

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1404
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31ST JULY, 2024**

TELEPHONE EXCHANGES IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

**1404 DR. D RAVI KUMAR:
DR. THIRUMAAVALAVAN THOLKAPPIYAN:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the existing telephone exchanges in urban and rural areas of the country including Tamil Nadu as on date;
- (b) the financial allocation made for the development of telephone exchanges during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) the details of the telephone exchanges which are not functioning as on date, State and location-wise;
- (d) whether lack of telephone exchanges in rural and underdeveloped areas of the country has affected smooth communication network, if so, the details thereof and the corrective steps taken in this regard;
- (e) whether most of the telephone exchanges have not been modernised and upgraded, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the steps taken in this regard; and
- (f) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to ensure smooth functioning of telephone exchanges and upgradation of the existing exchanges with the latest technique?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. PEMMASANI CHANDRA SEKHAR)**

(a) to (c) There are around 7001 telephone exchanges in urban areas and 6424 telephone exchanges in rural areas in the country. Further, in the State of Tamil Nadu, there are around 760 telephone exchanges in urban areas and 223 telephone exchanges in rural areas. It may be noted that current technology allows to serve an area from an exchange located anywhere in the country. Further, as reported by Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), all exchanges are functioning as on date.

The development of telecommunication infrastructure, including exchanges is being done by TSPs as per their private investment and no financial allocation, in this regard, is done by Government.

(d) to (f) The present telecommunication landscape in the country is predominantly having wireless access technology. With advancements in digital communications and networking, modern exchanges are now based on next generation networks to manage voice and data traffic, providing greater flexibility and scalability. TSPs have modernised and upgraded their exchanges accordingly. This has resulted in centralization of exchanges enabling a single digital exchange to handle traffic for an entire State or Union Territory (UT), or even multiple States/UTs. Thus, modern exchanges are capable of serving large areas, thereby obviating the requirement of installing exchanges in remote or rural area to serve them.
