	24.00	12.25	51.04	39.72	39.72	N/A	N/A	N/A
Viability Gap funding to BSNL for providing telecom connectivity during Shri Amarnath Yatra	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	N/A	N/A	N/A
Telecom Testing & Security Certificate Centre (TTSC)	8.00	8.00	3.77	0.94	24.93	7.54	7.54	N/A	N/A	N/A
Telecom Computer Emergency Response Team (T-Cert)	97.00	73.00	72.98	49.04	67.20	97.62	97.62	N/A	N/A	N/A
Provision of Champion Services Sector Scheme - Promotion of Innovation and Incubation of Future Technologies for Telecom Sector	1.10	1.10	14.05	1.08	7.69	0.01	0.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme to Promote Telecom and Networking Products	2830.00	1965.50	1944.00	700.98	36.06	1950.00	1950.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Digital Intelligence Unit Projects	70.00	52.00	40.00	32.14	80.35	30.00	30.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Digital Intelligence Unit Phase-II	0.00	0.00	25.51	0.00	0.00	29.04	29.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

Prevention of Spoofed incoming international calls system 'CIOR'	10.00	7.50	5.65	2.67	47.26	7.00	7.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
Unified Portal	25.62	10.00	15.02	10.00	66.58	32.50	25.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
IP Addressing and Routing Registry (IPARR)	0.00	0.00	10.90	0.00	0.00	1.36	1.36	N/A	N/A	N/A
Command and Control IP (C2C IP) Blocking Portal	0.00	0.00	10.78	0.00	0.00	2.23	2.23	N/A	N/A	N/A
SATCOM Monitoring Facility	0.00	0.00	5.28	0.00	0.00	192.80	192.80	N/A	N/A	N/A
Centralized Monitoring System 2.0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	100.00	N/A	N/A	N/A
IEC Media	25.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sampann 2.0	5.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total – DOT Schemes/Projects	3413.51	2307.69	2188.20	811.73	37.10	2780.72	2572.41	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total GBS (B) (SCHEMES)	33367.45	32163.94	12544.20	6577.82	52.44	27755.72	27547.41	N/A	N/A	N/A

23. Examination of written submissions of the Department about spending pattern revealed a mixed execution pace and the following indicates it:-

“The budget data for 2025–26 shows significant variation between Budget Estimates (BE), Revised Estimates (RE), and Actual Expenditure up to December 2025. Under IEBR, total RE was ₹792.54 crore, while actual expenditure reached ₹1154.82 crore, reflecting a very high utilisation of 145.71%. Notably, BSNL shows expenditure of ₹1002.47 crore against an RE of ₹500.00 crore (200.49% utilisation), indicating substantial over-achievement or additional internal resource mobilisation. In contrast, MTNL utilised only 16.47% (₹12.35 crore against ₹75.00 crore RE), and ITI Ltd. reported zero expenditure against ₹12.61 crore RE (0% utilisation). C-DOT (IR) performed relatively well with 93.33% utilisation (₹140.00 crore against ₹150.00 crore RE).

Under GBS (Major Schemes), overall utilisation stands at 55.68% (₹5766.09 crore against ₹10356.00 crore RE), reflecting moderate progress but clear underutilisation in key schemes. BharatNet utilised ₹3009.35 crore against ₹5500.00 crore RE (54.72%), while USOF infrastructure compensation utilised 65.26% (₹2610.58 crore against ₹4000.00 crore RE). However, R&D compensation shows serious underutilisation at only 14.11% (₹21.16 crore against ₹150.00 crore RE), and the Defence Spectrum OFC project utilised just 17.71% (₹125.00 crore against ₹706.00 crore RE), indicating major implementation lag.

Among DOT Projects/Schemes, total utilisation is particularly low at 37.10% (₹811.73 crore against ₹2188.20 crore RE). Several schemes show negligible or zero utilisation: Wireless Planning & Coordination (0.06 crore against ₹0.10 crore RE; 60% though small amount), Monitoring Services (17.13%), TEC (0%), Viability Gap Funding for Amarnath Yatra (0%), and multiple new digital platforms such as IPARR, C2C IP Blocking Portal, SATCOM Monitoring Facility, and CMS 2.0 show zero actual expenditure despite RE allocations. The PLI Scheme shows moderate utilisation at 36.06% (₹700.98 crore against ₹1944.00 crore RE).

Some schemes demonstrate relatively better performance. The Digital Intelligence Unit recorded 80.35% utilisation (₹32.14 crore against ₹40.00 crore RE), Unified Portal achieved 66.58%, and T-CERT reached 67.20%, indicating steady progress in cyber security and digital governance initiatives. Technology Development & Investment Promotion (TDIP) also shows moderate utilisation at 51.04%. These reflect comparatively better absorption capacity in technology and security-related initiatives.

Overall, while internal resource mobilisation (IEBR) shows strong performance largely due to BSNL, the GBS-funded schemes—especially R&D, Defence OFC, PLI, and several digital infrastructure projects—display substantial underutilisation. The aggregate GBS (Schemes) utilisation stands at 52.44% (₹6577.82 crore against ₹12544.20 crore RE). For 2026–27, allocations appear rationalised in some major schemes (e.g., BharatNet reduced to ₹20000 crore BE, USOF reduced to ₹3600 crore BE)”.

Revenue Receipts

24. According to the Department, the main sources of revenue receipts include License Fees (LF), Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC), Auction of Spectrum, Fees for other Services etc and are detailed as below:-

- (i) **The License Fee** refers to the payment that Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) make to the Government for the right to operate telecom services in a specific region or nationwide. As per the License Agreement, the LF is a percentage of the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) of TSPs. AGR includes the revenue from telecom services, excluding non-telecom-related income like income from interest, dividends, etc. As per License agreement, the operator pays the LF on a quarterly basis, depending on the terms of the license.
- (ii) **Spectrum Auction Receipts:** Since 2010, Access Spectrum for providing commercial mobile services is being auctioned to Telecom Service Providers (TSPs). The reserve prices of spectrum in the spectrum auctions are decided by the Government after considering TRAI's recommendations. Successful bidders in the auction are given the option of making payment of bid amount in instalments.
- (iii) **Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC):** This is levied as a percentage of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) earned by TSPs through use of Spectrum. SUC is payable on a quarterly basis by TSPs. W.e.f Sep 2021, SUC for spectrum acquired through auction has been reduced to zero.
- (iv) Other sources are amounts paid at the time of spectrum liberalization, Merger & Acquisitions, spectrum assignments to captive users, broadcasting services etc.

25. Details of Revenue Receipts of the Department from 2022-23 to 2026-27 are as follows:-

(Rs.in crore)

Items	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Actual	2025-26 Actual (as on 31.12.25)	2026-27 Proposed	2026-27 BE
License Fee	20,316.28	36,363.17	25,989.19	13,911.89	29,211.00	29,211.00
SUC	5,743.62	13,065.18	4,272.02	2,110.86	4,200.00	4,200.00
Spectrum auction/administratively allotted spectrum	37,816.00	42,617.89	54,500.07	62,651.72	42,410.66	42,410.66
Other sources	959.27	-1,386.98*	32.98	858.28	1,028.47	1,028.47
Total	64,835.17	90,659.26	84,794.26	79,532.75	76,850.13	76,850.13

* Negative amount in other sources during the year 2023-24 is due to deduct refund in lieu of duplicacy in SBI Scroll and subsequent correction entry in PFMS during March, 21 an amount of Rs.1600.14 Crore was reflected in outstanding challan in PFMS and an amount of Rs.755.52 Crore pertaining to excess payment done by Vodafone in 2018 has been deducted.

26. When asked to elaborate on the Revenue targets during 2025-2026 and on shortfalls if any, in achieving the targets during 2025-26, the Department stated as follows-

License Fees:-

- (i) The estimated Revenue Receipts in respect of License Fee for FY 2025-26 is Rs. 27,300 Cr.
- (ii) As on 22.12.2025, the Actual Revenue Receipts in respect of License Fee for FY 2025-26 is Rs. 13,911 Cr.
- (iii) There have not been any shortfalls till date in achieving the targets during FY 2025- 26.

Spectrum:-

The revenue target of 2025-26 is Rs.1,11,012.13 Cr. The details of anticipated receipts from December, 2025 to March, 2026 are as follows :-

(Rs. in crores)

Nature of Receipts	Target	Revenue Receipts Up to Dec. 2025 (FY 2025-26)	Anticipated receipts from January, 2026 to March, 2026
Auction instalments/pre-payment receipts	106412.13	62651.72	43760.41*
Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC) - CDMA+GSM+BWA +VSAT	4200.00	2110.86	2089.14
Other Spectrum related receipts	400.00	337.97	62.03
Grand Total	1,11,012.13	65,100.55	45,911.58

Including instalment due for the FY 2025-26 for Rs 6,355.35 cr and equity shares worth Rs. 36,950 cr towards pre-payment of deferred spectrum instalment of M/s VIL (Rs. 9,734 cr for FY 2025-26, Rs 17,631 cr for FY 2026-27, Rs 9,585 cr for FY 2027-28).

27. Regarding the measures taken by the Department to increase revenue earnings and the factors affecting revenue receipts and measures required to increase revenue, the Department in its written reply stated the following:-

Measures taken to increase revenue earnings:

1. Telecom Reforms, 2021 has clarified the definition of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) to include various sources of income from telecom operations.
 - a. to make online paperless payments & Online Grievance Facility resolution process.
 - b. 28 CCAs have been hand-holding licensees for on-boarding on SARAS portal and making submissions / payments via the Telecom Facilitation Center (TFC) and Telecom Outreach Programs (TOP). This led to increased participation, grievance redressal and revenue assurance.

2. License Fee payments are made by TSPs through SARAS portal of DoT, which is integrated with Bharatkosh. These revenue receipts are maintained digitally in the Bharatkosh/PFMS platforms of Govt. of India.
3. Access Spectrum is assigned through auctions only.
4. Provision for mandatory upfront payments is removed and number of equated annual installments were increased from 16 to 20. This facilitates TSPs to bid for more spectrum in Auction. Further, requirement for submission of Financial Bank guarantees securitizing the annual spectrum installment dues were also removed to decrease the overall cost of holding spectrum to TSPs.
5. Provision for pre-payment of Spectrum Auction is extended to any time in the year instead of only on instalment anniversary date as earlier.
6. Revenue receipts are maintained according to the Head of Accounts allotted for the Dept. of Telecom.

Factors affecting revenue receipts:

1. The factors affecting LF revenue receipts are revenue of telecom operators, regulatory policies, technological advancements viz. 5G, 6G, market competition, subscriber growth and demand, pricing strategies, infrastructure investments etc.
2. TSPs under Corporate Insolvency Resolution Professional (CIRP) adversely affected the revenue receipts.
3. Further, pursuant to support package in Sept. 2021, M/s Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL), M/s. Bharti Airtel Ltd.(BAL) and M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. were given the option of moratorium for 4 years for Spectrum auction dues and converting interest amount pertaining to deferred instalments into equity. Only M/s Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL), M/s. Bharti Airtel Ltd.(BAL) opted for the same. M/s VIL further exercised its option of converting interest amount pertaining to moratorium period into equity.
4. M/s Vodafone Idea Ltd. (VIL), M/s. Bharti Hexacom Ltd. M/s. Bharti Airtel Ltd., M/s. Quadrant Televentures Ltd., M/s. Tata Teleservices Ltd. (TTSL) and M/s. Tata teleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd. (TTML) were given the option of moratorium for 4 years for AGR

dues(LF&SUC) upto 2018-19 and converting interest amount pertaining to deferred instalments into equity. M/s VIL, M/s BAL and M/s Quadrant Televentures Ltd. and M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd opted for the moratorium. Further M/s. VIL also exercised its option for converting accrued interest on annual instalment during the moratorium period into equity.

5. M/s VIL has converted equity shares worth Rs. 36,950 cr towards pre-payment of deferred spectrum instalment (Rs. 9,734 cr for FY 2025-26, Rs 17,631 cr for FY 2026-27, Rs 9,585 cr for FY 2027-28).
6. As part of Telecom Reforms, Spectrum Usage Charges has been reduced to Zero for the spectrum acquired through spectrum auction held in 2022 and subsequent years. Further reforms introduced in September 2021, are expected to decrease the cost of operations for TSPs, facilitate foreign investment and at the same time increase the ease of doing business for TSPs.
7. These reforms are also expected to increase revenue for TSPs thus also increasing the revenue receipts to Gol.

28. Elaborating upon the steps taken by the Department to achieve the targets during 2025-26, the Department in its written submissions stated as follows;

“Following are the measures taken by the Department to achieve targets related to License Fee for FY 2026-27:

- a) Facility to make online paperless payments.
- b) Fully Digital and Paperless submission of financial documents.
- c) Online Grievance resolution process.
- d) 28 CCAs have been hand-holding licensees for on-boarding on SARAS portal and making submissions / payments via the Telecom Facilitation Center (TFC) and Telecom Outreach Programs (TOP). This led to increased participation, grievance redressal and revenue assurance.
- e) Receipt of Spectrum deferred installments & SUC shall be continuously monitored..”

IV. Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) renamed as Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)

29. USOF, formed by an Act of Parliament, was established w.e.f. 01.04.2002 under the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003 (further amended in 2006), to provide financial support for the provision of telecom services in commercially

unviable rural and remote areas of the Country. It is an attached office of the DoT, and is headed by the Administrator, USOF, appointed by the Central Government. Further w.e.f 26 June, 2024 it has been renamed as 'Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN)'.

- 30.** In accordance with the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, License fee includes Universal Access Levy, which is charged @ 5% of the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) of the telecom licensees. The fund collected under UAL goes to the Consolidated Fund of India and it is non-lapsable in nature. The outflow from this fund to USOF is through budgetary provision by the Ministry of Finance each year, based on the requirement of USOF.

Since inception of DBN (e-USOF) in FY 2002-03, UAL amounting to Rs. 1,87,734.99 crore has been collected up to 30.11.2025. The balance of UAL amount available as on 30.11.2025 is Rs. 94,868.30 crore. The total committed liability under various DBN projects including Amended BharatNet Program is Rs. 1,69,232 crore. The Union Cabinet has approved Rs. 1.39 lakh crores for Amended BharatNet Program for 10 years.

