

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:671

ANSWERED ON:07.08.2013

TELECOM SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

Ananth Kumar Shri ;Baitha Shri Kameshwar ;Bhujbal Shri Sameer ;Kaswan Shri Ram Singh;Pandurang Shri Munde  
Gopinathrao;Rana Shri Jagdish Singh;Vijayan Shri A.K.S.

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to give special thrust for expansion of telecom services in rural areas in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) the funds allocated for the purpose during the year 2011-12 and 2012-13, State-wise; and
- (d) the funds collected and disbursed under Universal Service Obligation Funds (USOF), company-wise and State-wise?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) Various Schemes are being implemented with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for expansion of telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country, the details of these schemes are given below:

**1. Creation of General Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) Infrastructure**

a) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN): NOFN is planned to connect all the Gram Panchayats (approx.. 2,50,000) in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibers of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) viz. BSNL, RailTel and Power Grid and laying incremental fiber wherever necessary to bridge the connectivity gap between Gram Panchayats and Blocks, for providing broadband connectivity.

b) Optical Fibre Network Augmentation, Creation and Management of Intra-District SDHQ-DHQ OFC Network in North Eastern Region Scheme has been launched to provide sufficient back-haul capacity to integrate the voice and data traffic from the access network in the rural areas to their core network by strengthening the OFC network.

The scheme considers OFC Network augmentation between the blocks` HQ and Districts` HQ. USOF shall provide subsidy support on the condition that it will be shared with other Telecom Operators at the rates prescribed in the Agreement.

**(i) Scheme for Assam**

This OFC scheme would connect 354 locations in 27 districts. USOF will provide subsidy support of Rs.98.89 Crore.

**(ii) Scheme for North East - I Circle [Meghalaya, Mizoram & Tripura]**

This OFC scheme would connect 188 locations in 19 districts. USOF will provide a subsidy support of Rs.89.50 Crore.

**(iii) Scheme for North East - II Circle [Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur & Nagaland]**

This OFC scheme would connect 407 locations in 30 districts USOF will provide a subsidy support of Rs.298.50 Crore.

**2. Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme**

A scheme has been launched by USO Fund to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing 7,353 infrastructure sites/ towers in 500 districts spread over 27 states for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there was no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. As on 31.05.2013, 7,317 towers i.e. about 99.51% have been set up under this scheme.

**3. Public Access: Village Public Telephones**

As on 31.05.2013, 5,82,147 villages i.e. 98.07% of the Census 2001 inhabited revenue villages have been covered with Village Public Telephones (VPTs). All the remaining villages are to be provided with VPTs with subsidy support from USO Fund by September 2013.

#### 4. Scheme for Mobile Communication Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected Areas

Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has identified and conveyed 2199 locations to DoT in 9 states which are affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) and do not currently have any coverage by any service provider. The scheme has been approved by Government on 04.06.2013 at a total estimated cost of Rs. 3046.12 Crore to be implemented by BSNL on nomination basis.

(c): The State-wise/ Controller of Communication Accounts (CCA)-wise funds allocated for the purpose during the year 2011-12 and 2012-13 are given in Annexure-I.

(d) Information on details of funds collected company-wise & State-wise is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

The details of funds disbursed under USOF, State-wise/CCA-wise and Company wise are given in Annexure-I & Annexure-II respectively.