

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3240
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD MARCH, 2022**

TELECOMMUNICATION TOWERS IN REMOTE AREAS

3240. SHRI GAJANAN KIRTIKAR:
SHRI DHANUSH M. KUMAR:
SHRI GAUTHAM SIGAMANI PON:
SHRIMATI MANJULATA MANDAL:
SHRI SELVAM G.:
SHRI OMPRAKASH BHUPALSINH alias PAWAN RAJENIMBALKAR:
SHRI C.N. ANNADURAI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of villages and remote backward areas in the country where telecommunication towers have been set up during each of the last three years including Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, Telecom company-wise;
- (b) the number of such towers targeted to set up in the rural/backward areas in the next financial year;
- (c) whether the Government has failed to develop telecommunication network in villages/remote areas of the country and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government is formulating any action plan to improve the telecommunication network in such areas and if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be done; and
- (e) the other steps taken/being taken by the Government to improve telecommunication network in villages and remote areas of the country?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Telecom company-wise total number of villages in the country where telecommunication towers/ Base Transceiver Stations (BTSS) have been set up during each of the last three years is attached as **Annexure-1**. Information for the states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu is attached as **Annexure-2**.

(b) The Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) decide their future plan based on their capacity, techno-commercial assessment and other parameters. Government has taken up various schemes to provide mobile services in rural and remote areas of the country by installing towers with the support from USOF. Total 5,321 number of Telecom Towers/ Base Stations have been envisaged under the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) scheme in the coming financial year (2022-23).

(c) to (e) As on December 2020, it is estimated that out of 5,97,618 inhabited census villages in the country (as per Census 2011), 5,72,551 villages are having mobile coverage. The Government through various schemes/projects under USOF is providing telecommunication services in uncovered villages in the country in a phased manner.

These schemes/ projects are (i) Left Wing Extremism (Phase-I & II) projects; (ii) Aspirational Districts scheme; (iii) Commissioning of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable connectivity from Chennai to Andaman & Nicobar Islands; (iv) Scheme for connecting submarine Optical Fibre Cable from Kochi to Lakshadweep Islands; (v) BharatNet (Phase-I & II) projects; (vi) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for mobile connectivity in the North Eastern Region; and (vii) Provision of 4G mobile coverage in uncovered villages and provision of seamless 4G mobile coverage of National Highway-4 (earlier NH-223) in Andaman & Nicobar Islands etc., through which Government is providing mobile and internet services in the rural and remote areas of the country.

DoT has also taken several policy initiatives to facilitate infrastructure growth for improving telecommunication network. These include notifying Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016, permitting trading/sharing/liberalisation of spectrum, permitting passive & active infrastructure sharing among the TSPs, etc. More than 16.75 lakh additional Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) for 2G/3G/4G-LTE services have been added by TSPs from March 2014 onwards across the country.

ANNEXURE-1

TELECOM COMPANY-WISE TOTAL NUMBER OF VILLAGES IN THE COUNTRY WHERE TELECOMMUNICATION TOWERS/ BTSs HAVE BEEN SET UP DURING EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS:

Name of Telecom Company	Number of Census inhabited villages where Telecom Towers/BTSs have been installed in the Country			
	During 2018-19	During 2019-20	During 2020-21	During 2021-22 (till date)
Bharti Airtel Limited	38,414	33,589	38,603	18,995
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited	5,770	3,408	1,608	378
Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited	80,984	36,213	16,417	21,131
Vodafone Idea Limited	18,242	17,803	4,904	2,218

ANNEXURE-2

TELECOM COMPANY-WISE TOTAL NUMBER OF VILLAGES IN THE STATES OF MAHARASHTRA AND TAMIL NADU WHERE TELECOMMUNICATION TOWERS/ BTSs HAVE BEEN SET UP DURING EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS :

Name of Telecom Company	Number of Census inhabited villages where Telecom Towers/BTSs have been installed in the State of Maharashtra			
	During 2018-19	During 2019-20	During 2020-21	During 2021-22 (till date)
Bharti Airtel Limited	484	941	2,750	1,194
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited	1,796	1,633	703	124
Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited	1,424	2,124	1,783	1,766
Vodafone Idea Limited	1,524	1,750	320	290

Name of Telecom Company	Number of Census inhabited villages where Telecom Towers/BTSs have been installed in the State of Tamil Nadu			
	During 2018-19	During 2019-20	During 2020-21	During 2021-22 (till date)
Bharti Airtel Limited	398	154	461	271
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited	5	32	226	7
Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited	5,114	2,411	1,126	895
Vodafone Idea Limited	1,985	821	666	144