- 31.** Regarding the schemes where there had been major shortfalls in achieving the targets during 2025-26 and the reasons for their poor performance, if any, the Department has stated as follows:

“BE for 2025-26 of Rs. 28,400 crores (Rs. 22,000 crore for BharatNet, Rs. 6,400 crore for other DBN's schemes) was received. RE for 2025-26 of Rs. 9,650 cr (Rs. 5,500 cr for BharatNet and Rs. 4,150 cr for other DBN's Schemes) is to be received. RE for the FY 2025-26 is sufficient to meet the expenditure for DBN's Schemes.

Scheme-wise details are as under:

(i) BharatNet: For the year 2025-26, an allocation of ₹22,000 crore has been made under BharatNet, against which RE of ₹5,500 crore has been proposed. The expected expenditure under Amended Bharat Program (ABP) has not materialized due to multiple delays. These include re-tendering of four out of sixteen packages where agreements could not be finalized, limited progress in state-led packages with only Gujarat signing an MoU but failing to finalize tenders, and delay in appointment of the Independent Engineer which has held up linked payments. Delay in grant of Right of Way permission by Ministries/States under Telecommunication (RoW) Rule, 2024. Further, certain tenders within BSNL such as for C-NOC, and VSAT remain pending, while agreements signed for four packages in June 2025 saw execution hampered by the onset of the monsoon. In addition, capital expenditure milestones are tied to completion of ring connectivity and S-NOC visibility, further deferring expenditure realization.

(ii) Mobile and other Projects: For the year 2025-26, an allocation of ₹6,400 crore has been made for Mobile and other projects includes ₹400 crore for R&D. RE 2025-26 is Rs. 4,000 crore for Other Mobile Projects and Rs. 150 crore for R&D is proposed. The delay in installation and supply of indigenously developed and domestically manufactured equipment is the main cause for the short fall in Schemes implemented by M/s BSNL namely 4G Saturation, LTE Phase-I upgradation, BoP/BIP Schemes etc. The Schemes implemented by Private TSPs like 354 uncovered villages, 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational District, LTE-II, 7287 uncovered villages of Aspirational District, Uncovered villages of Meghalaya along with National Highway (NH) and uncovered villages of Arunachal Pradesh & 2 District of Assam are mainly delayed due to the pending Revenue land allocation, Forest permission from State/MoEFCC, RoW issues, Security issue, Road Access issues etc. Most of the issues has been resolved with the support from State Governments. Under TTDF ₹250 crore was reduced due to fewer projects being shortlisted by the evaluation committee, and no proposal was approved in the chipset category”.

32. The Department has further stated in their written submissions that:

“The details of fund allocation for various DBN Schemes is as under:

(Rs. in Crore)							
Sl. No.	Schemes	2025-26 Proposed	2025-26 BE	2025-26 RE	2025-26 Actual Upto 31.12.25	2026-27 Proposed	2026-27 BE
1.	BharatNet	22,000	22,000	5,500	3,009.35	20,000	20,000
2.	Other USOF Scheme	6,400	6,400	4,150	2,631.74	4,000	4,000
	Total	28,400	28,400	9,650	5,641.09	24,000	24,000

“

A. Progress of implementation of BharatNet

BharatNet is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages in the Country.

The Union Cabinet on 25.10.2011 approved the project for creation of National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), now known as BharatNet, to provide Broadband connectivity for connecting Block Headquarters (BHQs) to Gram Panchayats (GPs), i.e. middle-mile network. Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) was incorporated on February 25, 2012 as a Special Purpose Vehicle for its establishment, management and operations.

In order to create synergy in terms of cost reduction and revenue enhancement the merger of BBNL with BSNL was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 as a part of “Revival of BSNL and merger of BBNL with BSNL” in order to achieve the larger objective of better utilization of existing assets.

(ii) Implementation of BharatNet: The Phase-I of the project has been implemented through GPON (Gigabit Passive Optical Network) technology by using existing fibre of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) - Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel Corporation Limited (RailTel) and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) and laying underground incremental fibre to bridge the connectivity gap up to the GPs. The Phase-I was completed in December 2017 with the implementation of over 1 lakh GPs. Subsequently, the scope of Phase-I has been enhanced to the revised work-front of about 1.20 lakh. As on 30.11.2025 by laying 3,12,449 km Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), total 1,20,179 GPs have been made Service Ready under Phase-I (Revised work front).

For expediting the implementation of BharatNet, a modified strategy was approved by Cabinet on 19.07.2017 at an estimated cost of Rs. 42,068 crore, which provides an optimal mix of media (OFC/Radio/satellite) to connect Gram Panchayats (GPs), multiple implementation models - State-led Model, Private Sector through BBNL and CPSU Model through BSNL/PGCIL, provision of Last Mile connectivity (e.g. through Wi-Fi) in GPs, etc. As on 30.11.2025 under BharatNet Phase II, by laying 3,82,422 km of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), 89,691 GPs have been made Service Ready. Further, 5,034 GPs have been made Service Ready on Satellite media. In total, 94,725 GPs have been made Service Ready under the BharatNet under Phase-II in the Country.

Regarding the overall progress of BharatNet (Phase-I + Phase-II), 2,09,870 GPs have been made Service Ready on OFC media by laying 6,94,871 km of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) as on 30.11.2025. Further, 5,034 GPs have been made Service Ready on Satellite media. Total 2,14,904 GPs have been made Service Ready under the BharatNet project in the Country.

33. While submitting information about other DBN projects, the Department stated:

“The Plans to achieve the targets of DBN Schemes are as under:

(i) BharatNet Project:- The following steps have been taken under Amended BharatNet Program:

- i. Appointment of Project Implementing Agency (PIA) for Development (creation, upgradation, operation & maintenance) of middle mile network of BharatNet on Design Build Operate and Maintain (DBOM) model.

- ii. BSNL has signed agreement with selected Project Implementation Agency (PIAs) in 12 packages and work has been commenced in 18 States/UTs covering 1,36,655 GPs (~52% of overall GPs). Further, re-tendering has been done by BSNL in 04 Packages and bids are under evaluation.
- iii. It is proposed to provide 1.5 crore rural home fibre connections distributed across all States/UTs with priority to cover Government institutions including schools, Primary Health Centers, Anganwadis, Panchayat offices etc., using the BNU model over the next five years to promote/ ensure utilisation of network.
- iv. Monitoring of the project at various levels by DBN, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited/ Bharat Broadband Network Limited with implementing Agencies for speedy roll out of the project.
- v. Resolving all pending issues in expeditious manner.
- vi. Single Project Implementation Agency (PIA) for construction and O&M of the network in a Package.
- vii. Dedicated Network Operation Centre.
- viii. Remote Fiber Monitoring System.

(ii) Other DBN Mobile Projects: - To sort the issues matters have been taken up with respective State Governments, Centre State Coordination Meeting chaired by Secretary Coordination, MHA, PMG meeting, MoEFCC for faster resolution. Further, regular meetings were also held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Communications (HMoC), Secretary/Administrator (DBN) to expedite the issues faced by USPs in executing the work. Multiple DO letters have been sent to State Chief Ministers for resolving the issues from the HMoC level as well.

BE for the FY 2026-27 has been sought to ensure sufficient fund is available for the projects.”

34. The details with respect to Proposed, BE, RE and actual during 2022-23 to 2025-26, Proposed and BE during 2026-27 are as under:

(Rs. in Crore)					
Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Proposed	7,000	5,000	15,000	22,000.00	20,000
BE	1,500	5,000	8,500	22,000.00	20,000
RE	1,500	5000	6,500	5,500.00	NA
Actuals	1,500	3,075.54	3,995.01	3,009.35*	
%w.r.t. RE	100%	61.51%	61.46%	54.72%	

*Expenditure upto 31.12.2025.

35. When the Committee desired to know about the implementation of Amended BharatNet Project, the Department in its written replies stated as under-

“Amended BharatNet Program: The Union Cabinet accorded its approval on 04.08.2023 regarding Amended BharatNet Program to provide high speed broadband connectivity to all inhabited villages in the Country. The Project will be fully funded through Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), Department of Telecommunications (DoT) at an estimated cost of INR 1,39,579 crore. The amount is Rs 1.88 lakh crores including the outlay for Phase-I and Phase-II. BSNL has been appointed as Project Management Agency (PMA) for Amended BharatNet Project. BSNL has put notice inviting tender (NIT) for selection of Project Implementing Agency (PIA) for Development (creation, upgradation, operation & maintenance) of middle mile network of BharatNet on Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) model for sixteen packages on 15.02.2024 and opened on 07.08.2024 which is under finalization. BSNL has signed agreement with selected Project Implementation Agency (PIAs) in 12 packages and work has been commenced in 18 States/UTs covering 1,36,655 GPs (~52% of overall GPs). Further, re-tendering has been done by BSNL in 04 Packages and bids are under evaluation.

Under the current scope of the BharatNet, the Gram Panchayats (GPs) are primarily connected in linear structure because of which the reliability of the network is low. However, under the Amended BharatNet Program an estimated 2.65 lakh GPs are proposed to be connected in ring network. The remaining 3.8 lakh villages are proposed to be connected on demand basis.

The network shall be maintained by professional agencies specialized in optical fiber networks, selected through bidding process by BSNL. These agencies will maintain network for a period of 10 years to high defined standards of availability. It is also proposed to engage a professional private sector partner for the Network Operations Center (NOC) to design, build, operate and maintain the NOC for 10 years. BSNL has put Request for Proposal (RFP) for Designing, Planning, Supply, Installation, Configuration, Customization, Integration, Testing, Commissioning and O&M of C-NOC for Amended BharatNet Program on 01.01.2025.

The last mile network will be managed through BharatNet Udyamis (BNU) who could be a village level entrepreneur, Internet Service Provider, Self Help Group etc. BNUs will be given a one-time financial incentive for activating new home fiber connections. To incentivize continuity of services, BNUs will also receive a share of the monthly revenue (on established market practice). It is proposed to eventually provide 1.50 crore rural home fiber connections using the BNU model over the next five years. In order to fast track last mile connectivity, about 100 districts are identified for prioritizing expenditure on upgradation of infrastructure and subsidy to home fibre connections.

BSNL will provide Internet Leased line (ILL) to all 7,269 blocks with sufficient bandwidth to ensure minimum 25 Mbps download speed to every home fibre subscriber.”

36. The Estimated cost and disbursement of funds under BharatNet Project upto 30.11.2025 are as under:-

(Rs. Crore)				
S. No.	Activity as approved by Union Cabinet	Amount as approved by Union Cabinet	Estimated cabinet approved cost (with taxes)	Funds disbursed from DBN (as on 30.11.2025)
1	BharatNet Phase I (Capex)	11,148	12,708.72	10,285.97
2	BharatNet Phase II (Capex)	18,792	22,174.56	20,738.47
3	Operation and Maintenance (O&M)	6,046	7,134.28	6,820.11
4	Last Mile Connectivity (LMC)	4,066	4,066.00	1,540.02
5	Replacement of Lossy fiber	2,016	2,378.88	850.00
6	Total	42,068	48,462.44	40,234.57
7	Amended BharatNet Program	1,20,756	1,39,579.00	6,861.60
8	Total (6 +7)	1,62,824	1,88,041.44	47,096.17

37. Further, it was stated that:

“BharatNet connectivity in remaining 47,000 GPs (including satellite GPs) has been planned under Amended BharatNet Program for which RFP (floated by BSNL) has been opened and agreement has been signed by BSNL with selected Project Implementation Agency (PIAs) in 12 packages and work has been commenced in 18 States/UTs covering 1,36,655 GPs (~52% of overall GPs). Further, re-tendering has been done by BSNL in 04 Packages and bids are under evaluation”.

38. On being asked about the reasons for variation from BE to RE during 2025-26 and any shortfall in achieving the targets during 2025-26, the Department has submitted its reply as follows:

“Under BE for FY 2025-26, Rs. 22,000 crore was allotted and same was decreased in RE 2025-26 to Rs. 5,500 crore. Rs. 3,009.35 crore has been disbursed under BharatNet up to 31.12.2025.

The expected expenditure under ABP has not materialized due to multiple delays. These include re-tendering of four out of sixteen packages where agreements could not be finalized, limited progress in state-led packages with only Gujarat signing an MoU but failing to finalize tenders, and delay in appointment of the Independent Engineer which has held up linked payments. Delay in grant of Right of Way permission by Ministries/States under Telecommunication (RoW) Rule, 2024. Further, certain tenders within BSNL such as for C-NOC, and VSAT remain pending, while agreements signed for four packages in June 2025 saw execution hampered by the onset of the monsoon. In addition, capital expenditure milestones are tied to completion of ring connectivity and S-NOC visibility, further deferring expenditure realization.”

B. Utilization of BharatNet Networks

39. The utilization of network is through leasing of bandwidth and dark fibre, Wi-Fi to access broadband/internet services at public places, and Fibre to the Home (FTTH) to provide broadband connectivity to Government Institutions (like school, Health Centre, Anganwadi, Police Station, Krishi Vikash Kendra, Post Office, Ration Shop, etc.), Private Institutions and Households, and FTTH connections to rural households through the USOF-funded BharatNet Udyami scheme, Service Partners and State Implementing Agencies. The work of provisioning of Wi-Fi hotspots in about 5200 GPs of BharatNet Phase-II (being connected on satellite media) is under process.

So far, the utilization is as follows (as on 30.11.2025):

Sl. No.	Utilization Model	Actual Utilization
1	FTTH connections Provided	13,92,767
2	Dark Fibre leased (fibre Kms)	1,18,244
3	Leasing of Bandwidth (in Mbps)	3,92,141
4	Data consumption (Oct-25) (in TB)	1,64,588

40. On being asked about the main issues confronting the implementation of Bharat Net Project , the Department replied as under:-

“The main issues concerning BharatNet Phase-I and Phase-II are as follows:

- (i) Delay in project implementation because of multiple challenges in remote and far-flung rural areas, involvement of multiple agencies, and slow progress by implementing agencies.
- (ii) Delay in Right of Way clearances from Government Institutions, regulating forest land, railway lines, defense areas, highways, oil and gas pipelines or any other agencies or Departments.
- (iii) Low utilization of created network and connectivity.
- (iv) The pace of implementation was affected due to pandemic induced lockdowns/restrictions.
- (v) Delay in finalization of tenders by State Implementing Agencies.
- (vi) O&M issues. ”

41. Regarding the measures taken to address these issues, the Department submitted the following:-

“

- i. Appointment of Project Implementing Agency (PIA) for Development (creation, upgradation, operation & maintenance) of middle mile network of BharatNet on Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) model.
- ii. It is proposed to provide 1.5 crore rural home fibre connections distributed across all States/UTs with priority to cover Government institutions including schools, Primary Health Centers, Anganwadis, Panchayat offices etc., using the BNU model over the next five years to promote/ ensure utilisation of network.
- iii. Monitoring of the project at various levels by DBN, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited/ Bharat Broadband Network Limited with implementing Agencies for speedy roll-out of the project.
- iv. Resolving all pending issues in expeditious manner.
- v. Single Project Implementation Agency (PIA) for construction and O&M of the network in a Package.
- vi. Dedicated Network Operation Centre.
- vii. Remote Fiber Monitoring System.”

