

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3413
ANSWERED ON:12.02.2014
TELECOM FACILITY UNDER USOF
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of mobile towers and telephone exchanges in the country along with the number of towers and telephone exchanges proposed to be set up, State-wise including Maharashtra;
- (b) the total amount collected and disbursed under the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) during the last three years and the current year, company-wise and State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to change the norms for funding of USOF from the existing adjusted gross revenue;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government has made it mandatory for rolling out telecom services in the rural areas by the telecom operators; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against erring operators?

Answer

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

(a) The total number of mobile towers in the country is approximately 701931 and state wise details are given in Annexure-I. The total number of telephone exchanges working in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) are 36394. The State/Circle-wise details are given in Annexure-II. Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme was launched by Universal Service Obligation (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. Villages or cluster of villages having population of 2000 or more and not having mobile coverage were taken into consideration for installation of the tower under this scheme. 7,317 towers i.e. about 99.51% of towers planned under the scheme have been set up. State-wise details of these towers are given in Annexure-III. All the targeted 956 mobile tower sites of Maharashtra have already been set up.

(b) The funds collected and disbursed under USOF during the last three years and the current year is as under:

Year	Universal Access Levy (UAL) collections (Booked figures as per DoT Accounts) [in Rs. Crore]	Funds allocated and disbursed through USOF [in Rs. Crore]
2010-11	6114.56	3100.00
2011-12	6723.57	1687.96
2012-13	6735.46	625.00
2013-14	3955.03 [till Dec 2013]	1789.36 [till Dec 2013]

Company-wise details of subsidy disbursed by USOF during the last three years and the current year are given in Annexure-IV. Controller of Communication Accounts Office-wise (CCA-wise) details of subsidy disbursed under USOF during the last three years and the current year are given in Annexure-V.

(c) & (d) No, Madam. The present norms for funding of USOF from the adjusted gross revenue of Telecom Licensees meet the requirements, at present.

(e) & (f) With a view to improve mobile phone services in rural areas, Government have made rollout obligations for coverage of at least 30% of block headquarters by 5th year from the effective date of license for coverage of rural areas as part of Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for auction of spectrum to successful bidder. However, the choice of Block Headquarters to be covered and further expansion beyond 30% Block Headquarters shall lie with the licensee depending on their business decision.

Failure to meet the rollout obligations, invite Liquidated Damages as prescribed in license.