

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 521
ANSWERED ON 22ND JULY, 2026**

MOBILE CONNECTIVITY IN TRIBAL AREAS OF ODISHA

521. SHRI SAPTAGIRI SANKAR ULAKA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of villages in Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts that still lack reliable 4G/5G mobile connectivity;
- (b) the status of sanctioned telecom towers under the Digital Bharat Nidhi (formerly USOF);
- (c) the reasons for delay in commissioning approved towers;
- (d) whether the Government has identified uncovered Gram Panchayats in Scheduled Areas as priority locations; and
- (e) the timeline for achieving universal mobile broadband coverage in these districts?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) Government, through Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), has approved various mobile connectivity projects to provide 4G mobile services in identified uncovered villages/locations, including the villages of Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur and Rayagada districts of Odisha, which are notified as Scheduled Areas under the Fifth Schedule to the Constitution.

The district-wise 4G coverage status of villages and towers commissioned are as under:

District	Total Villages as per Registrar General of India data (November 2019)	Villages lacking 4G Connectivity	Towers approved	Towers Commissioned (as on 30.06.2026)
Koraput	2,047	116	510	395
Malkangiri	1,036	116	334	225
Nabarangpur	880	11	64	46
Rayagada	2,671	156	793	591
Total	6,634	399	1,701	1,257

Some towers encountered delays due to factors such as non-availability of road access, delay in land allotment, forest, wildlife and Right of Way (RoW) permissions.