42. The target and achievements made for expansion of telecom infrastructure under DBN during 2025-26 are given in the table below. The main reasons for shortfall in achieving targets includes, inter-alia, security issues in the survey of LWE affected locations, delay in land allotment by the State Government and, RoW issues in Forest, Road Access issues etc.

Physical Target & Achievements of DBN schemes during 2025-26			
S. No.	Major USOF Schemes/ Projects	Physical Target	Achievement
1	BharatNet (Phase-I, Phase-II and Amended BharatNet Program)	Connecting all the 2.65 Lakh GPs	<p>2,14,323 GPs are Service Ready.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Cabinet approved the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) on 04.08.2023 for 10 years. BSNL has been appointed as Project Management Agency (PMA) for ABP. ii. BSNL has signed agreement with selected Project Implementation Agency (PIAs) in 12 packages and work has commenced in 18 States/UTs covering 1,36,655 GPs (~52% of overall GPs). Further, re-tendering has been done by BSNL in 04 Packages and bids are under evaluation. iii. HOTO of existing network – Handover takeover of 100% GPs (98,606 GPs done out of 98,608 GPs) in 12 ABP packages where roll-out has started. iv. Physical Survey - Physical survey of 43% GPs done (58,483 GPs done out of total 1,36,655 GPs) in 12 ABP packages where roll-out has started. v. GPs Live : 2,332 GPs are live and visible in S-NOC.

Physical Target & Achievements of DBN schemes during 2025-26			
S. No.	Major USOF Schemes/ Projects	Physical Target	Achievement
2.	4G Saturation project	Installation of 3590 towers	2285 towers installed
3.	Mobile Services in 502 Uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts	Installation of 11 towers	5 towers installed
4.	Mobile Services in 7287 Uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts	Installation of 1323 towers	207 towers installed
5.	LWE Phase-I	Upgradation of 1790 sites	737 towers upgraded
6.	LWE Phase-II	Installation of 264 towers	32 towers installed
7.	Mobile Services in Meghalaya	Installation of 3 towers	2 towers installed
8.	Mobile Services in Arunachal Pradesh and Two Districts of Assam	Installation of 48 towers	5 towers installed
9.	BOP/BIP	Installation of 521 sites	105 sites installed
10.	Project for Augmentation of Telecom Connectivity in Lakshadweep Islands	Installation of 7 towers	All sites installed.

C. Revised implementation strategy of BharatNet to connect 6 lakh villages

43. When asked about the details of total number of uncovered villages which have no telecom connectivity and plans envisaged to provide connectivity to these villages, the Department replied that:

“As per data received from Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), Department of Telecom’s field unit and State Governments as of November 2025, out of 6,44,131 villages (villages are as per data of Registrar General of India as of

November 2019) in the Country, around 6,34,654 villages are having mobile connectivity and 9,477 villages are not having any mobile coverage.

Government and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) provide telecommunication connectivity in the Country in a phased manner. Government through funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is implementing various schemes for providing mobile network coverage in all uncovered villages of the country. Details of schemes/projects to improve the telecommunication connectivity in rural, tribal and LWE affected areas across the Country:

- Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the Country.
- Provision of 4G mobile services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas Phase-II.
- Provision of 4G Mobile Services in North Eastern Region of the country under Comprehensive Telecom Development Program for NER.
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha). And provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts in four States (namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan).
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 354 uncovered villages of J&K, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Border area & other priority areas.
- Provision of 4G Mobile Coverage in 85 uncovered Villages and seamless 4G Mobile coverage of NH223 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.”

44. Regarding the Mobile Services in Uncovered villages of Meghalaya and seamless coverage along National Highway, the Department apprised the Committee as under:

Mobile Services in Uncovered villages of Meghalaya and seamless coverage along National Highway: The work has been awarded to M/s Bharti Hexacom Ltd for 1,164 uncovered villages and 11 sites along National Highways in Meghalaya on 04.09.2020 for provisioning of 4G mobile services at a total project cost of Rs. 804.37 Crore. Additional 723 villages of Meghalaya are also proposed to be covered by Commissioning of 528 mobile towers. The scope of work has been revised after survey. The revised cost of the project is Rs. 398 Cr.

The status as on 30.11.2025 are as follows:

Executable scope after survey			Tower Commissioned	Villages Covered	NH Locations covered
Villages	NH	Sites			
627	3	437	436	626	3

45. Furnishing details about Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages of Arunachal Pradesh and 2 Districts of Assam the Department has stated:

“Mobile Services in Uncovered Villages of Arunachal Pradesh and 2 Districts of Assam:

Agreements have been signed with M/s Bharti Hexacom Limited for provision of services in Arunachal Pradesh on 29.10.2021 and with M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited for 2 Districts of Assam on 01.11.2021. The total project cost is Rs. 1,255.49 Crore. Roll-out period is April, 2023 which has been extended upto March, 2025. The scope of work has been revised after survey. The revised cost of project is Rs. 667 crores. Till 30.11.2025, in Arunachal Pradesh 472 sites have been installed and commissioned covering 933 villages. In two Districts of Assam, 222 sites have been installed and commissioned covering 303 villages. Extension of the project is up to March, 2026 for Arunachal Pradesh.”

D. Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Islands

46. When the Committee desired to know about the progress made under the plan, the Department informed regarding the Provision of 4G Mobile Coverage in Uncovered Villages and seamless 4G Mobile coverage of National Highway in Andaman & Nicobar Islands as follows:-

“An Agreement was signed between USOF and M/s RJIL on 15.03.2021 for setting up of 82 towers to provide mobile services on 4G Technology in identified 85 uncovered villages (with population of 10 or more), and 42 towers for providing 4G mobile services to bridge the gaps in mobile connectivity along uncovered NH-4 (earlier NH-223). The total project cost is Rs. 129.58 Crore and was targeted to be completed by September, 2024. The revised cost of the Project is Rs. 110 crore as on date. The target for completion of project was extended from 14.03.2021 due to Covid related logistics issues, pending Forest permissions and nonavailability of land and backhaul. Till November 2025, 68 towers (villages-21, NH-47) have been commissioned and providing mobile services to 69 villages (villages-22, NH-47).”

47. While submitting details about Submarine OFC Connectivity between Mainland India (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands the Department has stated that:

“The project entails Provision of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity between Mainland (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands (KLI Project) comprising of Kavarati and ten other Islands, namely, Kalpeni, Agatti, Amini, Androth, Minicoy, Bangaram, Bitra, Chetlat, Kiltan and Kadmat. The total estimated Route length is about 1,772 km and the total Financial Implication is about Rs. 1,072 Crore (excluding taxes). The project is targeted to be implemented within 1000 days from the date of announcement by Hon’ble Prime Minister on

15th August, 2020. It was dedicated to the nation by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 03.01.2024.”

48. About the Provision of 4G Mobile Services, augmentation of OFC Transmission Network & Provision of FTTH services in Lakshadweep Islands, the Department stated as follows:

“DoT is supporting a scheme for augmentation of Telecom infrastructure in Lakshadweep islands at a total cost of Rs. 62.86 Cr.

The works includes:

- i. Upgradation of 17 existing 2G tower sites to 4G mobile services. Work has been completed.
- ii. Installation of additional 20 new mobile tower sites (including Suheli Island) for provision of 4G mobile services. Work has been completed.
- iii. Creation of 225Km OFC network for provision of FTTH in Lakshadweep Islands. This includes the operation and maintenance cost for 5 years with provision of services at the same QoS/ SLA for 10 years. 7976 FTTH connections have been provided. Work has been completed.

This project has been planned to reap the benefits of huge bandwidth created under KLI Project of submarine optical fibre connectivity between Kochi and Kavaratti and ten other Islands of Lakshadweep Islands.

System of monitoring and control over the performance of schemes:

- i. Appropriate conditions exist in USOF Agreements with the USPs to ensure proper quality of service and maintenance of various records.
- ii. Agreement for new installations also provide for imposition of liquidated damages in case of not meeting the roll-out obligations within the specified period.
- iii. Agreements provide for deductions in subsidy if the facilities are non-functional on account of faults, or disconnected for non-payment or interruption in services.
- iv. In accordance with the stipulations in the Agreements, the service providers have to submit fault/downtime details etc. while submitting the claims in the Proforma prescribed, besides self-certification and affidavit to the effect that claims are being submitted in accordance with terms and conditions of Agreement.
- v. There are adequate safeguards in the Agreements to take care of eventualities such as excess/underpayment of subsidy at any stage. Provisions also exist

for recovery of interest in case subsidy payments are found to be made in excess.

- vi. In the new RFPs floated for mobile services in uncovered areas in 2019 onwards the provision of inspection by TPA has been made.
- vii. The Agreement also provides that, 'The quarterly subsidy statements of each year shall be required to be audited by the auditors of the universal service provider appointed under section 224 of the companies act 1956 and final adjustment, if any, in respect of excess or shortage in the subsidy disbursed shall be made in the following year based on the quarterly statement duly certified by the auditors of the universal service provider. (As mentioned in concerned Agreement). Thus, in addition to adjustment made by the CCA offices, the Agreement provides for adjustment of any excess/short payment detected by the Statutory Auditors of the Company.
- viii. Claim Settlement Management System (CSMS 2.0) has been developed for processing and settlements of claims."

49. The Estimated cost and disbursement of funds under BharatNet Project upto 30.11.2025 are as under:

(Rs. Crore)				
S. No.	Activity approved by Union Cabinet	Amount approved by Union Cabinet	as Estimated cabinet Funds approved (with taxes) cost	Funds disbursed from DBN (as on 30.11.2025)
1	BharatNet Phase I (Capex)	11,148	12,708.72	10,285.97
2	BharatNet Phase II (Capex)	18,792	22,174.56	20,738.47
3	Operation and Maintenance (O&M)	6,046	7,134.28	6,820.11
4	Last Mile Connectivity (LMC)	4,066	4,066.00	1,540.02
5	Replacement of Lossy fiber	2,016	2,378.88	850.00
6	Total	42,068	48,462.44	40,234.57
7	Amended BharatNet Program	1,20,756	1,39,579.00	6,861.60
8	Total (6 +7)	1,62,824	1,88,041.44	47,096.17

50. While furnishing information with respect to BharatNet Saturation Project-across rural and remote India, the following information was submitted by the Department:

“The Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 approved a USOF funded 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 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. The revised Project Cost is Rs. 30,620.49 crore.

Agreement has been signed with BSNL on 06.02.2023. As per Cabinet note, target date for completion of the project was 500 days from the date of signing of agreement. Further, roll-out period has been extended up to March, 2026.

Till 30.11.2025, 17,165 towers including upgradation of 644 towers have been planned. Out of which 13,415 towers have been made on air covering 19,901 villages.”

E. Aspirational Districts Scheme

51. According to the Department, the details of progress made under the scheme is as follows:-

“502 Aspirational District villages (MP, UP, Rajasthan, Bihar):-

A Scheme for 502 uncovered villages across 112 Aspirational District over four States (namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) for provisioning of 4G based Mobile services has been finalized. Agreements have been signed and work has been awarded to M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd for UP and MP States, M/s Bharti Hexacom Ltd for Rajasthan and M/s Bharti Airtel Ltd for Bihar after tendering process in March, 2021. The total project cost is Rs. 414 Crore as per the agreement. The Roll out period of the project was March 2022 which has been extended upto December, 2025.

In addition to above, 27 villages of Madhya Pradesh have been added in the scheme against deleted village vide letter dated 22.08.2022 having roll-out period was 21.08.2023 which has been extended upto 21.02.2025.

Till November 2025, 242 towers have been installed & commissioned covering 279 villages under the scheme.”

52. As regards the remaining 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha) the Department in its written submission has stated as follows:-

“Remaining 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha):

Project entails provisioning of 4G based Mobile services in 7,287 uncovered villages of 44 Aspirational Districts of 5 States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha. An agreement with M/s RJIL for 3 States and M/s BAL for 2 States have been signed on 20.05.2022 at a cost of Rs. 3765.47 crore and survey work is in progress. Target for completion of this project was November, 2023 which has been extended upto May, 2026.

Till November 2025, survey for 6,981 villages have been completed and is in progress for remaining uncovered villages. After physical survey, scope is reduced to cover only 5,514 villages by commissioning of 3,724 towers mainly due to existing coverage. Revised cost of the Project is Rs. 2,876 crore. Till November 2025, 4,610 villages have been covered by commissioning of 3026 towers.”

53. Regarding the Scheme for Mobile Communications Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Affected Areas, the Department submitted the following:

LWE Phase-I: On 20.08.2014, the Cabinet approved the implementation of a project in LWE areas to provide Mobile Services on 2G technology in the 10 affected States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The work was awarded to M/s BSNL on nomination basis and Agreement was signed on 30.09.2014. The cost of the project was Rs 4214.28 crore. Under this scheme, 2,343 sites are installed, commissioned and providing services and the Project is completed. The State-wise details are as follows:

S. No.	Name of the State	Total LWE Districts	Towers functional
1	Andhra Pradesh	8	62
2	Bihar	22	250
3	Chhattisgarh	16	525
4	Jharkhand	21	816
5	Madhya Pradesh	1	22
6	Maharashtra	4	65
7	Odisha	19	256
8	Telangana	8	173
9	Uttar Pradesh	3	78
10	West Bengal	4	96
	Total	106	2343

54. Extension of existing 2G sites approved by Union Cabinet at estimated cost of Rs. 541.80 crores and further extension was given till Oct. 2023 with the approval of Hon'ble MoC within the Cabinet approved cost. Further, Union Cabinet has approved the upgradation of existing LWE towers from 2G to 4G with an estimated cost of ₹1,884.59 Crore by BSNL on nomination basis on 27.04.2022.

