

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2587
TO BE ANSWERED ON 7TH AUGUST, 2024
UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND**

†2587 **SHRI ARUN KUMAR SAGAR:**

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the provision of Universal Service Obligation (USO) fund has been incorporated in the Telecom Policy 1999;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the provision made for depositing percentage of the gross revenue in this Fund has been made for Telecom Operator Companies as per the Telecom Policy by monitoring the extent of percentage;
- (d) whether all the telecom operator companies have deposited their respective amount of gross revenue in the USO Fund as per the rules;
- (e) if so, the details of amount deposited as on date;
- (f) the State-wise details of money spent from the USO fund during the last five years for mobile network in the country particularly in backward and scheduled caste dominated areas along with the achievements thereof; and
- (g) the balance amount of USO fund as on date?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (g) In New Telecom Policy 1999, Government expressed its commitment to provide access to all people for basic telecom services at affordable and reasonable prices under Universal Service Obligation (USO). USO Fund was accordingly established under the Indian Telegraph (Amendment) Act, 2003.

At present, as per the License agreement, the license fee is based on Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) which includes of USO Levy. Telecom Service Providers are depositing the Licence Fee as per license agreement. As on 31.03.2024, total of Rs. 1,62,846.25 Crore has been collected as Universal Access Levy under USO Fund. An amount of Rs. 83,442.26 Crore, which is part of the committed liability against ongoing schemes, is available in the USO Fund as on 31.03.2024.

USO Fund schemes, *inter-alia*, provides mobile network in rural and remote areas including backward and scheduled castes dominated areas. During the last five financial years (2019-20 to 2023-24), total 5,262 towers were installed and an amount of Rs. 8,311 Cr. was spent. The State/UT-wise details of funds spent from USO Fund during the said period is available at the USOF website (<https://usof.gov.in>).
