

Internet connectivity in rural India growing at fast pace: Nirmala Sitharaman

Synopsis

Responding to the debate on the General Budget 2022-23 in the Rajya Sabha, she said that as per the report of Internet and Mobile Association, the rural internet user base is growing three times faster and is likely to surpass the urban user numbers soon.



Finance Minister [Nirmala Sitharaman](#) on Friday said that [internet connectivity in rural India](#) is increasing at a fast pace and will soon surpass [urban](#) connectivity.

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"Data consumption through Bharatnet optical fibre surpassed 13,000 terrabytes in June 2021 while the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India's ([TRA](#)) report in August 2021 said that the total number of internet subscribers has gone up to 82.5 crore," she said.

Sitharaman also said that, in the Budget she announced, the contracts for laying optical fibre connections in rural and remote areas will be awarded this year and will be completed by 2025.

Replying to the Opposition's comments on Bangladesh growing faster than India, she informed the House that India's economy is 10 times bigger than Bangladesh, so if Bangladesh grew at 10 per cent and India grew just at 1 per cent, the absolute number in terms of growth will be the same.

"To say Bangladesh is growing at 5.5 per cent and we are growing at 4.1 per cent is not a completely correct picture in terms of the growth rate," she said.

Responding to Congress MP Kapil Sibal's "India in Rahu Kaal since 2014" comment, she said: "Raau Kaal is when a sitting PM was about to meet the US President and a Bill he cleared was torn up.

"Rahu Kaal is what produces what is called G23, it is where the Congress party is. Ours is Amrit Kaal, senior leaders from the party are leaving their own party and getting out. That is Rahu Kaal."

On request by the Deputy Chairman, the Finance Minister concluded her speech while two Members laid their papers for the 'Special Mention' and the chair adjourned the House till March 14, as the first part of the Budget Session was over.