Agreement has been signed on 09.05.2024 with BSNL. As per agreement, Time line for 4G upgradation is Twelve months i.e. upto 08.05.2025. Roll-out period has been extended upto 08.11.2025 and further extension is under consideration upto March, 2026. Work has been awarded to vendor for upgradation by BSNL.

55. Till November, 2025, total 1957 mobile tower has been upgraded from 2G to 4G. State-wise details are as under:-

S. No.	State	Total MHA identified sites Under LWE Phase I	Sites upgraded to 4G
1	Andhra Pradesh	62	61
2	Bihar	250	210
3	Chhattisgarh	532	481
4	Jharkhand	816	615
5	Madhya Pradesh	22	19
6	Maharashtra	65	57
7	Odisha	261	224
8	Telangana	173	158
9	Uttar Pradesh	78	76
10	West Bengal	96	56
Total		2355	1957

56. As regards LWE Phase II, the Department in its written submission has stated as follows:-

“LWE Phase II: The project entails provision of 2,542 towers to provide 4G mobile services for implementation of the project. An agreement has been signed with Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd and Bharti Airtel Ltd in Sept/Oct 2021 at a cost of Rs. 2,211.11 Crore. Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd is to implement the project in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha (1602 towers) and Bharti Airtel Ltd in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal (940 towers). Target for completion of this project is March, 2023 which has been extended upto March 2026.

State-wise list of mobile towers in LWE Phase II (Till November, 2025) is as under:

Sl. No.	State	No. of Sites commissioned	Total no. of Location covered
1	Andhra Pradesh	192	208
2	Bihar	1	1
3	Jharkhand	65	68
4	Telangana	7	7
5	Uttar Pradesh	0	0
6	West Bengal	0	0
7	Chhattisgarh	451	473
8	Madhya Pradesh	24	24
9	Maharashtra	76	77
10	Odisha	343	360
Grand Total		1,159	1,218

“

57. Overall Tele-Density in India

According to the Department status of telephones, service provider-wise as on 31.10.2025 is as follows:-

Status of telephones, service provider-wise as on 31.10.2025							
Sr. No.	Service provider	Wireline		Wireless		Total Telephones	
		Total Wireline Telephones	%age share of Wireline phones	Total Wireless Telephones	% age share of Wireless	G.Total Telephones (Wireline+ Wireless)	%age share in total
	PRIVATE						
1	Bharti Airtel Limited	13200569	22.19	393664913	33.59	406865482	33.04
2	Reliance Communications Ltd.	96215	0.16	849	41.36	97064	0.01
3	Reliance Jio Infocom Limited	24607778	41.36	484700719	0.00	509308497	41.36
4	Vodafone Idea	813837	1.37	200723171	17.13	201537008	16.37
5	TATA Teleservices Ltd	10940512	18.39	0	0.00	10940512	0.89
6	Quadrant Televentures Ltd., Punjab	337128	0.57	0	0.00	337128	0.03
7	V-CON MOBILE INFRA & PVT LTD	51344	0.09	0	0.00	51344	0.00
	Total Private (1 to 7)	50047383	84.11	1079089652	92.08	1129137035	91.70
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	BSNL	7522811	12.64	92541999	7.90	100064810	8.13
9	<u>MTNL</u>				0.00		
(i)	Delhi	711904	1.20	139399	0.01	851303	0.07

(ii)	Mumbai	822659	1.38	104013	0.01	926672	<i>0.08</i>
	Total MTNL	1534563	2.58	243412	0.02	1777975	<i>0.14</i>
10	APSFL	395757	0.67	0	0.00	395757	<i>0.03</i>
	Total PSUs (8 to 9)	9453131	15.89	92785411	7.92	102238542	<i>8.30</i>
	All India Total (1 to 9)	59500514	100.00	1171875063	100.00	1231375577	<i>100.00</i>

Parameter	As on 31.10.2025
Total Phones (millions)	1231.38
Rural (millions)	541.77
Urban (millions)	689.61
Overall Teledensity (%)	86.76
Wireline Teledensity (%)	4.19
Wireless Teledensity (%)	82.57
Rural Teledensity (%)	59.72
Urban Teledensity (%)	134.66
Public (%)	7.20
Private (%)	79.56

58. The Department further stated that :

“Government and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) provide telecommunication connectivity in the country in a phased manner. Government through funding from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is implementing various schemes for providing mobile network coverage in all uncovered villages of the country. Details of schemes/projects to improve the telecommunication connectivity in rural, tribal and LWE affected areas across the country are given below:

- Saturation of 4G mobile services in uncovered villages across the country.
- Provision of 4G mobile services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE)

- affected areas Phase-II.
- Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 7,287 Aspirational District Villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha). And provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts in four States (namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan).
 - Provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 354 uncovered villages of J&K Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Border area & other priority areas.
 - Provision of 4G Mobile Coverage in 85 uncovered Villages and seamless 4G Mobile coverage of NH223 in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
 - Laying of submarine optical fibre cable between Chennai and Andaman & Nicobar Islands for providing connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands;
 - Submarine OFC connectivity between Kochi and Lakshadweep Islands.
 - BharatNet project implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all inhabited villages in the country.

For faster and easier deployment of telecommunication infrastructure in the Country, the Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules 2024 have been notified under the Telecommunications Act, 2023.”

V. **Defence Spectrum: OFC based network for Defence Services**

59. According to the Department, Network For Spectrum (NFS) is a Government-funded project, which is being implemented on a turn-key basis for Defence Tri-Services, in lieu of releasing the spectrum utilized by Defence Forces. BSNL is implementing the NFS Project on behalf of DoT. Under this project, a complete telecom network consisting of various network elements like Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), transmission equipment, microwave, satellite, encryptors, end-point equipment, data centres etc. are being set up across the Country as a Tri-Services backbone. NFS projects provide high bandwidth through dedicated OFC and high-end communication and networking equipment including satellite and microwave as an alternative for redundancy, wherever applicable.

60. The proposed, BE, RE, Actuals from 2022-23 to 2025-26, proposed and BE for 2026-27 for this scheme , as submitted by the Department are as under:

(Rs. In Crore)

Proposed/BE/RE/ Actuals	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Proposed	1,961	2,158.35	-	1,553.94	975
BE	1,961	2,158.35	-	1,456.25	975
RE	1,961	3,751.74	1,315.96	706	NA

Actuals	1,000	1,282.28	446.23	125	
%w.r.t.RE	51	34.17	33.90	17.70	

VI. Other contemporary issues and schemes

61. Regarding PLI Scheme, the Department informed the Committee in its written submissions as under:-

“Domestic Industry Incentivisation Scheme (DIIS) Comprising Productivity Linked Incentive (PLI) & Technology Development and Investment Promotion (TDIP):

TDIP:- During the India Mobile Congress 2023, Hon’ble Prime Minister awarded 100 ‘5G Use Case Labs’ to educational institutions across the Country. The ‘100 5G labs initiative’, is an endeavor to realise the opportunities associated with 5G technology by encouraging development of 5G applications which cater, both to India’s unique needs as well as the global demands. The unique initiative will foster innovation across various socio-economic sectors like education, agriculture, health, power, transportation etc, and propel the country into the forefront of usage of 5G technology.

PLI:- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme was launched by DoT on June 03, 2021, with an objective to boost domestic manufacturing in the telecom and networking products by incentivising investments and incremental sales with the total outlay of Rs.12,195 Crore. The scheme is effective from 1st April 2021”.

Further, According to the Budget and Expenditure statement upto Dec 2025, Department has informed that the RE for 2025-26 was Rs 1944 Cr, BE for 2026-27 is Rs 1950 Cr and the Actual Expenditure up to December 2025 is only Rs 700.98 Cr.

62. The Department while highlighting certain key initiatives stated regarding the PLI scheme as follows:-

“The first is Production-Linked Incentive scheme. The sales cumulatively stand at Rs. 1,03,859 crore, exports are worth Rs. 21,898 crore and approximately 29,000 jobs have been created. Major products, which have been made in India, are 4G/5G equipment, switches, internet set-top boxes and optical-fiber equipment. We would like to highlight that 5G deployment by private telecom service providers has been mainly through the equipment made by PLI beneficiaries.”

63. As regards the Digital Intelligence Unit(DIU) Project, the Department informed the Committee as under :

The BE 2025-26 for Digital Intelligence Unit project was Rs. 52 crores and the RE for 2025-26 was Rs. 40 crores, but the actual expenditure up to December 2025 is Rs. 32.14 crores. Further, a new scheme, Digital Intelligence Unit Project Phase II, has been launched with the BE 2026-27 being Rs. 29 crores.

Digital Intelligence Unit and Digital Intelligence Unit Phase II: The Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU) Project aims to prevent misuse of telecom resources in cybercrime and financial fraud, provide a citizen-centric portal for reporting such misuse, enable intelligence sharing among stakeholders through an integrated platform, and develop AI and Big Data analytics tools for detection and prevention of telecom resources misuse.

64. Further the Department has informed that-;

“Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU) (DoT Project) – DIU’s Sanchar Saathi portal has enhanced capabilities now. The Sanchar Saathi portal has more than 224 million visitors till date. Sanchar Saathi has enabled reporting of 30.2 million mobile numbers under Know Mobile Connections in Your Name module and disconnection and out of which 14.9 million connections have been disconnected under Not My Number category and 5.86 million under Not Required category. 4.34 million stolen/lost mobiles reported out of which around 2.69 million were traced and action taken on around 4.16 million suspected communications.”

Regarding Physical targets of DIU phase-2 the Department has mentioned that they aim towards Enhancement of DIU project and are Facilitating set up of integrated DIU cum T-CSIRT field units.

VII. Review of functioning of PSUs

65. According to the Department, there are 4 PSUs under DoT namely Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL), ITI Limited (ITI) and Telecommunications Consultants India limited (TCIL). The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) is an autonomous body and is also the R&D arm of the Department. Review of performance of some PSUs are in the following paragraphs:-

66. Performance of BSNL, MTNL& ITI

- i. The details of revenue and working expenditure of BSNL and MTNL as submitted by the Department are as under:-

A: BSNL:**Details of revenue & working expenses of BSNL:****(Rs. in Crore)**

S. No.	Parameter	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (Projection)	2026-27 (Projection)
1	RFO Target	17,161	19,052	24,428	28,476	-
2	RFO Actual	19,131	19,344	20,856	23,259	26,407
3	Total Income actual/projection	20,702	21,317	23,446	25,559	28,907
4	Total Expenditure	27,364	26,683	25,854	30,202	34,853
5	Profit/(Loss) before exceptional items	-6,662	-5,366	-2,408	-4,643	-5,946
6	Exceptional items	-1,499	0	0	0	0
7	Tax Expenses	0	1	-166	0	0
8	Profit/(Loss) after Tax	-8,161	-5,367	-2,241	-4,643	-5,946

Notes:

1. DPE assign RFO (Not Total Income) target for BSNL and therefore RFO figures are furnished in first two rows.
2. FY 22-23 onwards MOU target is given basis consolidated financials, accordingly above data is given basis consolidated financials.

B: MTNL:

The details of revenue and working expenses of MTNL are as follows:

(Rs. in Crore)

Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (Actual up to Sep-2025)	2026-27
Total Income	1,810.00	1,750.00	1,450.00	1,200.00	1,240.00

Target					
Total Income	1,474.02	1,301.48	1,307.02	396.93	
Total Expenditure	4,384.76	4,603.67	4,630.53	2,297.03	
Net Profit/Loss	-2,910.74	-3,302.19	-3,323.51	-1,900.11	

B: MTNL:

(Rs. in Crore)

Year	2025-26
Total Income Target	1,200.00
Total Income (Actual up to Sep-2025)	396.93

67. Projected Revenue and expenditure of BSNL/MTNL for the year 2026-27 and measures being taken to achieve the revenue targets is as given below:-

A: BSNL:

Projected Revenue and expenditure of BSNL for the year 2025-26 & 2026-27 is tabulated below:-

(Rs in Crore)

S. No.	Parameters	Projections: 2025-26	Projections: 2026-27
1	Revenue from Operations (Gross incl. of Taxes)	23,259	26,407
	> CFA	4,568	5,271
	> CM	8,342	10,151
	> EB	5,538	6,237
	> Other Operating income	4,812	4,748
2	Other Income	2,300	2,500
3	Total income (1+2)	25,559	28,907
4	Employee costs	8,625	9,056
5	Depreciation & Amortisation (Excluding Impairment)	8,570	11,874
6	LF/SUC	1,649	1,936

7	O&M Expenses	9,813	10,192
7a	Network Operating Expenses	6,081	6,385
7b	Access Charges	508	518
7c	Sales & Marketing Expenses	755	770
7d	Other Expenses	2,470	2,520
8	Interest (Expenditure) or Finance Cost	1,545	1,795
9	Total Expenses (Incl. of Indirect Taxes setoff in Revenue, if any)	30,202	34,853
10	EBITDA	5,472	7,723
11	Profit/ Earning Before Tax (after Exceptional & Prior Period Items)	-4,643	-5,946

B: MTNL:

The Projected Revenue and expenditure of MTNL for the year 2026-27 is Rs 1,240.00 Cr and Rs. 4,556.90 Crore respectively.

However, as per Gol decision BSNL will provide all telecom services in Delhi and Mumbai through leasing of operational assets or other appropriate model. With operations by BSNL in Delhi/Mumbai, MTNL would be left with land/building assets which it will continue to monetize to discharge its loan liabilities.

68. While submitting details regarding the Revenue target for the year 2025-26, achievements made and reasons for not meeting the target the Department stated as follows:-

Revenue target for the year 2025-26 is Rs 3,814 Cr (exclusive of taxes). Achievement is Rs 1,041 Cr (exclusive of taxes) as on 30th September 2025.

