



Agreement Signed between DBN (Digital Bharat Nidhi) - Department of Telecommunications; Government of Maharashtra; MDIL; BSNL & MahaIT for Implementation of Amended BharatNet Program in Maharashtra

₹10,520 Crore Financial Support Approved for Rollout of Amended BharatNet Program in Maharashtra

Amended BharatNet Program in Maharashtra to Cover 28,237 Gram Panchayats and Provide On-Demand Connectivity to 15,799 Villages

Partnership to Strengthen and Upgrade Rural Telecom Infrastructure across Maharashtra

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In a significant step towards strengthening digital infrastructure and accelerating broadband connectivity across rural Maharashtra, Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN) under Department of Telecommunications (DoT) signed an Agreement for implementation of the Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) in the State under the State-led model today at Sanchar Bhawan, New Delhi.

The Agreement was signed between Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), DoT; Government of Maharashtra; MahaNet Digital Infrastructure Limited (MDIL); Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Maharashtra Information Technology Corporation Limited (MahaIT) for implementation of the Amended BharatNet Program in the State of Maharashtra.

The Agreement signing ceremony was held in the august presence of Shri Shyamal Misra, Administrator, Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN); Shri Virendra Singh, Secretary, Department of Electronics, Information Technology & Artificial Intelligence, Government of Maharashtra; Smt. Buveneswari S., MD, Maharashtra Information Technology Corporation Limited (MahaIT); Shri Papa Sudhakara Rao, Director (Enterprise Business - EB), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL); Shri Dinesh Kumar Garg, DDG (ABP Implementation-I), Department of Telecommunications, along with senior officers of DoT, DBN and BSNL.

The signing of the Agreement marks an important milestone towards expeditious implementation of the Program and reflects the shared commitment of the Central Government and the Government of Maharashtra towards strengthening rural digital infrastructure, enhancing last-mile connectivity and promoting inclusive digital growth.

The Union Cabinet had approved the Amended BharatNet Program on 4th August 2023 with the objective of upgrading, consolidating and expanding the existing BharatNet network to ensure robust and future-ready broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats and villages on demand basis.

Under the Amended BharatNet Program in Maharashtra, the project will be implemented through MahaNet Digital Infrastructure Limited (MDIL). The Program will have a total scope of 28,237 Gram Panchayats, which includes upgradation of 15,171 Phase I Gram Panchayats from linear to ring topology to enhance network resilience, coverage of 12,740 Phase II Gram Panchayats, and inclusion of 326 newly created Gram Panchayats. In addition, 15,799 villages will be provided connectivity on a demand basis to strengthen last-mile connectivity.

The Government of India has approved financial support of ₹10,520 crore for implementation of the Program in Maharashtra. The initiative is expected to facilitate more than nine lakh rural home fibre connections with financial support from the Government of India and significantly enhance delivery of digital services including e-Governance, online education, telemedicine, digital payments and citizen-centric services across rural and remote areas of the State.

The Agreement signed today is expected to accelerate execution of the Program in Maharashtra and further advance the vision of a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

About Digital Bharat Nidhi

Digital Bharat Nidhi (erstwhile USOF) was established under the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003 w.e.f. 01.04.2002. As per 'The Telecommunications Act, 2023' the Universal Service Obligation Fund, has become the Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN). The DBN has mandate to support universal service through promoting access and delivery of telecommunication service in underserved rural, remote and urban areas. It is an attached office of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications.

In order to achieve objectives of DBN, it covers various schemes and projects including BharatNet, 4G Saturation Project, Provision of Mobile Service in uncovered areas of Aspirational Districts, Mobile Services in Left Wing Extremist Areas, Mobile Services in Himalayan and Border areas, Mobile Services in Islands and Mobile Services in North Eastern Areas.

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