

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 963
TO BE ANSWERED ON 8TH FEBRUARY, 2023**

UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND

**963. SHRI ANTO ANTONY:
SHRI KUMBAKUDI SUDHAKARAN:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the total funds sanctioned, allocated, and spent under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for FY 2015-16 to 2022-23;
- (b) the details of the reasons for the under utilisation of the existing corpus of the USOF;
- (c) whether any inspection has been conducted under the monitoring mechanism of the USOF during the financial years 2014-15 to 2021-2022, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the USOF funds are diverted towards other purposes or schemes, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of the disbursements under the USOF scheme, including details about the allocations to various partners and the status of projects initiated under the USOF for FY 2014-15 to 2021-2022?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Rs. 42,607.42 crore has been sanctioned/ allocated/ spent/ disbursed under various Schemes of Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during the Financial Years (FY) 2014-15 to 2022-23 (till 31-12-2022).
- (b) USOF utilized 100% funds as allocated by the Ministry of Finance during the said Financial years.
- (c) The Monitoring of the schemes is an ongoing process and its mechanism includes checking the quality of services through Network Operating Centre / Network Management System on real time basis, as well as evaluation of Schemes through physical verification, impact assessment, etc.
- (d) 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.
- (e) Rs. 42626.99 crore has been disbursed under various USOF Schemes during 2014-15 to 2021-22. The year-wise details are as under:

Financial Years	Rupees in Crores
2014-15	2086.98
2015-16	3100.00
2016-17	7227.03
2017-18	6998.76
2018-19	4788.22
2019-20	2926.00
2020-21	7200.00
2021-22	8300.00
Total	42626.99

The details of funds allocated/ disbursed during 2014-15 to 2021-22 to various partners / Project Implementing Agencies is given in **Annexure-I**. The status of projects initiated under the USOF for the said Financial Years is given in **Annexure-II**.

Annexure-I

Annexure referred to in Part (e) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 963 to be answered on 08.02.2023

The details of funds allocated/ disbursed during 2014-15 to 2021-22 to various partners / Project Implementing Agencies from USOF

Sl. No.	Name of Partners/ Implementation Agencies	Rupees in crores
1	Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL)	33725.12
2	Bharti Airtel Limited (BAL)	284.81
3	Bharati Hexacom Limited (BHL)	375.06
4	Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)	7123.67
5	Common Service Centre -E-governance	979.73
6	GTL Infrastructure Limited (GTL)	0.06
7	Kerala Industrial and Technical Consultancy Organization Ltd. (KITCO)	0.03
8	RailTel Corporation of India Limited (RCIL)	49.16
9	Reliance Communications Limited (RCL)	1.74
10	Reliance Infocomm Limited (RIL)	17.03
11	Reliance Jio Infocom Limited (RJIL)	41.46
12	Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL)	21.21
13	The Energy Resource of India (TERI)	1.38
14	Tata Teleservices Maharashtra Ltd. (TTML)	1.81
15	Dishnet Wireless Limited (DWL)	0.97
16	Kamani Engineering Corporation International Limited (KEC)	1.53
17	Reuters Market Light Information Services Pvt. Ltd. (RMLISPL)	0.64
18	TATA	0.53
19	Vietnam Emerging Capital Limited (VECL)	0.90
20	Other Expenses (Impact Assessment)	0.15
	Total	42626.99

Annexure-II

Annexure referred to in Part (e) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 963 to be answered on 08.02.2023

The Status of Major USOF Projects initiated during Financial Years 2014-15 to 2021-22 under the USOF

S. No.	Major USOF Schemes/ Projects	Present Status
1	BharatNet	As on 09.01.2023, a total 1,87,289 GPs are Service Ready
2	Provision of Submarine OFC connectivity between Mainland India (Chennai) and Andaman & Nicobar Islands	All segments of CANI submarine cable project are commissioned by laying about 2313 Km of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable in 8 segments. 200 Gbps Bandwidth is available between Chennai to Port Blair while 100 Gbps bandwidth is available within Islands. Present utilization of bandwidth is 90 Gbps.
3	Mobile services in uncovered villages in rest of NER and seamless coverage along National Highway (by Airtel) Except Meghalaya	Tower installed – 1358
4	Mobile Services in Meghalaya	321 sites have been commissioned and provide coverage in 480 villages.
5	Mobile Services in Arunachal Pradesh and Two Districts of Assam	161 towers installed.
6	Hiring of 20 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala from BSCCL, Bangladesh via Cox Bazar:	The project has been commissioned.
7	Satellite Bandwidth Augmentation from 2 Gbps to 4 Gbps between Mainland India and Andaman & Nicobar islands and Intra-Islands	Bandwidth Augmented to 4 Gbps on 09.09.2021.
8	Provision of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable Connectivity between Mainland (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands (KLI Project) comprising of Kavarati and ten other Islands, namely, Kalpeni, Agatti, Amini, Androth, Minicoy, Bangaram, Bitra, Chetlat, Kiltan and Kadmat	Marine survey commenced on 14.12.2021. Both Deep and Shallow Water Marine Route Survey been completed for all segments. Land OFC - Pipe laying and Cable blowing work has been completed in all segments.
9	Satellite Bandwidth augmentation to 1.71 Gbps between Mainland India and Lakshadweep	Bandwidth Augmented to 1.71 Gbps on 14.08.2021
10	Provision of Mobile Services in 354 uncovered villages of J&K, Ladakh and other priority areas.	296 villages have been covered by installing 278 mobile towers.
11	Mobile connectivity in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. (LWE Phase-I)	2343 Towers have been installed.
12	Mobile connectivity in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas.	284 Towers have been commissioned and providing coverage in 294 villages.

S. No.	Major USOF Schemes/ Projects	Present Status
	Provision of 2542 sites in LWE affected areas (LWE Phase -II)	
13	Provision of 4G Mobile services in uncovered villages and for seamless connectivity on NH223 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands	An agreement was signed on 15.03.2021.
14	Re-provisioning of Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPTs) provided to MHA agencies (CAPFs), MoD agencies (Army, BRO) and other agencies using VSAT connectivity under BharatNet Project	As of now, 1391 sites have been operationalized.
15	Provision of Mobile Towers in 502 Sites	146 villages have been covered by installing 119 mobile towers.
16	Provision of Mobile Services in 7,287 uncovered villages of 44 Aspirational Districts of 5 States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha	19 sites commissioned and providing coverage in 37 villages.
