

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:338
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2009
UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND
Reddy Shri Magunta Srinivasulu

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the total corpus of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund as on 31 March, 2009;
- (b) whether the USO Fund has not been fully released to the Department of Telecommunications for expansion of telecommunication network in rural areas;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to utilize the said fund to a greater extent in the telecom sector to boost the telecom infrastructure in rural areas; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 338 FOR 27TH JULY, 2009 REGARDING UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUND.

(a) The total available corpus of the Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund as on March 31, 2009 is Rs. 11,243.88 Crore.

(b) & (c) The requirement of the USO Fund have been met fully as per the details given in the Annexure.

(d) & (e)

A scheme was launched by USO Fund for setting up 7440 number of towers for provision of mobile services in rural and remote areas, where there is no existing mobile coverage. As on 30.06.2009, 5979 towers have been set up and the remaining towers are likely to be commissioned by September 2009.

A scheme for rural wire line broadband connectivity has been launched in January, 2009. This will provide about 28000 public access broadband kiosks and about 9 lakhs individual and institutional broadband connections.

USO Fund is also going to launch schemes for provision of wireless broadband and laying of optical fiber cable in rural areas.