

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2528
TO BE ANSWERED ON 1ST AUGUST, 2018**

TELECOM SERVICES IN RURAL AND LWE AREAS

2528. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB:
SHRI RAHUL SHEWALE:
SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of villages in rural areas and areas affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in the country which are yet to connect with mobile telephone and internet services, as on date, State/UT-wise;
- (b) the schemes / programmes implemented by the Government to ensure mobile and internet services in each village of the country;
- (c) the funds provided by the Government under the said schemes/programmes during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (d) whether the Government has assessed the impact of such unavailability of mobile telephone and internet services on its Digital India Programme, if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the other steps taken by the Government in this direction?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)**

(a) The number of villages in rural areas which are yet to connect with mobile telephone and internet services, as on 27th July 2018 (based on 2018 survey), are 43,088. State/ Union Territory-wise details are given in **Annexure-I**. It includes 10 States affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE) namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

(b) The Government has planned to cover all uncovered villages in a phased manner utilizing Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF). The Government has prioritized to reach remote areas of the country such as North-Eastern States, Islands, Himalayan States, Western Border States and more importantly the Left Wing Extremism affected areas in the first phase.

The details of schemes/ programmes implemented and under-implementation are as under:

(i) Scheme for LWE affected areas:

In order to provide mobile telephony services in the States affected by Left Wing Extremism (LWE), Phase-I of the project for providing mobile connectivity at 2355 tower locations as identified by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) spread across 10 States as mentioned above in part(a).

It has been implemented through Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) at 2335 locations.

The Government has further approved Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas Phase II scheme to provide mobile services at 4072 MHA identified locations in 10 States under viability gap-funding of Rupees 7330 Crore. Detailed Project Report (DPR) for LWE Phase II scheme is being prepared and 4G technology along with 2G will be deployed for providing both voice & data services. Implementation of project will commence after selection of implementing agencies.

(ii) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for North Eastern Region

- Under this plan, USOF has signed an agreement with BSNL, to install 2817 mobile towers for providing mobile coverage in 4119 uncovered villages of Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam with an estimated cost of Rupees 2258 Crore.
- Agreement has also been signed with M/s Bharti Airtel Limited and M/s Bharti Hexacom Limited to install 2004 mobile towers for providing mobile coverage in 2128 villages and National Highways in rest of NER (except Meghalaya) with an estimated cost of Rupees 1656 Crore.
- On 23.05.2018, the Cabinet has approved revised proposal for provision of mobile services on 2G+4G technology for installation of 2173 mobile towers in 2374 uncovered villages and along National Highways in Meghalaya at an estimated cost of Rupees 3911 Crore.
- Augmentation of Fibre Cable (OFC) network between District Headquarters and Block Headquarters has been implemented by connecting a total of 402 nodes, including 323 in Assam, 05 in Meghalaya, 02 in Mizoram, 37 in Tripura, 07 in Arunachal Pradesh, 10 in Manipur and 18 in Nagaland.

(iii) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Andaman & Nicobar Islands

- Satellite bandwidth augmented by BSNL from 260 Mbps to 1.3 Gbps.
- Provision of 2G & 4G coverage in 172 uncovered villages and 129 km. of National Highway 223 for which tenders have been invited in June 2018.

(iv) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Lakshadweep Islands:

- Satellite bandwidth augmented by BSNL from 102 Mbps to 358 Mbps.
- Augmentation of 2G mobile coverage with EDGE technology by installation of 10 new BTS towers.

(v) Bharat-Net project

- Bharat-net project is being implemented in a phased manner for providing broadband connectivity to about 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country. As on 8th July 2017, optical fiber to about 1.17 lakh GPs has been laid and about 1.13 lakh GPs declared service-ready. Last mile connectivity is also in progress in different States through various agencies.

(vi) Public Wi-Fi hot-spots at 5000 GPs set-up by CSC e-Governance Services India Limited, a Special Purpose Vehicle, under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology. BSNL has also envisaged provision of Wi-Fi hot-spots in 25,000 rural telephone exchanges out of which 4519 have been set-up.

(c) The funds disbursed by USOF against various schemes during the last three years and current year are tabulated in **Annexure-II**.

(d) No.

(e) Steps taken are already covered in (b) above.

Count of villages without mobile services as on 27 July 2018 (based on 2018 survey) in respective States/ Union Territories (UT) is as under:

Sl. No.	State/UT Name	No. of inhabited villages as per census 2011	No. of inhabited villages without mobile services
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	396	165
2.	Andhra Pradesh	16158	2745
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	5258	2215
4.	Assam	25372	915
5.	Bihar	39073	263
6.	Chandigarh	5	0
7.	Chhattisgarh	19567	3563
8.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	65	0
9.	Daman & Diu	19	0
10.	Delhi	103	0
11.	Goa	320	47
12.	Gujarat	17843	1262
13.	Haryana	6642	8
14.	Himachal Pradesh	17882	211
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	6337	328
16.	Jharkhand	29492	1222
17.	Karnataka	27397	869
18.	Kerala	1017	0
19.	Lakshadweep	6	1
20.	Madhya Pradesh	51929	5558
21.	Maharashtra	40959	6117
22.	Manipur	2515	877
23.	Meghalaya	6459	2691
24.	Mizoram	704	314
25.	Nagaland	1400	328
26.	Odisha	47677	9940
27.	Punjab	12168	4
28.	Puducherry	90	0
29.	Rajasthan	43264	1402
30.	Sikkim	425	13
31.	Tamil Nadu	15049	83
32.	Telangana	10128	647
33.	Tripura	863	16
34.	Uttarakhand	15745	552
35.	Uttar Pradesh	97813	295
36.	West Bengal	37478	437
	TOTAL	5,97,618	43,088

Annexure-II

The status of disbursement of subsidy under USOF Schemes is tabulated below:

(Rupees in Crore)

Sl. No.	Activity	Subsidy Disbursed			
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 As on 30.06.18
1.	Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas	617.05	280.68	710.90	61.63
2.	Bharat-Net (previously NOFN)	2415.10	5600.00	6000.00	
3	OFC (NE –I & II)	3.95	27.52		
4	OFC Assam				0.77
5	Satellite Augmentation-Andaman & Nicobar Is	8.10			
6	Satellite Augmentation-Lakshadweep Is		4.65		
7.	Setting up of 25000 public Wi-Fi hotspots at rural block exchanges	0	0	187.50	-
8.	'Wi-Fi Choupal' at 5,000 Gram Panchayats by CSC	0	35.70	68.16	-
