

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:56
ANSWERED ON:07.07.2014
TELEPHONE MOBILE SERVICES IN VILLAGES
Mullappally Shri Ramachandran

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

- (a) whether a large number of villages in the country are yet to be connected with mobile/basic telephone services;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of such villages in the country and the reasons therefor, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether there have been delays by private operators as well in launching their mobile services under Shared Infrastructure Scheme of Universal Service Obligation Fund;
- (d) if so, the details thereof including the penalties imposed on these operators for the delay in roll out of services; and
- (e) the action plan of the Government to provide connectivity to technically feasible uncovered villages with basic telephone facility and mobile services?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) Yes, Madam. The state-wise details of villages uncovered by mobile services are at Annexure-I. The number of villages covered by Village Public Telephone (VPT) Scheme, implemented by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) with financial support of Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF), is at Annexure-II.

(c) & (d) Yes, Madam. As on 30.11.2013 i.e. till the closure of the scheme, 7317 towers out of the targeted 7353 towers i.e. about 99.51% have been set up.

An amount of Rs. 2,06,99,934/- towards Liquidated Damages have been recovered from operators for delay in roll out of Mobile services under Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme. Operator-wise details are at Annexure-III.

(e) Various schemes are being implemented with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for expansion of telecom services in rural & remote areas of the country:

(i) 7317 Mobile towers have been installed during the period from June, 2007 to November, 2013, with the financial support of USOF under the Share Mobile Infrastructure. 16,254 BTSs (Base Transceiver Stations) have been commissioned by Service Providers at these towers for provisioning of mobile services.

(ii) Union Cabinet approved a proposal to install mobile towers at 2199 locations identified by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in the States which are affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE), to be funded by USOF. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has been nominated to execute the work.

(iii) In its meeting held on 13.06.2014, the Telecom Commission approved a proposal to implement the Comprehensive Telecom development Plan for North Eastern Region (NER) at an estimated project cost of Rs. 5336.18 Crores.

(iv) In its meeting held on 13.06.2014, the Telecom Commission accorded 'in-principle' approval for a scheme for providing mobile services in uncovered villages with the financial support of USOF.