

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 237
TO BE ANSWERED ON 3RD FEBRUARY, 2021**

SHORTAGE OF MOBILE TOWERS

237. SHRI DEVUSINH JESINGHBHAI CHAUHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is an acute shortage of towers for cellular phone services in the country and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (b) the agencies which have been held responsible by the Government for this situation;
- (c) whether Indian private telecom operators spend hardly 15 per cent of their outlay on infrastructure as against 30 per cent in China and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the manner in which the Government intends to bring a turnaround in the situation?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)**

(a) & (b) Telecom Service Providers are installing towers/Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) as per the techno-commercial viability and fulfilling the rollout obligation criteria in the service area, as per the License conditions.

Multiple factors such as inability to install additional BTSs on existing Towers due to loading issues, opposition from local residents due to perceived fear of EMF (Electro-Magnetic Field) radiation, non-availability of suitable structure at various places, inaccessible terrain and transportation difficulties of equipment at various locations, and unwarranted delays in commissioning new sites due to various procedural formalities from local administration/agencies, limit the feasibility of tower installation.

(c) There is no mandatory limit set by Government on spending by private telecom operators on their infrastructure and normally the spending on infrastructure is decided by their business requirement.

(d) In order to address the difficulties being faced by the Telecom Service Providers, Infrastructure Providers and Telecom Companies with various States/ Union Territories and Concerned Central Government Departments/ Agencies in creation of underground and over ground telecom infrastructure on account of multiple right of way related issues and exorbitant charges, the Government of India notified Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules – 2016 in November 2016. These rules govern the Right of Way procedures for setting up towers and laying fibers across the country.
