

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1782
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27TH JULY, 2022**

OBJECTIVES OF USOF

1782. DR. TALARI RANGAIAH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the objectives of the Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF);
- (b) whether the Government has not been able to achieve the same objectives of USOF, if so, the details thereof including the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has fixed the accountability for not fulfilling of the said objectives; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the amount spent on USOF, State-wise?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) was established with effect from 01.04.2002 under the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act 2003, as amended from time to time, to provide financial support for the provision of telecom services in commercially unviable rural and remote areas of the country. The scope of USO Fund covers all telecom services including mobile services, broadband connectivity and creation of infrastructure like Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), etc. in rural and remote areas. A number of schemes have been taken up with funding from USOF for expansion of telecom services in rural & remote areas of the country, details of which are given in **Annexure-I**.

USOF projects such as BharatNet, Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas scheme, Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for North Eastern Region (NER) are of mega nature and the sites are widely dispersed across the country in difficult rural and remote areas. Implementation of the projects are in hilly and forest areas, LWE affected areas and getting Right of Way (RoW) and other permissions pose a challenge and require close coordination with various Central and State Government Authorities. All out efforts are made to expeditiously implement the projects.

(c) & (d) The implementation of the USOF schemes is carried out through the Service Providers after entering into contracts, and action is taken as indicated therein for not meeting the stipulated targets. The amount spent on USOF, State-wise, is given in **Annexure-II**.

Annexure referred to in Parts (a) & (b) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question
on 27.07.2022

No. 1782 for answer

A number of schemes have been taken up with funding from USOF for expansion of telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country as given below:

- (i) Under BharatNet project to provide broadband connectivity in all the Gram Panchayats in the country, as on 04.07.2022, total 1,77,550 GPs have been made Service Ready in the country.
- (ii) For provision of mobile services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas, the Phase-I scheme has been completed by installing 2343 towers.
- (iii) For provision of 4G mobile services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas under Phase-II, as of June, a total of 37 towers have been installed.
- (iv) Under Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for mobile connectivity in the North Eastern Region, as of June, a total of 1636 towers have been installed, covering 1663 villages and National Highways.
- (v) Hiring of 20 Gbps International Bandwidth for Internet Connectivity to Agartala from BSCCL, Bangladesh via Cox Bazar has been commissioned.
- (vi) For provision of mobile connectivity in 354 uncovered villages of J&K, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Border area & other priority areas, as of June, a total of 250 towers have been installed, covering 268 villages.
- (vii) For provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 502 uncovered villages of Aspirational Districts in four States (namely Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan), as of June, a total of 69 towers have been installed, covering 86 villages.
- (viii) For provision of 4G mobile connectivity in 7,287 villages of Aspirational District in five States (Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Odisha), agreements have been signed.
- (ix) For provision of 4G Mobile Coverage in 85 uncovered Villages and seamless 4G Mobile coverage of NH223 in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, agreement has been signed.
- (x) For laying of submarine optical fibre cable between Chennai and Andaman & Nicobar Islands, project completed and 200 Gbps Bandwidth available between Chennai to Port Blair while 100 Gbps bandwidth available within Islands.
- (xi) For Submarine OFC Connectivity between Mainland India (Kochi) and Lakshadweep Islands, survey completed.

Annexure-II

Annexure referred to in Parts (c) & (d) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 1782 for answer on 27.07.2022

State/UT- wise details of funds spent/ disbursed by USOF (as on 30.06.2022)

S. No.	States/UT	Figures in Crore
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1085.77
2	Andhra Pradesh	878.21
3	Assam	506.85
4	Bihar	638.50
5	Chhattisgarh	576.17
6	Gujarat	688.54
7	Haryana	194.43
8	Himachal Pradesh	285.03
9	Jammu & Kashmir (including Ladakh)	113.44
10	Jharkhand	672.99
11	Karnataka	690.36
12	Kerala (including Lakshadweep)	766.12
13	Maharashtra	1456.59
14	Madhya Pradesh	883.16
15	NE-I*	260.26
16	NE-II**	363.26
17	Odisha	637.93
18	Punjab	337.59
19	Rajasthan	815.60
20	Tamil Nadu	360.04
21	Telangana	80.62
22	Uttar Pradesh	959.63
23	Uttarakhand	161.75
24	West Bengal (including Sikkim)	269.97
25	Centrally Disbursed /Utilized Funds#	54387.10
	Total	68069.91

#Fund released includes BharatNet as well as other USOF Schemes.

*NE-I includes Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura

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