

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4027
ANSWERED ON 12TH AUGUST, 2026**

NATIONAL PUBLIC WI-FI ECOSYSTEM

4027. SHRI DHARAMBIR SINGH:

WILL the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has considered expanding the National Public Wi-Fi ecosystem to educational institutions, rural markets and public service centres across the country;
- (b) whether the initiative is intended to improve digital inclusion and support digital entrepreneurship and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the measures taken to encourage participation of local entrepreneurs and service providers under the programme and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) whether the Government proposes to establish additional Public Wi-Fi hotspots in the Bhiwani–Mahendragarh Lok Sabha Constituency and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. PEMMASANI CHANDRA SEKHAR)**

- (a) & (b) India's national public Wi-Fi ecosystem operates primarily through the Prime Minister's Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) framework. PM-WANI Scheme was introduced to accelerate the proliferation of Broadband services through Public Wi-Fi networks across the country. The PM-WANI framework, in line with the objectives of the National Digital Communications Policy (NDCP) 2018, aims to create a robust digital communications infrastructure. The framework allows Public Data Offices (PDOs) to set up Wi-Fi hotspots, under the aggregation of Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs), with minimal regulatory oversight, thus encouraging local entrepreneurs to participate in the digital transformation process.
- (c) To encourage participation of local entrepreneurs and service providers under the programme, the Government has carried out the following policy interventions in the PM-WANI framework:
 - (i) The use of regular FTTH, aggregation of multiple access points to a single backhaul and Quick Response (QR) based authentication for secondary devices have been

allowed with a view to cut costs and boost the viability of Public Data Offices (PDOs).

- (ii) Offloading of mobile data and sending of promotional or branding content to users have been allowed, with a view to enhance viability.
- (iii) Home and business wi-fi have been allowed to join PM-WANI, mutual roaming between PDOs has been permitted and the naming of Service Set Identifiers (SSIDs) has been standardised to enable easier discovery.

Further, to reduce cost and enhance viability, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has issued a tariff order on retail broadband connectivity for PDOs, mandating that Internet Service Providers offer all retail FTTH broadband plans with maximum speed up to 200 mega-bits per second to PDOs at tariffs not more than twice the corresponding consumer broadband tariff.

- (d) Under PM-WANI scheme, as on 30.6.2026 a total of 228 and 51 public wi-fi hotspots are registered in Bhiwani and Mahendragarh districts respectively. Under PM-WANI scheme, the Government's primary role is policy enablement.