Reasons for not meeting the target are as under:-

- Delay in receipt of customer orders and technical clearance for execution.
- Delay in the availability of raw material due to long lead time.
- Shortage of working capital.
- Higher rate of obsolescence of products in Telecom technologies.

Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26 (actuals up to 30.09.2025)	2026-27 (Estimates)
Total Income Target	2569.00	2244.00	3246.00	1620.00	4183.00
Total Income	1448.00	1308.00	3702.00	1069.00	4238.00
Total Expenditure	1808.00	1877.00	3935.00	1187.00	4161.00
Net Profit/Loss	(360.10)	(569.00)	(233)	(118)	77

(ii) Challenges faced to increase Revenue earning; and

Challenges faced to increase Revenue earning are as under:-

- Limited cash flow and shortage of working capital.
- Due to delay in the availability of raw material, long lead time in procurement, non-availability of manpower and constraints in transportation and logistics
- Delay in realization of payment receivables.
- Competition in the market from private telecom vendors.
- Higher rate of obsolescence of products in Telecom technologies.

Entry Level barriers due to lack of requisite experience in place of Proof of Concept demonstration to qualify for a tender.

69. Projected Revenue and expenditure for the year 2026-27 and measures being taken to achieve the revenue targets as submitted by the Department are as follows:-

(Rs. in Crore)

Projected Performance	(₹ in Crs)
Turnover Including GST (A)	4,936
Revenue from operations (NET) (B)	4,183
Other Income (C)	55
Total Revenue (D= B+C)	4238
Material Cost	3637
Employee Cost	170
Other Expenses	90
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	3897
EBITDA	341
Finance Cost	208
Depreciation	56
TOTAL EXPENSES (E)	4161
Net Profit (D- E)	77

70. Budget Allocated to ITI Ltd. for Capex is as under:-

(Rs. in crore)

Proposed/BE/RE/Actual	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Proposed	400.00	220.00	168.00	105.5	39.50
BE	200.00	160.00	168.00	105.5	NA
RE	187.00	NIL	59.00	60.00	NA

71. When asked about the Utilization of funds by ITI Ltd. since 2021-22, the Department submitted the following information

(in Rs. Cr.):-

Financial Year	Amount sanctioned	Cumulative amount sanctioned since 2014	Actual Expenditure (Utilization done)	Cumulative expenditure since 2014 (cumulative utilization)	% achievement (cumulative expenditure/ cumulative amount sanctioned)
2014-15 to 2020-21	874	874	418.41	418.41	47.87%
2021-22	71.56	945.56	288.15	706.56	74.72%
2022-23	187	1132.56	71.11	777.67	68.66 %
2023-24	NIL	1132.56	53.36	831.03	73.37%
2024-25	59	1191.56	10.90	841.93	70.66%
2025-26*	-	1191.56	2.87	844.80**	70.90%

(* figures up to 24.12.2025);

Telecommunications Consultant India Limited (TCIL)

72. The details of Revenue and working expenses of Telecommunications Consultant India Limited (TCIL) as submitted by the Department are:-

(Rs.in crore)

Year	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Total Income Target*	1,876.00	2,251.00	3,070.00	3,702.00	4,423.00
Total Income	2,001.70	2,603.46	3,059.67	-	-
Total Expenditure	1,940.13	2,491.25	2,932.55	-	-
Balance	61.57	112.21	127.12	-	-

* Revenue Target as per MoU for 2025-26.

73. Regarding main source of revenue and items of expenditure of TCIL, the following was submitted :-

“Main source of income are from Turnkey Projects, Maintenance / Service Contracts & Consultancy, whereas major items of expenditure are purchase of material, Sub – contract expenditure, employees benefit expenses, Administrative expenses etc.”

74. On being asked about Revenue target for the year 2025-26, achievements made and reasons for not meeting the targets, if any, the following was stated by the Department :-

“TCIL’s revenue target for the year 2025-26 is ₹ 3,702.00 Crore and the same is expected to achieve the target.

Challenges faced to increase Revenue earning:

- Low capital base and huge requirement of working capital.
- Deficient funding for Telecom projects by Multilateral Funding Agencies.
- Competition from OEMs, PSUs and private entities.
- Substantially decreased margins in global / domestic tenders on account of increased competition.
- Procedures and compliances, especially being a PSU, makes it difficult to compare with private players.
- Fewer businesses being awarded on nomination. TCIL competes in public tendering process for obtaining business.
- Rapidly changing and evolving technologies.”

75. Projected Revenue and expenditure for the year 2026-27 and measures being taken to achieve the revenue targets are as under:-

“The projected Revenue and Expenditure for the year 2026-27 is ₹ 4,423.00 Crore and Rs. 4,193.00 Crore respectively.

Measures being taken to achieve the targets: -

- Wider participation in tenders and targeting of customers in private sector within India and abroad.
- Increasing the business footprint and expand business to more foreign countries.
- Entering in new markets & new Areas

- Timely execution of project using PM tools & close monitoring through frequent project reviews.”

76. As regards the assistance required from the Government, the Department stated as follows:-

“The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), as the Administrative Department of Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) gives a lot of importance to the revival, survival, shining and excelling in improving financial performance and overall sustainability to all CPSEs under its control including Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL). TCIL has shown robust revenue growth, with turnover rising from ₹1,756 crore in FY 2019-20 to ₹3,070 crore in FY 2024-25. The company has set ambitious revenue targets of ₹3,702 crore for FY 2025-26, indicating a continued upward trajectory. Further, the Profit after Tax has also increased significantly from Rs. 44 Crore in 2019-20 to Rs. 156 Crore in 2024-25, showing a robust growth during this period.

TCIL executes several projects of DoT and its PSUs along with the other Ministries / Departments of Govt of India within the ambit of extant rules, regulations and guidelines. DoT supports its PSUs including TCIL to undertake several study works. TCIL is also deploying several indigenously manufactured products in foreign countries, mainly in the Middle East and Africa. It is also envisaged that TCIL may deploy the indigenous 4G equipment being designed and manufactured by C-DoT and ITI respectively.

DoT constantly endeavours in extending a supporting hand to its PSUs including TCIL in terms of working capital also. To sustain momentum and financial viability, TCIL has been allowed to keep a major part of its profits by giving exemptions in depositing the part of dividends to Gol including FY 2019-20, FY 2020- 21, FY 2021-22 & FY 2022-23. In future also, DoT endeavours to support its PSUs including TCIL to get works from DoT and other Departments/Ministries.”

77. Regarding meeting the budgetary requirement of the organization and the support required by C-DoT from the Department/Government to better implement various schemes/activities, C-DoT informed the Committee in their written submissions as under:-

- i. “The Organization receives funding primarily in the form of Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) from the Government of India through the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), which supports its core R&D activities, strategic technology programmes.
- ii. In addition to GBS, the Organization also generates internal resources through

accruals from Transfer of Technology (ToT) fees, royalties from ToT partners, and revenues from commercialization of indigenous products & solutions, and funding of the projects approved through Detailed Project Reports (DPRs).

- iii. For effective implementation of various schemes and activities, C-DOT requires sustained support and assistance from the Government and concerned Departments. To compete with global telecom giants in the Telecom R&D sector and to develop and deploy advanced indigenous technologies, enhanced and predictable funding support is essential.
- iv. Increased funding will enable C-DOT to undertake large-scale R&D programmes, attract and retain specialized technical talent, build state-of-the-art test beds and infrastructure, accelerate product development cycles, and scale solutions for nationwide deployment.
- v. Such support will strengthen India's technological self-reliance, reduce dependence on imported telecom technologies, and ensure timely delivery of strategic and security-critical solutions aligned with national priorities."

Part-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

DoT Budget

In adherence to the annual budgetary exercise, the Department of Telecom (DoT) under the Ministry of Communications laid their Detailed Demands for Grants (DDG) under Demand No. 13 seeking allocation for the financial year 2026-2027 on 12.02.2026 in the Lok Sabha. The Departmentally Related Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology in accordance with their mandate have thoroughly examined the Demands for Grants 2026-27 pertaining to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and have made certain Observations/ Recommendations which are detailed in the following paragraphs:

Budgetary Allocations and Utilizations

1. According to the detailed Demands for Grants laid by DoT, the Committee note that there have been significant variations in both Revenue and Capital Expenditure from FY 2022-23 to FY 2025-26. The revenue section reveals that the actuals peaked at Rs.66,280.44 crore in FY 2022-23 before declining sharply to Rs.33,067.19 crore during FY 2023-24. The actuals during the financial year 2025-26 upto December was Rs.24,867.42 crore while the Revised Estimates was Rs.33,632.37 crore, indicating that there may be a shortfall in achieving the targets during FY 2025-26. The projected revenue expenditure estimates for FY 2026-27 as per the Budget Estimate is Rs.30,716.02 crore. On the Capital Expenditure front, there has been a rise from Rs.56,228.62.74 crore in FY 2022-23 to Rs.68,195.29 crore in RE 2025-26. The Committee also note that the actual spending upto December, 2025 has been Rs.47,416.93 crore. While the Budget Estimate (BE) capital outlay for FY 2026-27 is Rs.67,274.93 crore.

An analysis of the above points out that the total financial outlay for both the Capital and Revenue expenditure has been fluctuating from Rs.97,990.95 crore against BE for FY 2025-26 to Rs.1,01,827.66 crore being the RE of 2025-26

and the Actual Expenditure till December 2025 being only Rs 47,416.93 crore. The Department also informed that till February 2026, the overall expenditure stands at Rs 87,483 crore which is about 86 percent of RE. The Committee opine that the Department should ensure proper planning and management to overcome significant variations between RE stage as well as actual implementation stage and also take measures for optimum utilization of the allocated funds.

The Committee note that the BE for FY 2025-26 (Revenue) section of the Department was Rs.35,851.50 crore which was decreased to Rs.33,632.37 crore in same FY 2025-26 RE stage. During FY 2025-26 revenue expenditure was reduced by nearly Rs 2,219.13 crore mid-year. The Committee desire that the Department should institute a robust mid-term expenditure framework to reduce sharp fluctuations under Revenue and Capital heads so as to ensure greater predictability in financial planning and strengthen quarterly review mechanism to closely monitor expenditure *vis-à-vis* Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates, with clear project-wise milestones linked to fund releases to ensure timely utilization. The Committee recommend for introduction of a digital expenditure tracking dashboard for real-time monitoring of scheme-wise fund utilization enhancing transparency and accountability in financial management. Overall, the Department should exercise prudent fiscal discipline while ensuring effective and timely utilization of funds to support and achieve long-term national telecom and digital connectivity objectives.

Recommendation No.2 :

2. The Committee note that in respect of Capital allocation, the actual expenditure is Rs 22,549.51 Crore as on 31.12.2025 against allocation of Rs. 68,195.29 Crore in RE 2025-26 which is only 33 % of RE approximately. The reasons for decrease in expenditure are mainly due to (i) less allocation in the Bharat Net (decrease of Rs.16,500.00 crore), (ii) Capital infusion to BSNL/MTNL (decrease of Rs. 26,872.58 crore) and (iii) OFC based network of Defence Services (decrease of Rs. 750.25 crore). Other causes are increased allocation in conversion of outstanding spectrum auction dues into equity (Vodafone Idea Ltd) (increase of Rs. 36,950.00 crore) and loans to MTNL on invocation of Government

Guarantee (Rs. 1,829.48 core). The Department has conveyed that the expenditure is being regularly monitored and all-round efforts are being made for full utilization of the allocated fund.

The Committee note that while fund utilization in certain areas is encouraging, at the same time non- optimal utilization of funds in other areas needs focussed attention to avoid improper utilization of previous allotted funds during the Financial Year 2026-27. Therefore, the Committee would like to call upon the Department for concerted efforts to adopt sound financial principles in order to ensure proper and effective utilization of allocated funds.

Recommendation No.3 :

3. Noting the revenue expenditure pattern for FY 2024-25 and 2025-26, the Committee observe that there has been a significant shortfall in spending by the Department. For example, the RE for revenue expenditure in FY 2025-26 stands at Rs.33,632.37 crore which was curtailed from Rs.35,851.50 crore of BE 2025-26 that was initially allocated. Out of the above RE, the actual expenditure is only Rs.24867.42 crore up to December, 2025 which is only 73.94 percent. Further, during FY 2026-27, the allocation has been reduced to Rs. 30,716.02 crore against the proposed revenue expenditure of Rs.31,394.53 crore indicating that reduced allocation was due to previous under-utilization trends. The Committee, therefore, urge the Department to tread the path of optimum utilization of allocated funds.

The revenue expenditure trend of the Department of Telecommunications during FY 2024–25 and FY 2025–26 reflects under-utilisation of allocated funds, as evidenced by the downward revision from BE to RE and utilisation of only 73.94% up to December 2025. The reduction in allocation for FY 2026–27 against the proposed estimates suggests an attempt to rationalise budgeting in light of previous spending patterns. Taking note of the above, the Committee recommend that the Department adopt more realistic forecasting while preparing Budget Estimates and institute a robust quarterly expenditure review mechanism to ensure timely corrective action.

Recommendation No. 4

4. The main sources of revenue receipts of the Department are License Fees, Spectrum Usage Charges, Auction of Spectrum and Fees for other services etc. The License Fee receipts were Rs.20,316.28 crore in FY 2022-23, Rs.36,363.17 crore in 2023-24, Rs.25,989.19 crore in FY 2024-25 and Rs.13,911.89 crore in FY 2025-26 upto 31.12.2025. The estimates for FY 2026-27 are Rs.29,211 crore. Under the category of Spectrum Usage Charges, the receipts are Rs.5743.62 during FY 2022-23, Rs.13,065.18 in FY 2024-25 and only Rs.2110.86 crore in FY 2025-26 upto 31.12.2025. For FY 2026-27, the projected receipt for Spectrum Usage charges is Rs. 4200 crore. Further, the details of receipt under Spectrum Auction Receipts are Rs.37816.00 crore in FY 2022-23, Rs.42617.89 crore during FY 2023-24 and Rs.54500.07 crore during FY 2024-25 and 62,651.75 Cr in 2025-26 upto 31.12.2025. For FY 2026-27, Rs.42,410.66 crore is the estimated Spectrum Auction Receipts.

While examining the issue, it has been observed that the factors adversely affecting revenue receipts are the decreased revenue of telecom operators, regulatory policies, technological advancements such as 5G, 6G, market competition, subscriber growth and demands, pricing strategy, infrastructure investments etc.

