

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1466

ANSWERED ON:14.08.2013

MOBILE SERVICES IN VILLAGES

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

- (a) whether a large number of districts and villages in the country are yet to be provided with mobile connectivity;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the districts/villages covered and those yet covered with mobile connectivity, State-wise;
- (c) the details of mobile subscribers in the country separately in rural and urban areas, State-wise;
- (d) the action plan prepared by the Government to provide mobile connectivity to all villages and the timeframe fixed for the same;
- (e) whether the Government is facing any hurdles in providing telecom infrastructure in rural areas and the delay has resulted in cost escalation; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a) & (b) 56,397 villages in the country are yet to be provided with mobile connectivity as per the survey carried out by the Department of Telecommunications. The Service area-wise details are given in Annexure-I.

(c) The Service area -wise details of rural and urban mobile subscribers in the country are given in Annexure-II.

(d) A scheme is being envisaged to extend financial support from Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund for provisioning of mobile communication services in balance inhabited uncovered villages of the country. USOF has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) on 1st November, 2012 for preparation of mobile network to be used for benchmarking of USOF subsidy. Scheme will be formulated after receiving the report from C-DoT.

(e) & (f) Service Providers, who are implementing USOF funded schemes, have reported difficulties in implementation of schemes due to remote & tough terrain, lack of proper transport infrastructure, poor/no availability of electricity, areas affected by insurgency, natural calamities etc. There have been delays in implementation of schemes due to these difficulties.

The question of delay resulting in cost escalation does not arise as the objective of USOF supported schemes/projects is to provide viability gap funding of commercially unviable projects implemented by licensed service providers in telecom sector. The modality of subsidy support from USOF is such that subsidy disbursable to the agency reduces if there is delay in implementation of the scheme by the agency.