

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2435
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21st DECEMBER, 2022**

UNIVERSAL ACCESS LEVY

2435. SHRI KARTI P. CHIDAMBARAM:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the Universal Access Levy (UAL) collected in FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 as well as provisional data for the current FY;
- (b) the details of UAL credited to Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) in FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and provisional data for the current FY, year-wise;
- (c) the details of funds under USOF allocated and utilised in FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and provisional data for the current FY, project-wise and State/ UT-wise;
- (d) the details of status of various projects for which funds have been disbursed through USOF;
- (e) whether the USOF funds are diverted towards other purposes or schemes, if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether the Government intends to reduce the Universal Service Obligation Levy as recommended by TRAI and telecommunication industry stakeholders, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

- (a) Rs. 75,386 crore is collected as Universal Access Levy (UAL) during Financial Years (FYs) 2014-15 to 2021-22 and current FY 2022-23 at the end of November 2022.
- (b) The funds for Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) are credited through budgetary provision. The year-wise details of Universal Access Levy (UAL) credited to Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and provisional data for the current FY 2022-23 upto November 2022 is given in **Annexure-I**.
- (c) The Project-wise details of funds allocated/utilised/dispursed from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and current FY 2022-23 upto November, 2022 is given in **Annexure-II**. The State/UT-wise details of funds allocated/utilised/dispursed from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and current FY 2022-23 upto November, 2022 is given in **Annexure-III**.
- (d) The Status of Projects /Schemes of USOF is given in **Annexure-IV**.
- (e) USO Funds are used for providing telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country at affordable and reasonable prices and not for other purposes.
- (f) In 2015, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recommended that component of USOF levy should be reduced from 5% to 3% of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) for all licences with effect from 1st April 2015. However, the recommendation of TRAI was not accepted considering the revised and expanded targets of USOF.

Annexure-I

Annexure referred in part (b) of the above said Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2435 to be answered on 21.12.2022

The year-wise details of Universal Access Levy (UAL) credited to Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and provisional data for the current FY 2022-23 upto November 2022

Financial Year	UAL credited to USOF (Figures in Rs. Crores)
2014-15	2086.98
2015-16	3100.00
2016-17	7225.79
2017-18	7000.00
2018-19	4788.22
2019-20	2926.00
2020-21	7200.00
2021-22	8300.00
2022-23 (as per Budget Allotment for FY 2022-23)	9000.00

Annexure referred in part (c) of the above said Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2435 to be answered on 21.12.2022

The Project-wise details of funds allocated/utilised/disbursed from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and current FY 2022-23 upto November, 2022

Sl. No.	Name of Schemes/Projects	Figures in Rs. Crore
1	Setting up of 25000 Wi-Fi Hotspot at Rural Exchanges of BSNL	529
2	Provision of Mobile Services in 354 uncovered Villages of Border States	137
3	Setting up of Wi-Fi Choupals at 5,000 Gram Panchayats by Common Service Centre	104
4	Provision of Mobile Services in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts	30
5	Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra	7
6	BharatNet	35785
7	Provision of Mobile Services in Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (LWE Phase-I)	4051
8	Provision of Mobile Services in Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (LWE Phase-II)	59
9	Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme	13
10	Provision of Mobile Services in uncovered villages of Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1
11	Provision of Mobile Services in NER and National Highways	661
12	Provision of Mobile Services in Meghalaya	127
13	Sanchar Shakti	1
14	Village Public Telephones in uncovered villages (VPTs)	46
15	Augmentation, Creation and Management of Optical Fiber Network in Assam (OFC Assam)	38
16	Augmentation, Creation and Management of Optical Fiber Network in NE-I (OFC-NE-I)	18
17	Augmentation, Creation and Management of Optical Fiber Network in NE-II (OFC-NE-II)	13
18	Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELS)	1281
19	Satellite Bandwidth Augmentation in Andaman & Nicobar Islands	148
20	Satellite Bandwidth Augmentation in Lakshadweep	70
21	Shared Mobile Charging Facilities (SMCF)	1
22	Submarine Optical Fibre Connectivity between Chennai to Andaman & Nicobar Islands and other Islands	956
23	Submarine Optical Fibre Connectivity between Kochi to Lakshadweep and other Islands	150
24	Ten 2G Edge BTS in Lakshadweep	10
25	Hiring of 20 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala	5
26	Setting up of Wi-Fi Hotspot at 200 Railway Stations	19
27	Wi-Fi hotspots at 200 Gram Panchayats by BSNL using BharatNet backhaul, as a pilot project	3
28	Rural Wireline Broadband	175
	Grand Total	44437