The Department has submitted that as a part of telecom reforms, Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC) has been reduced to zero for the spectrum acquired through auction held in 2022 and subsequent years. Furthermore, the Department has conveyed that reforms introduced in September, 2021 are expected to decrease the cost of operations for TSPs, facilitate foreign investment and increase ease of doing business for TSPs. These reforms would also increase revenue for TSPs and thereby increase the AGR based revenue receipts of the Government of India. Elaborating upon the steps taken by the Department to achieve targets during FY 2025-26, the Department has stated that the measures taken include (a) facility to make online paperless payments; (b) fully Digital and paperless submission of financial documents; (c) online grievance resolution process; and (d) continuous monitoring of receipts of

spectrum deferred instalments and spectrum usage charges. The Committee express hope that the measures undertaken by the Department will significantly enhance revenue receipts and facilitate the achievement of the intended objectives. They emphasise that the success of these initiatives will depend upon their constant monitoring for its effective implementation and timely course correction. The Committee, therefore, urge the Department to periodically review above measures so as to assess their impact and address emerging gaps. Regular monitoring and evaluation would help ensure sustained improvement in revenue generation as well as greater financial discipline and accountability.

Recommendation No.5 :

5. Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) was created w.e.f. 1.4.2002 in pursuance of The Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003 to provide financial support to the telecom service in commercially unviable rural and remote areas of the Country. This is an attached office of DoT headed by an Administrator appointed by the Central Government. With effect from 26.06.2024, USOF has been renamed as Digital Bharat Nidhi(DBN). As per the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, Licence Fee includes Universal Access Levy which is charged at the rate of 5% of the adjusted Gross Revenue of the telecom licences. The fund collected under UAL goes to the Consolidated Fund of India and it is non-lapsable in nature. The outflow from Consolidated Fund of India to USOF is through regulatory provisions of the Ministry of Finance each year based on requirement of USOF. The Department has submitted that since inception of DBN (e-USOF) in FY 2002-03 UAL amount Rs.1,87,734.99 crore has been collected till 30.11.2025. The balance of UAL amount available as on 30.12.2025 is Rs. 94,868.30 crore. Further, the total committed liabilities under various DBN projects including Amended BharatNet Program is Rs 1,69,232 crore and the Union Cabinet has approved Rs 1.39 lakh crore for Amended BharatNet Programme for 10 years.

While reviewing the performance of the schemes under DBN, the Committee note that the steps taken under Amended BharatNet Programme include Appointment of Project Implementing Agency (PIA) for Development (creation, upgradation, operation & maintenance) of middle mile network of

BharatNet on Design, Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) model. Further, BSNL has signed agreement with selected Project Implementation Agency (PIAs) in 12 packages and work has been commenced in 18 States/UTs covering 1,36,655 GPs (~52% of overall GPs). Re-tendering has been done by BSNL in 04 Packages and bids are under evaluation. The Department has proposed to provide 1.5 crore rural home fibre connections distributed across all States/UTs with priority to cover Government institutions including schools, Primary Health Centres, Anganwadis, Panchayat offices etc., using the BNU model over the next five years to promote/ ensure utilisation of network. Monitoring of the project at various levels by DBN, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited/ Bharat Broadband Network Limited with Implementing Agencies for speedy roll out of the project is being done. Resolving all pending issues in expeditious manner, Single Project Implementation Agency (PIA) for construction and O&M of the network in a Package, Dedicated Network Operation Centre and Remote Fiber Monitoring System has also been done.

Submitting information on Mobile Projects, the Department has stated that the delay in installation and supply of indigenously developed and domestically manufactured equipment is the main cause for the shortfall in schemes namely 4G Saturation Scheme and LTE Phase-I upgradation, Border Out Post(BOP)/Border Intelligence Post(BIP) schemes etc.

The Department has stated that in order to sort out the issues, matters have been taken up with respective State Governments, Centre State Coordination Meeting chaired by Secretary Coordination, MHA, PMG meeting, MoEFCC for faster resolution. Further, regular meetings have been held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Communications (HMoC), Secretary/Administrator (DBN) to expedite the issues faced by USPs in executing the work. Multiple DO letters have been sent to State Chief Ministers for resolving the issues from the HMoC level as well. The Department have also stated that BE for the FY 2026-27 has been sought to ensure sufficient fund is available for the projects.

Since there has been substantial accumulation of funds under Digital Bharat Nidhi, the Committee desire that the Department may ensure the funds are timely and optimally utilized in a structured and outcome-oriented manner. The Committee urge the Department of Telecommunications to align committed liabilities with realistic implementation timelines so that funds do not remain idle and the intended benefits reach rural and remote areas expeditiously. While considering the progress made under the Amended BharatNet Programme, the Committee recommend for close monitoring of pending packages, early finalisation of re-tendered works, and ensure strict adherence to timelines by Project Implementing Agencies. The Committee further emphasise the need to prioritise connectivity to Government institutions such as schools, Primary Health Centres and Panchayat offices situated in remote and hilly areas of the country so as to ensure effective utilisation of the created infrastructure. The Committee also urge the Department to resolve bottlenecks relating to equipment supply, right of way permissions and inter-ministerial coordination through sustained engagement, time-bound monitoring and regular meetings with State Governments and all concerned authorities.

Recommendation No -6

6. The Committee note that budget execution for both Capital and Revenue Expenditure in the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) highlights significant gaps in fund utilization across key telecom projects. Under the head Pensions & Other Retirement Benefits-DoT, the RE 2025-26 was Rs 19,685 Cr , the expenditure till December , 2025 was Rs 14,783.28 Cr and Rs 16,351 till February, 2026. For Centralised Monitoring System, the RE was Rs 52.60 cr, but the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 18.38 cr only. Similarly, under USOF Professional Service, the RE was Rs 25 cr , but the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 12.39 cr only. The Total Schedule caste sub plan (USOF + C-DoT), had Rs 380.74 cr as RE for 2025-26 , but the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 36.74 cr only. Under International Cooperation, the RE 2025-26 was Rs 46.28 cr , but the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 6.65 cr only. CDOT had RE 2025-26 of Rs 454.47 cr for FY 2025-26 , but the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 262.20 cr only. Under Training, the RE for 2025-26 was Rs 28 cr , but the expenditure till

December 2025 is just Rs 12.95 cr only. Champion Service Sector scheme had Rs 14.05 cr under RE 2025-26, but the expenditure till December 2025 is mere Rs 1.08 cr only. Under Production Linked Incentive Scheme, the RE 2025-26 was Rs 1944 cr , but the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 700.98 cr only and Rs 862 cr till 20 February, 2026. Under Satcom Monitoring Facility, the RE 2025-26 was Rs 5.28 cr , but the expenditure till December 2025 is surprisingly NIL only.

Under Bharat Net, the RE for 2025-26 was Rs 4257 Cr and the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 2,466.07 Cr only (expenditure till Feb , 2026 is Rs 3,510 cr) , the RE for 2025-26 for OFC Network for Defence was Rs 635.40 Cr, the expenditure till December 2025 is Rs 125 cr only, the RE for 2025-26 for Telecom Emergency Response Team was Rs 72.98 cr and the expenditure till December 2025 is just Rs 49.04 cr only, the RE for FY 2025-26 for IP Addressing and Routing registry (IPARR) was Rs 10.90 cr and the expenditure till December 2025 is NIL. The Committee note that overall, revised capital budget and revenue budget have not been fully utilized and in certain cases nil utilisation, underscoring execution bottlenecks and lack of financial prudence that need urgent resolution.

The Committee note that budget execution under several revenue and capital heads of the Department of Telecommunications during FY 2025–26 reflects low utilisation and in few cases nil utilisation of funds *vis-à-vis* the Revised Estimates. The Committee observe that while expenditure under Pensions and certain committed heads has progressed, allocations under key schemes such as Centralised Monitoring System, USOF Professional Services, Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan, International Cooperation, Champion Service Sector Scheme, Satcom Monitoring Facility, IPARR, OFC Network for Defence and BharatNet remain substantially below the projected levels. The Committee are of the view that the Department must earnestly strive to overcome such shortfalls by avoiding possible procedural delays, procurement constraints or gaps in inter-agency coordination. The Committee, therefore, urge the Department to undertake a comprehensive scheme-wise review to identify and address structural bottlenecks affecting timely optimal fund utilisation. The Committee urge the Department to strengthen quarterly expenditure planning and ensure closer

monitoring at senior levels and fix accountability so that fund allocations are effectively translated into tangible outcomes and last-quarter rush for expenditure or surrender or idling of funds are avoided. Particular attention must be given to ensure strategically important digital/ net connectivity especially to security-related projects to avoid slippages in implementation. The Committee emphasise that improved financial discipline, realistic forecasting and outcome-based monitoring are essential to ensure optimal utilisation of precious public funds and for successful achievement of the Department's objectives.

Recommendation No.7

7. According to the Department, BharatNet project is being implemented in a phased manner to provide broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats in the Country. The Union Cabinet on 25.10.2011 approved the project for creation of National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), now known as BharatNet, to provide Broadband connectivity for connecting Block Headquarters (BHQs) to Gram Panchayats (GPs), i.e. middle-mile network. Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) was established on February 25, 2012 as a Special Purpose Vehicle for its establishment, management and operations.

The Department have communicated that in order to create synergy in terms of cost reduction and revenue enhancement the merger of BBNL with BSNL was approved by Union Cabinet on 27.07.2022 as a part of "Revival of BSNL and merger of BBNL with BSNL" vide its Cabinet Note dated 25.07.2022. The approval is aimed at achieving the larger objective of better utilization of existing assets.

The Committee has been apprised by the Department that the Phase-I of the project has been implemented through GPON (Gigabit Passive Optical Network) technology by using existing fibre of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) - Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel Corporation Limited (RailTel) and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) and laying underground incremental fibre to bridge the connectivity gap up to the GPs. The Phase-I was completed in December 2017 with the implementation of over 1 lakh GPs. Subsequently, the scope of Phase-I has been enhanced to the revised work-

front of about 1.20 lakh. As on 30.11.2025 by laying 3,12,449 km Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), total 1,20,179 GPs have been made Service Ready under Phase-I (Revised work front).

The Department enlightened the Committee that in order to expedite the implementation of BharatNet, a modified strategy was approved by Cabinet on 19.07.2017 at an estimated cost of Rs. 42,068 crore, which provides an optimal mix of media (OFC/Radio/satellite) to connect Gram Panchayats (GPs), multiple implementation models - State-led Model, Private Sector through BBNL and CPSU Model through BSNL/PGCIL, provision of Last Mile connectivity (e.g. through Wi-Fi) in GPs, etc. As on 30.11.2025 under BharatNet Phase II, by laying 3,82,422 km of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), 89,691 GPs have been made Service Ready. Further, 5,034 GPs have been made Service Ready on Satellite media. In total, 94,725 GPs have been made Service Ready under the BharatNet under Phase-II in the Country.

So far as the overall progress of BharatNet (Phase-I + Phase-II) is concerned, the Department informed that 2,09,870 GPs have been made Service Ready on OFC media by laying 6,94,871 km of Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) as on 30.11.2025. In addition to that 5,034 GPs have been made Service Ready on Satellite media. In all, 2,14,904 GPs have been made Service Ready under the BharatNet project in the Country.

The Committee note that Amended BharatNet Programme, approved by the Union Cabinet on 04.08.2023, aims to provide high-speed broadband connectivity to all inhabited villages of the country at an estimated cost of Rs 1,39,579 crore (Rs 1.88 lakh crore including Phase-I and Phase-II), fully funded through Digital Bharat Nidhi, with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited appointed as Project Management Agency. Though agreements have been signed in 12 out of 16 packages and work commenced in 18 States/UTs covering only about 52% of Gram Panchayats, the financial progress under the Amended Programme remains modest, with only Rs 6,861.60 crore disbursed against the approved outlay. The Committee, therefore, recommend the Department to prepare a time-bound implementation calendar with clearly defined milestones for completion of the

remaining packages, expeditious finalisation of re-tendered works, and quarterly monitoring at the senior level of DoT so as to ensure that physical progress keeps pace with financial sanction. Greater display of transparency in package-wise progress may also be ensured through periodic public disclosures.

The Committee further observe from the financial table that against a total Cabinet-approved cost (with taxes) of Rs 48,462.44 crore for Phase-I, Phase-II, O&M, Last Mile Connectivity and Replacement of Lossy Fiber, an amount of Rs 40,234.57 crore has been disbursed, indicating substantial utilisation in core network creation and maintenance. However, utilisation under Last Mile Connectivity (Rs 1,540.02 crore against Rs 4,066 crore) and Replacement of Lossy Fiber (Rs 850.00 crore against Rs 2,378.88 crore) indicates low expenditure. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Department should prioritise last-mile activation and network strengthening in remote areas to avoid under-utilisation of already created middle-mile infrastructure. A focussed drive with measurable district-level targets and outcomes, especially in the identified 100 priority districts, may be undertaken under top priority to accelerate home fibre connections and improve service reliability.

The Department have indicated that under the Amended BharatNet, 2.65 lakh GPs will be connected through a ring architecture for improved reliability, with professional agencies maintaining the network for 10 years and a private partner proposed for NOC operations, while BharatNet Udyamis will drive last-mile expansion targeting 1.50 crore rural home fibre connections. The Committee opine that the future roadmap should integrate ring topology rollout, block-level Internet Leased Lines, and BNU-led fibre-to-home expansion in a convergent manner so as to ensure assured minimum 25 Mbps delivery to rural households. A clear phasing plan for achieving the 1.50 crore connections target over five years, backed by realistic demand assessment and viability support be placed before the Committee. Further, the Committee recommend that continuous audit of service quality, uptime benchmarks, and revenue-sharing outcomes should also be instituted to ensure sustainability and optimal utilisation of public funds.

Recommendation No.8

8. The Committee observe that while the BE 2025-26 was Rs. 76,862 crore in non-tax revenue receipts of the Department the RE 2025-26 jumped to Rs. 138,942 crore. The Department informed the Committee that this surge is due to pooling of Rs. 36,950 crore of Vodafone and Idea's dues into equity, representing the first instalment which came in the middle of the year. The Committee understand that consequent upon conversion of dues into equity, the Government of India now holds 49 per cent stake in Vodafone Idea, creating a significant opportunity for strategic coordination between BSNL and Vodafone Idea. The Committee note that an enabling policy framework for infrastructure sharing among the operators is already in place and that discussions between the two entities have reportedly been initiated to strengthen their working and reduce the expenditure.

