

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 199
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18th JULY, 2018**

MOBILE SERVICES IN BACKWARD AREAS

†199. SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government and the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) have taken any steps to provide mobile services in backward blocks of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the number of blocks in the country where mobile service is available, State/UT-wise along with the number of blocks which are yet to be provided with mobile service, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the measures taken by the Government to link each block and village of the country with mobile services;
- (d) the time by which each block and village is likely to be linked with mobile service; and
- (e) the number of complaint redressal mechanism and various other facilities set up by the Government to provide regular mobile/telephone service in rural areas?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)**

(a) to (d) All BHQs (Block Head Quarters) are covered with mobile and landline network. Government/Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has taken following measures to provide mobile services in uncovered villages:

- i) DoT has sanctioned viability gap funding through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provision of mobile services in 2355 identified locations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. As of now 2335 sites are radiating. Cabinet has approved on 23.05.2018 the LWE Phase-II proposal of providing mobile services at 4072 locations in LWE affected areas through viability gap funding for an estimated cost of Rs.7330 Crore.

ii) Under Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for North East Region (NER), USOF has signed an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to install 2817 mobile towers for providing mobile coverage in 4119 uncovered villages of Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam with an estimated cost of Rs. 2258 crore. The project is likely to be completed by September, 2019.

iii) On 09.01.2018, Telecom Commission approved the proposal for providing mobile services in 172 uncovered villages in Andaman & Nicobar Islands at an estimated cost of Rs. 342.40 crore.

(e) The primary responsibility of addressing the service, billing and quality of service related grievances lies with telecom service providers. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has framed regulations for handling of public grievances and maintaining the quality of service parameters for Telecom Service Providers. According to "Telecom Complaint Redressal Regulations 2012" as amended from time to time, all Telecom Service Providers should set up a two tier grievance redressal mechanism i.e.

(i) **Establishment of a Complaint Centre with a toll-free "Consumer Care Number"**

(ii) Establishment of an Appellate Authority. Accordingly, complainants to approach their telecom service providers for redressal of their grievances.

In case complainant is not satisfied with the decision taken by service provider or there is delay in redressal of grievance at any point of time /stage in the above process, the complainant may also approach an appropriate court of law/ any other appropriate forum (judicial / quasi-judicial) against the service provider.

An individual complainant may also file before Public Grievance Cell of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in either of the following ways:

(i) By hand; (ii)By post; (iii) Through FAX; (iv) Telephonically; OR (v) By Web Portal(CPGRAMS) URL: <http://www.pgportal.gov.in>

All such complaints received are then registered on the web portal, so that the processing is monitored in a transparent; user friendly and structured manner.

Twitter Seva has been started on 02.08.2016 for handling of Grievances/feedback related to various Telecom Service Providers (TSPs).

DoT has launched an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) on 23.12.2016 to obtain direct feedback from subscribers. Through this System, a subscriber receives a telephone call with short code 1955 and is requested to respond to a few questions on problem of call drops faced during last one month. Upto 31.05.2018, 1.64 crore calls were made to subscribers of all TSPs across the country.