Annexure-III

Annexure referred in part (c) of the above said Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2435 to be answered on 21.12.2022

The State/UT-wise details of funds allocated/utilised/disbursed from USOF during FYs 2014-15 to 2021-22 and current FY 2022-23 upto November, 2022

Sl. No.	Name of States/UT	Figures in Rs. Crore
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1104
2	Andhra Pradesh	101
3	Assam	324
4	Bihar	230
5	Chhattisgarh	458
6	Gujarat	35
7	Haryana	11
8	Himachal Pradesh	27
9	Jammu and Kashmir (including Ladakh)	72
10	Jharkhand	677
11	Karnataka	33
12	Kerala	21
13	Lakshadweep	230
14	Maharashtra	129
15	Madhya Pradesh	82
16	North East-I (NE-I)	263
17	North East (NE-II)	283
18	Odisha	265
19	Punjab	29
20	Rajasthan	22
21	Tamil Nadu	4
22	Telangana	91
23	Uttar Pradesh	123
24	Uttarakhand	16
25	West Bengal (including Sikkim)	99
26	Centrally Allocated / Disbursed Funds#	39705
	Grand Total	44437

#Fund released for BharatNet etc.

*NE-I includes Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura

**NE-II includes Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur

Annexure-IV

Annexure referred in part (d) of above said Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2435 to be answered on 21.12.2022

Ongoing Projects /Schemes of USOF

Sl. No.	Name of Schemes/Projects
1.	Provision of Mobile Services in 354 uncovered Villages of Border States
2.	Provision of Mobile Services in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts
3.	BharatNet
4.	Provision of Mobile Services in Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (LWE Phase-I)
5.	Provision of Mobile Services in Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (LWE Phase-II)
6.	Provision of Mobile Services in uncovered villages of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
7.	Provision of Mobile Services in NER and National Highways
8.	Provision of Mobile Services in Meghalaya
9.	Submarine Optical Fibre Connectivity between Kochi to Lakshadweep and other Islands
10.	Setting up of 25000 Wi-Fi Hotspot at Rural Exchanges of BSNL
Closed / Completed Projects /Schemes of USOF during 2014-15 to 2022-23	
1.	Setting up of Wi-Fi Choupals at 5,000 Gram Panchayats by Common Service Centre
2.	Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra
3.	Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme
4.	Sanchar Shakti
5.	Village Public Telephones in uncovered villages (VPTs)
6.	Augmentation, Creation and Management of Optical Fiber Network in Assam (OFC Assam)
7.	Augmentation, Creation and Management of Optical Fiber Network in NE-I (OFC-NE-I)
8.	Augmentation, Creation and Management of Optical Fiber Network in NE-II (OFC-NE-II)
9.	Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELS)
10.	Satellite Bandwidth Augmentation in Andaman & Nicobar Islands
11.	Satellite Bandwidth Augmentation in Lakshadweep
12.	Shared Mobile Charging Facilities (SMCF)
13.	Submarine Optical Fibre Connectivity between Chennai to Andaman & Nicobar Islands and other Islands
14.	Ten 2G Edge BTS in Lakshadweep
15.	Hiring of 20 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala
16.	Setting up of Wi-Fi Hotspot at 200 Railway Stations
17.	Wi-Fi hotspots at 200 Gram Panchayats by BSNL using BharatNet backhaul, as a pilot project
18.	Rural Wireline Broadband
