

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 673
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26TH JUNE, 2019**

UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND

**†673. SHRI SUDHAKAR TUKARAM SHRANGARE:
SHRI DEVJI M. PATEL:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to spend ten thousand crores of rupees in the current financial year from the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to give impetus to basic infrastructure facilities in rural areas under the Digital India Programme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the quantum of amount spent during each of the last two years, State/UT-wise and the availability of amount in this fund during the same period;
- (c) the number of Gram Panchayats and rural post offices connected with optical fibre network in the country including the State of Maharashtra and specifically for Latur district of Maharashtra; and
- (d) the reasons of the delay in connecting all the Gram Panchayats and rural post offices of the country including in the State of Maharashtra and Rajasthan with optical fibre?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, LAW & JUSTICE AND
ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)**

- (a) Rs. 8350 Crore is proposed in the current financial year from the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for telecom and broadband infrastructure facilities in rural areas.
- (b) The year wise allocation of funds from USOF is enclosed as **Annexure –A**. The State/UT-wise amount spent under various Schemes during the last two years is enclosed as **Annexure-B**. Rs. 48426.45 Crore and Rs. 50542.30 Crore were available in the USO Fund at the end of F.Y. 2017-18 and F.Y. 2018-19 respectively.
- (c) The Broadband connectivity to Gram Panchayats is being provided under BharatNet by BBNL. The connectivity to rural Post Offices is not covered in BharatNet scheme. At present 120341 GPs have been provided infrastructure for Broadband connectivity. Out of these GPs, 15173 GPs are in Maharashtra, of which 436 GPs are in Latur District of Maharashtra.
- (d) As per the modified strategy for implementation of BharatNet, the project was targeted to be completed by March 2019. The delay in the initial implementation of the project including in Maharashtra and Rajasthan, was on account of:

- (i) Delay in the initial commencement of project as the work on the project began in the second half of 2014 due to field survey of GPs and pilot testing of the technology model.
- (ii) Only one media that is underground OFC to cover GPs, and Right of Way (RoW) issues.

Since May 2016, with the constitution of the following committees, the issues are being resolved timely:

- i) Empowered Committee under Secretary, DoT
- ii) Steering Committee under Administrator, USOF.
- iii) State Committee under Chief General Manager (CGM), BSNL for resolution of State level issues.

THE YEAR WISE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FROM USOF

Rs. in Crore

| Schemes | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| BharatNet | 6000.00 | 4145.54 | 6000.00 |
| Other Schemes | 1000.00 | 642.68 | 2350.00 |
| Total | 7000.00 | 4788.22 | 8350.00 |

| Annexure-B | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| STATE/UT-WISE SUBSIDY DISBURSED FROM USOF DURING LAST TWO YEARS UNDER DIGITAL INDIA PROGRAMME | | | |
| Rupees in Cr. | | | |
| Sl. No. | NAME OF STATES/UTs/ CCAs | 2017-18 | 2018-19 |
| 1 | ANDHRA PRADESH | 6.85 | 5.45 |
| 2 | ASSAM | 0.50 | 6.34 |
| 3 | BIHAR | 53.35 | 35.82 |
| 4 | CHHATTISGARH | 118.64 | 28.22 |
| 5 | DELHI | 0.04 | |
| 6 | DOT HQ * | 6516.45 | 4409.04 |
| 7 | GUJRAT | 0.54 | |
| 8 | HARYANA | 0.21 | 0.95 |
| 9 | HIMACHAL PRADESH | 0.02 | 2.70 |
| 10 | J&K | 0.12 | 0.03 |
| 11 | JHARKHAND | 168.32 | 108.46 |
| 12 | KARNATAKA | 9.10 | 0.01 |
| 13 | KERALA | 0.76 | 2.59 |
| 14 | MAHARASHTRA | 12.20 | 11.86 |
| 15 | MADHYA PRADESH | 4.40 | 2.65 |
| 16 | NE-I ** | 0.33 | 0.08 |
| 17 | NE-II *** | 0.05 | 0.01 |
| 18 | ODISHA | 40.64 | 38.62 |
| 19 | PUNJAB | 0.66 | |
| 20 | RAJASTHAN | 0.45 | 3.68 |
| 21 | TELANGANA | 15.49 | 17.27 |
| 22 | TAMIL NADU | | 91.98 |
| 23 | UP(E) | 26.93 | 3.58 |
| 24 | UP(W) | 0.33 | 0.06 |
| 25 | UTTARANCHAL | 0.21 | |
| 26 | WEST BENGAL | 22.16 | 18.82 |
| | Total | 6998.75 | 4788.22 |

* Centralized payment by DOT HQ

** NE I - Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram

*** NE II - Arunachal, Manipur, Nagaland
