



PM-WANI Scheme Accelerates Public Wi-Fi Expansion across India with Over 4 Lakh Hotspots

Posted On: 02 APR 2026 6:21PM by PIB Delhi

Hon'ble Union Minister of Communications and Development of North Eastern Region, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, informed the Rajya Sabha in a written reply today that the Government is promoting the expansion of public Wi-Fi access across the country through the **Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (PM-WANI) Scheme**, aimed at accelerating the proliferation of broadband services through public Wi-Fi networks across the country.

As on February 28, 2026, a total of 4,09,403 Public Data Offices (PDOs) / public Wi-Fi hotspots are operational under the PM-WANI framework across States and Union Territories. In addition, 207 Public Data Office Aggregators (PDOAs) and 113 App Providers are registered under the scheme. State/UT-wise details of PDOs, PDOAs and App Providers are maintained under the scheme, with States such as Delhi, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh emerging as leading contributors in the deployment of Wi-Fi hotspots.

The Union Minister further informed that the total number of internet users who have accessed PM-WANI hotspots till February 28, 2026 is 2,44,67,896, reflecting the growing adoption of public Wi-Fi services across the country. He also stated that approximately 58.64 petabytes of data have been consumed through PM-WANI hotspots since the launch of the scheme.

The PM-WANI framework is based on a decentralised and market-driven model, encouraging local entrepreneurs to set up and operate Wi-Fi hotspots based on techno-commercial viability. The Government's role is primarily that of policy enablement.

To further accelerate the growth of PM-WANI hotspots, particularly in rural and remote areas, the Government has introduced several key policy interventions:

Cost Reduction Measures: Public Data Offices (PDOs) have been permitted to provide services using Fibre-to-the-Home (FTTH) connections and to aggregate multiple access points to a single backhaul towards the Internet Service Provider.

Revenue Enhancement Opportunities: PDOs have been allowed to offer mobile data offloading services to telecom service providers. PDOAs and App Providers have also been permitted to deliver promotional and branded content to users with their consent.

Improved User Experience: Existing home and business Wi-Fi networks can now be integrated into the PM-WANI ecosystem. Additionally, PDOAs have been enabled to provide roaming among themselves, allowing users to seamlessly connect across different PM-WANI hotspots.

Additionally, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, through a tariff order issued on 16.06.2025, has mandated that Internet Service Providers offer retail FTTH broadband plans up to 200 Mbps to PDOs at tariffs not exceeding twice the corresponding consumer broadband tariff, thereby improving affordability and viability of the PM-WANI ecosystem.

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