The Committee are of the view that, where there is direct or indirect Government participation in the utilization of towers, duplication of creation of infrastructure and unwanted capital expenditure can be avoided. In regions where BSNL has stronger presence and Vodafone Idea is comparatively weaker, or vice-versa, collaborative utilisation of towers, fibre, spectrum and other network assets would expand service reach, optimise resource use reduce expenditure, increase connectivity and accelerate 5G rollout.

In this regard the Committee would like the Department to facilitate a structured and time-bound decision, on comprehensive infrastructure sharing between BSNL and Vodafone Idea. The Committee recommend that the proposed additional expenditure be reviewed and kept in abeyance until a clear decision on collaboration is finalised.

A detailed analysis on sharing of towers, fibre, spectrum and other networks be prepared, outlining progress made, modalities finalised and estimated financial savings, so as to ensure optimal collaborative utilisation of public resources and efficient deployment of 5G services across the Country may be submitted to the Committee within six months of submission of this report.

Recommendation No.9

Physical Targets and Achievements of DBN Schemes during 2025-26

9. While examining the Digital Bharat Nidhi schemes, it is seen that the target during 2025–26 was to connect 2.65 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) under BharatNet (Phase-I, Phase-II and Amended BharatNet Program), out of which 2,14,323 GPs are service ready. The Committee note that while substantial progress has been achieved in making GPs service ready and 98,606 GPs have undergone HOTO (Handover takeover) in 12 packages, only 2,332 GPs are presently live and visible in State- level Network Operating Centres (S-NOC), and physical survey has been completed in 43% of the GPs in the rollout areas. In view of the above, the Committee urge the Department to expedite and intensify efforts to convert “service ready” GPs into fully operational and live connections within a fixed timeframe. Greater coordination with State Governments for land allotment and faster survey completion may be ensured, particularly in LWE and remote areas and Aspirational Districts and uncovered villages of Meghalaya and Assam, so that infrastructure created translates into actual service delivery and measurable broadband penetration.

The Department have further indicated significant shortfalls in tower installation under various mobile connectivity schemes, including 4G Saturation (2,285 towers installed against 3,590 targeted), Aspirational District schemes (5 out of 11 towers and 207 out of 1,323 towers installed), LWE Phase-I and II (737 out of 1,790 upgradations and 32 out of 264 installations), and projects in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Border Out Posts (BOP)/ Border Intelligence Post (BIP) areas. The Committee observe that the pace of execution in strategically sensitive and border areas remains a matter of challenge and concern. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a high-level coordination mechanism involving DoT, State Governments, security agencies and forest authorities be institutionalised to resolve Right of Way (RoW), security clearance and land-related bottlenecks on priority. Scheme-wise quarterly targets with accountability for delays may also be fixed to ensure time-bound completion of the project.

The Department have attributed the shortfall primarily to security constraints in LWE areas, delay in land allotment, forest clearances, and road access issues. While these constraints are taken cognizance of, the Committee are of the view that many of the above challenges are recurring and require structural solutions rather than case-by-case interventions. Moreover, Left Wing Extremists affected areas have almost been cleared by the concerned and dedicated efforts of the Union Government. The Committee recommend that the Department prepare a comprehensive mitigation framework, including advance identification of high-risk sites, pre-consultation with State authorities, use of alternative technologies such as satellite backhaul where feasible, and adoption of standardised RoW protocols across States. A clear future roadmap with realistic phasing, improved inter-agency coordination, and enhanced monitoring through digital dashboards may be submitted to the Committee to ensure optimal utilisation of DBN funds and timely achievement of universal telecom connectivity objectives.

Recommendation No.10 :

Mobile coverage in Uncovered villages in Meghalaya and seamless coverage along National Highway, Arunachal Pradesh and 2 Districts of Assam.

10. The Department have stated that the work for provisioning 4G mobile services in 1,164 uncovered villages and 11 National Highway locations in Meghalaya was awarded to M/s Bharti Hexacom Ltd on 04.09.2020 at a total project cost of Rs. 804.37 crore, and that after survey the executable scope was revised to 627 villages and 3 NH sites with a revised cost of Rs. 398 crore. The Committee note that as on 30.11.2025, 436 towers have been commissioned covering 626 villages and 3 NH locations, indicating substantial progress though the project has undergone scope and cost revisions. In view of the above scenario, the Committee recommend the Department to ensure early completion of the remaining villages under the revised scope and closely monitor quality of service along National Highways to guarantee seamless internet and mobile connectivity. The reasons for significant reduction in scope and cost after survey

may also be clearly documented and lessons institutionalised for future projects to avoid initial overestimation and delays.

The Department have also informed that Mobile Services in uncovered villages of Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam were awarded to M/s Bharti Hexacom Limited and M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited at an original project cost of Rs. 1,255.49 crore, subsequently revised to Rs. 667 crore after survey. As on 30.11.2025, 472 sites have been commissioned in Arunachal Pradesh covering 933 villages and 222 sites in Assam covering 303 villages, with extension granted up to March, 2026 for Arunachal Pradesh. The Committee observe that while physical progress is appreciable in challenging terrain, repeated extensions for execution of the project dilute the intended timelines of universal connectivity. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Department fix clear milestone-based completion schedules, particularly for Arunachal Pradesh, and ensure strict adherence to revised deadlines with appropriate performance-linked monitoring mechanisms.

The Committee further note that DBN projects are being implemented in geographically remote and strategically sensitive regions where connectivity has socio-economic as well as national security implications. The Committee are of the view that the Department may strengthen coordination with State Governments, local administrations and security agencies to address issues relating to land, power supply, transport and security in advance of rollout of projects. Adoption of resilient technologies, reliable backhaul arrangements and regular third-party quality audits may also be ensured so that commissioned sites remain functional and sustainable. A consolidated status report indicating village-wise coverage, uptime levels and fund utilisation may be furnished to the Committee.

Recommendation No.11

Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Islands

11. The Committee are pleased to note the progress made in extending 4G mobile coverage to uncovered villages and National Highways in the Andaman &

Nicobar Islands, and the successful commissioning of the Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity between Kochi and Lakshadweep Islands and the subsequent augmentation of telecom infrastructure in Lakshadweep. While appreciating the completion of major components of the Lakshadweep projects, including upgradation of towers, installation of new sites and provision of FTTH connections, the Committee observe that the 4G project in Andaman & Nicobar Islands has faced delays due to logistical constraints, forest clearances, land issues and backhaul challenges, and, therefore, remains partially completed.

The Committee recommend the Department to adopt a mission-mode approach so as to ensure time-bound completion of the remaining towers in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, in close coordination with local administration and concerned authorities for expeditious clearances. The Committee further desire that the enhanced bandwidth created under the submarine OFC projects be optimally leveraged to improve service quality, affordability and digital inclusion across all inhabited islands, along with periodic monitoring to ensure sustained service levels and effective utilisation of public investment. An updated status report indicating stipulated timelines for completion and measurable service outcomes may be furnished to the Committee at the earliest. (Para 37-38)

Recommendation No.12 :

Aspirational Districts Scheme: Strengthening Implementation and Expediting Project Completion

12. The Committee note that under the scheme for provision of 4G mobile services in Aspirational Districts, progress has been made in both components covering 502 villages across four States and the remaining 7,287 villages across five States. The Department have informed the Committee that till November 2025, 242 towers have been installed and commissioned covering 279 villages under the scheme in MP, UP, Rajasthan and Bihar. Further in the remaining 7,287 Aspirational District villages (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha) an agreement with M/s RJIL for 3 States and M/s BAL for 2 States have been signed on 20.05.2022 at a cost of Rs. 3765.47 crore and the survey work is in progress. Even though, target for completion of this project was

November, 2023 now it has been extended upto May, 2026. The Committee note that till November 2025, survey for 6,981 villages have been completed and survey is in progress for remaining uncovered villages. After physical survey, scope is reduced to cover only 5,514 villages by commissioning of 3,724 towers mainly due to existing coverage. Revised cost of the Project is Rs. 2,876 crore. Till November 2025, 4,610 villages have been covered by commissioning of 3026 towers.

The Committee observe with concern that the projects have witnessed repeated extensions of rollout timelines, with the original completion targets of March 2022, subsequently November 2023, further extended up to December 2025 and now May 2026. While a substantial number of towers have been commissioned and villages covered, a significant gap still remains in achieving full saturation of connectivity in the Aspirational Districts. The Committee further note that physical survey has led to rationalisation of scope and reduction in project cost due to existing coverage in certain villages. While this reflects improved ground assessment, it also underscores the need for accurate baseline mapping at the planning stage to avoid repeated delays and revisions of timelines.

The Committee call upon the Department to adopt a strict milestone-based monitoring framework with State-wise review mechanisms to ensure timely completion of the work in remaining villages within the revised deadlines. The Committee recommend that the benefits of revised cost savings be transparently reported and, wherever feasible, redeployed to address residual connectivity gaps or strengthen network quality in the Aspirational Districts. A detailed progress report, indicating village-wise coverage status, service quality parameters and firm timelines for completion, may be furnished to the Committee.

Recommendation No.13 :

Strengthening Mobile Communication Services in LWE-Affected Areas

13. The Committee note that under LWE Phase-I, 2,343 towers were successfully installed across 106 LWE-affected districts and the project stands completed. The Committee understand that upgradation of these towers from 2G to 4G, approved at a cost of Rs. 1,884.59 crore, has witnessed delays, with the original timeline extended up to November 2025 and further extension up to March 2026 under consideration. As of November 2025, 1,957 out of 2,355 identified sites have been upgraded, leaving a substantial number of sites pending for completion of LWE Phase I project, particularly in certain States.

With regard to LWE Phase-II, the Committee observe that against 2,542 approved towers, only 1,159 sites could be commissioned covering 1,218 locations as of November 2025, despite the project having been originally targeted for completion in March 2023 and now extended up to March 2026. The progress across States appears uneven and repeated extensions of goal posts resulting in negligible or nil commissioning in some States, which is a matter of serious concern given the strategic and developmental importance of connectivity in LWE-affected regions.

The Committee would like to prevail upon the Department to undertake a focussed, State-wise review of both the 4G upgradation under LWE Phase-I and implementation under LWE Phase-II, with clearly defined monthly milestones and enhanced coordination with security agencies and State Governments to address site-specific challenges. The Committee recommend that priority be accorded to States which are lagging behind so as to ensure equitable rollout and timely completion within the revised deadline. The Committee may be apprised of the status report with comprehensive details indicating pending sites, bottlenecks, efforts to achieve the targets and strategic completion schedules.

Recommendation No.14 :

Enhancing Financial Utilization and Efficiency of PLI Scheme

14. The Committee note that the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for telecom and networking products, launched with a total outlay of ₹12,195 crore, has reportedly generated cumulative sales of ₹1,03,859 crore, exports worth ₹21,898 crore and generating approximately 29,000 jobs, along with significant domestic manufacturing of 4G/5G equipment, optical fibre products and other telecom gear. The Committee understand the Technology Development and Investment Promotion (TDIP) initiative, including the establishment of 100 '5G Use Case Labs', aimed at fostering innovation across key socio-economic sectors.

The Committee observe that in PLI scheme against the Revised Estimate of ₹1,944 crore for 2025–26, the actual expenditure up to December 2025 is only ₹700.98 crore, indicating a considerable gap in fund utilisation. The Committee are, therefore, of the view that while outcome indicators such as sales and exports are encouraging, the pace of financial disbursement and implementation requires closer scrutiny so as to ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive timely incentives and that allocated funds translate into tangible manufacturing capacity and technology development thereby preventing avoidable under utilization of funds.

The Committee are of the consistent view that the Department undertake a detailed review of fund utilisation under the PLI Scheme, identify procedural lapses or compliance bottlenecks affecting disbursement, and put in place a streamlined mechanism for timely release of incentives. The Committee recommend that the impact of the 5G Use Case Labs under Technology Development and Investment Promotion (TDIP) be periodically evaluated with measurable performance indicators so as to ensure that public investment leads to sustainable innovation, domestic value addition and enhanced global competitiveness in telecom manufacturing.

Scrutiny of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme revealed that separate categories were envisaged for global and domestic manufacturers, with the stated objective of promoting large-scale manufacturing in India. The Committee find that while restrictions have been imposed on the use of specified foreign equipment, adequate transitional support mechanisms were not built into the Scheme with the well known limitations of immediate domestic component manufacturing capacity. As a result, even leading performing companies have reportedly not received timely incentive disbursements despite achieving significant market scale.

In the light of above, the Committee would like the Department to undertake an urgent review of the operational guidelines of the PLI Scheme to address procedural bottlenecks, ensure timely disbursement of incentives to deserving, eligible and performing companies, and introduce pragmatic transitional provisions wherever domestic value addition constraints exist. The Committee recommend that performance-linked benefits be aligned strictly with measurable outcomes and investment milestones, so that market leaders contributing substantially to domestic manufacturing are not discouraged.

Recommendation No.15 :

Digital Intelligence Unit

15. Under the Digital Intelligence Unit (DIU) Project, against the BE of Rs 52 crore for FY 2025–26, the RE was reduced to Rs 40 crore and the actual expenditure up to December 2025 was at Rs 32.14 crore, indicating partial utilisation of allocated funds. The Committee further note that DIU Phase–II has been launched with a BE of Rs 29 crore for FY 2026–27, with a focus on strengthening analytics, enhancing the Sanchar Saathi platform and facilitating the establishment of integrated DIU-cum Telecom- Cyber Security Incident Response Team (T-CSIRT) field units.

The Committee appreciate the notable achievements of the DIU initiatives like public outreach of the Sanchar Saathi portal with over 224 million visitors, reporting of 30.2 million mobile numbers, disconnection of a substantial number

of unauthorised connections, tracing of stolen devices and action against suspected fraudulent communications. These outcomes reflect the growing importance of the DIU framework in combating cybercrime and misuse of telecom resources.

The Committee are of the opinion that the underutilisation of funds during 2025–26 warrants closer examination, especially in view of the expanding scale of cyber threats and financial frauds. As a result, the Committee urge the Department to undertake a detailed review of implementation bottlenecks affecting timely expenditure of precious funds and ensure that adequate technical manpower, analytics infrastructure and inter-agency coordination mechanisms are strengthened under DIU Phase–II. Clear physical and measurable targets be laid down for DIU Phase–II, including timelines for operationalisation of integrated field units, enhancement of AI-based detection systems and reduction in redressal response time for citizen complaints. A comprehensive progress report, indicating optimum financial utilisation, measurable outcomes and milestones under DIU Phase–II, may be furnished to the Committee.

Recommendation No.16 :

Financial Efficiency of BSNL

16. Having carefully examined the financial performance of BSNL over the period 2022–23 to 2026–27 (Projections), the Committee note that while Revenue from Operations (RFO) has shown a rising trend — from Rs 19,131 crore in FY 2022–23 to Rs 23,259 crore in 2025–26 and a projected Rs 26,407 crore in FY 2026–27 — the overall financial position of the company remains stressed. Although losses had narrowed significantly to Rs -2,241 crore in FY 2024–25, the projections indicate a widening of financial losses again to Rs -4,643 crore in FY 2025–26 and Rs -5,946 crore in FY 2026–27. The Committee note with concern that the total expenditure is projected to increase sharply to Rs 30,202 crore in 2025–26 and Rs 34,853 crore in 2026–27, outpacing the growth in total income. This suggests that operational gains from rising revenues are being offset by increasing cost burdens.

The Committee are of the view that the Department and BSNL undertake a comprehensive expenditure rationalisation exercise, with special focus on controllable operational costs, increased sharing of mobile towers with other operators, network optimisation and prioritisation of high-revenue service segments such as 4G/5G rollout, enterprise services and fibre connectivity. At the same time, revenue enhancement strategies should be strengthened through aggressive customer acquisition by enhancing customer's satisfaction in quality of service, monetisation of assets, improved service quality and leveraging infrastructure sharing opportunities. The Committee call for clear, time-bound financial turnaround benchmarks be fixed, with annual targets for reduction of losses and improvement in operating margins. A structured roadmap outlining measures for cost control, revenue growth and capital efficiency be developed so that sustained revival of BSNL can be ensured in a financially prudent and accountable manner.

Recommendation No.17 :

ITI Limited -Strengthening Financial Liquidity and Operational Efficiency

17. The budgetary allocation and utilisation pattern in respect of ITI Ltd. for capital expenditure reveals that there is a consistent decline in proposed allocations from Rs 400 crore in FY 2022–23 to Rs 39.50 crore in FY 2026–27. Further, the Revised Estimates show significant reductions, including NIL allocation in FY 2023–24 and reduction to Rs 59 crore in FY 2024–25 and Rs 60 crore in FY 2025–26. This reflects either reduced absorption capacity or underutilisation of allocated funds.

From the utilisation data, the Committee observe that against cumulative sanctions of Rs 1,191.56 crore since 2014, cumulative expenditure stands at Rs 844.80 crore (as of 24.12.2025), reflecting about 70.90% achievement. While there was an improvement in cumulative utilisation up to 2021–22, the actual annual expenditure in recent years has remained modest — Rs 71.11 crore in 2022–23, Rs 53.36 crore in 2023–24, Rs 10.90 crore in 2024–25 and only Rs 2.87 crore in 2025–26 (up to December 2025).

The Committee find it imperative that the Department undertakes a comprehensive review of ITI Ltd.'s capital expenditure planning and absorption capacity. A time-bound reconciliation of accounts, including clarification regarding the pending Rs 118.92 crore, may be ensured at the earliest. The Committee recommend that future budgetary allocations be linked to realistic project execution schedules, measurable physical milestones and strict monitoring mechanisms to avoid idle allocation of public funds.

The Committee emphasise the need for ITI Ltd. to prepare a clear revival and capital deployment roadmap, identifying priority technology areas, order pipelines and revenue-generating investments so that capital support from Government translates into tangible operational strengthening rather than remaining idle or underutilised.

Recommendation No.18 :

Strategic Support for TCIL's Growth and Competitiveness

18. The Committee have examined the financial performance of Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) and note with satisfaction the consistent growth in total income from Rs 2,001.70 crore in FY 2022–23 to Rs 3,059.67 crore in FY 2024–25, along with a steady increase in operational surplus from Rs 61.57 crore to Rs 127.12 crore during the same period. The Committee take note of the enhanced Profit after Tax over the years and TCIL's ambitious revenue targets of Rs 3,702.00 crore for FY 2025–26 and Rs 4,423.00 crore for FY 2026–27, with projected expenditure of Rs 4,193.00 crore during FY 2026–27.

While appreciating TCIL's robust financial trajectory and expanding footprints in domestic and overseas markets, the Committee observe that the company faces structural challenges such as low capital base, high working capital requirements, declining margins due to competitive tendering, and constraints associated with procedural compliances as a PSU.

In order to ensure that the company can compete effectively in large turnkey and international projects, the Committee urge the Department to

facilitate strengthening of TCIL's Capital base and working capital support mechanisms. The Committee recommend TCIL to diversify its activities into high-technology and value-added segments, including deployment of indigenously developed 4G/5G equipment, digital infrastructure consultancy, and emerging technology domains, so as to improve margins and long-term sustainability.

The Committee also emphasise the need for outcome-based monitoring of revenue targets, with clear quarterly benchmarks and project execution milestones. While observing the Government support through dividend exemptions and facilitation of projects, the Committee stress that TCIL must progressively enhance operational efficiency and profitability to ensure self-sustained growth so as to obviate excessive reliance on administrative support. In this regard, structured roadmap outlining revenue diversification, margin improvement strategies and risk mitigation measures may be submitted to the Committee at the earliest.

Recommendation No.19:

19. The Committee note that C-DOT primarily relies on Gross Budgetary Support (GBS) from the Government through the Department of Telecommunications for its core R&D and strategic technology programmes, supplemented by internal resource generation through Transfer of Technology (ToT) fees, royalties and commercialisation of indigenous products. The Committee do recognise the critical role being played by C-DOT in strengthening India's telecom R&D ecosystem and advancing indigenous technology capabilities. Further, going through the budget allocations, it is seen that the BE 2025-26 for CDOT was Rs 309.60 cr and RE 2025-26 was Rs 454.47 and the BE for 2026-27 stands at Rs 464.40 cr.

The Committee are of the opinion that, given the rapidly evolving global telecom landscape and the strategic importance of self-reliance in telecom technologies, C-DOT requires stable, predictable and adequate funding support. Enhanced financial backing would enable the organisation to undertake large-scale research programmes, develop advanced 4G/5G and next-generation technologies, build robust testing infrastructure, and attract and retain high-

quality technical talent. At the same time, CDOT should strive for increased value addition and R & D output in the emerging digital world.

The Department must ensure multi-year assured funding support to C-DOT linked with clearly defined research milestones and deliverables. C-DOT be encouraged to progressively enhance its internal revenue generation through wider commercialisation of indigenous products, global technology partnerships and industry collaborations so as to reduce exclusive dependence on budgetary support. Apart from these, the Committee further recommend that a structured roadmap outlining priority R&D areas, timelines for product deployment, revenue projections from ToT and measurable outcomes in terms of indigenous technology adoption be placed before the Committee. Strengthening C-DOT in a focussed and accountable manner will be vital for achieving technological innovations and self-reliance thereby safeguarding national strategic interests in the Telecom Sector.

New Delhi;
13th March, 2026
22 Phalguna, 1947 (Saka)

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on
Communications and Information
Technology.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2025-26)**

MINUTES OF THE NINTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 25th February, 2026 from 1245 hours to 1430 hours in Committee Room 'Samanvay 3', Parliament House, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Dr. Nishikant Dubey - Chairperson

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Anup Sanjay Dhotre
3. Shri S. Supongmeren Jamir
4. Smt. Poonamben Hematbhai Maadam
5. Shri G. Kumar Naik
6. Shri Shafi Parambil
7. Ms. Kangna Ranaut
8. Shri Radheshyam Rathiya
9. Shri Arun Kumar Sagar
10. Shri Devesh Shakya

Rajya Sabha

11. Shri Saket Gokhale
12. Smt. Priyanka Chaturvedi
13. Shri Amar Pal Maurya
14. Shri Kartikeya Sharma
15. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya

Secretariat

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|----|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Shri Harish Chandra Bist | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. A. Jyothirmayi | - | Director |
| 3. | Shri Rajesh Mohan | - | Deputy Secretary |

LIST OF WITNESSES

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS) (DoT)

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Amit Agrawal	Secretary (T) & Chairman, DCC
2.	Shri Manish Sinha	Member (F)-DCC
3.	Shri Rudra Narayan Palai	Member (T)- DCC
4.	Shri Deb Kumar Chakrabarti	Member (S)- DCC
5.	Shri Shyamal Misra	Administrator, DBN
6.	Shri Gulzar Natarajan	Additional Secretary
7.	Shri Awadhesh Kumar	Advisor (F) & DG, NCA-F
8.	Ms. Madhavi Das	FA (Telecom)
9.	Shri A. Robert J. Ravi	CMD, BSNL/MTNL
10.	Shri Rajesh Rai	CMD, ITI Ltd.
11.	Dr. Rajkumar Upadhyay	CEO, C-DoT
12.	Shri Atul Kumar Chaudhary	Secretary, TRAI
13.	Shri D. Manoj	Principal Advisor (F&EA), TRAI

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee convened to examine Demands for Grants (2026-27) related to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) (DoT).

(The witnesses were then called in)

3. After welcoming the representatives of the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) to the Sitting, the Chairperson drew attention to the expenditure pattern of the Department. It was observed that a comparative analysis of the Budget Estimates for FY 2025–26 and FY 2026–27 reflected a

declining trend in allocations, from Rs. 1,09,636.26 crore to Rs. 97,990.95 crore. Further the actual revenue expenditure as on 31 December 2025 stood at Rs. 24,867.42 crore against the Revised Estimate of Rs. 33,632.37 crore for FY 2025–26, indicating a significant shortfall in utilisation of allocated funds. Against the Revised Estimate allocation of Rs. 68,195.29 crore for FY 2025–26, only Rs. 22,549.51 crore had been spent as on 31 December 2025. The Committee, therefore, desired a detailed explanation regarding these trends and sought to be apprised of the concrete Action Plan formulated for ensuring optimal utilisation of funds in future. The Department was requested to elaborate on the measures being undertaken to strengthen financial discipline and adopt prudent commercial practices. The Committee also sought information on the earnest and stringent steps proposed to restore the financial viability and operational independence of BSNL and MTNL, including progress on monetisation of MTNL's land assets and effective utilisation of Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) funds.

4. Thereafter, the representatives of DoT introduced themselves to the Committee and made a Power Point presentation highlighting the evolution of Telecom Sector, key achievements in last one year, Budget at a glance, and key initiatives of the Department like Atmanirbhar Bharat- Domestic Manufacturing, R&D innovation schemes, Ease of Doing Business- Telecom Transformation (eTT) Centre, SATCOM Monitoring Facility (SMF) Project, 4G Saturation Scheme, Revival Package of BSNL, and BharatNet Schemes etc.

5. The Members then raised a range of queries and concerns, particularly regarding the non-utilization of allocated funds and the Department's action plan for ensuring its effective utilization. Other key issues discussed included the poor status of implementation of the Digital Bharat Nidhi Scheme, poor or nil internet connectivity in rural and remote areas of the country; need for setting up BSNL towers especially in the naxalite ridden Chhattisgarh; unsatisfactory implementation of the BharatNet Project, the PLI scheme, review of performance of PSUs under the Department etc. Additionally, discussions also covered the monetization of MTNL's land assets, functioning of the Indian Telephone Industries and C-DOT, as well as the achievements and challenges faced by the Department in implementing the Saturation of 4G Mobile Services Scheme in uncovered villages across the Country.

Further deliberations focused on the slow progress of the Defence Spectrum Optical Fiber Cable-based Network for Defence Services Project and the establishment of 100 5G use-case labs in educational institutions nationwide, Development of 5G Indigenous Stack, Telecom Technology Development Fund Scheme, Satcom Services, Connectivity issues and the need for ensuring the presence of BSNL Officers in DISHA Committee meetings etc .

6. The representatives of Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications) (DoT) responded to most of the queries raised by the Members. The Chairperson, then, directed that written replies to the points on which information was not readily available may be furnished to the Committee within Seven days.

7. Thereafter, the Chairperson thanked the representatives of DoT for deposing before the Committee.

The witnesses then withdrew.

A copy of the verbatim proceedings of the Sitting has been was kept on record.

The Committee then adjourned.

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (2025-26)**

MINUTES OF THE TENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee sat on Friday, the **13th March, 2026** from 0945 hours to 1000 hours in Committee Room No. '1', Extension to Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY- Chairperson

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Dr. Rabindra Narayan Behera
3. Shri S. Supongmeren Jamir
4. Shri Appalanaidu Kaliseti
5. Dr. M.K. Vishnu Prasad
6. Ms. Kangna Ranaut
7. Shri Ramasahayam Raghuram Reddy
8. Shri Arun Kumar Sagar
9. Shri Devesh Shakya

Rajya Sabha

10. Shri Sujeet Kumar
11. Shri Amar Pal Maurya
12. Shri S. Niranjan Reddy
13. Shri Lahar Singh Siroya

Secretariat

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|----|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| 1. | Shri Harish Chandra Bist | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Smt. A. Jyothirmayi | - | Director |
| 3. | Shri Rajesh Mohan | - | Deputy Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee convened to consider and adopt four draft Reports on Demands for Grants (2026-27) relating to the Ministries/Departments under the jurisdiction of the Committee.

3. XXX....XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX

4. The Committee, then, took up the following four draft Reports for consideration and adoption:-

(i) Draft Report on Demands for Grants (2026-27) relating to the Ministry of Communications (Department of Telecommunications).

(ii) XXX....XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX

(iii) XXX....XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX

(iv) XXX....XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX....XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX...XXX

5. The Committee adopted the Reports without modifications and also authorized the Chairperson to finalize the draft Reports and present the same to the House during the current Session of Parliament.

The Committee, then, adjourned.

*****Matter not related to the Report.**