

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1489  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2021**

**MOBILE TOWERS IN FAR-FLUNG AREAS**

1489. SHRI RAJESHBHAI CHUDASAMA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is taking any steps to install mobile towers in every Panchayat of the country to fulfill the demand of digitalization and strengthen the rural banking system ;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has taken any steps to provide mobile towers in those far-flung villages of the country where these towers are not available till now and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the proposed time-line for installing mobile towers in every far-flung villages and each panchayat region of the country?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS  
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) to (d) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on the basis of a survey carried out in 2020, has estimated that around 5,72,551 out of 5,97,618 inhabited census villages of the country already have mobile coverage. 25,067 inhabited villages do not have mobile coverage. The Government through Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) provide Mobile coverage in uncovered villages in the country in a phased manner. Government has prioritized the reach of mobile services in remote areas of the country such as North-Eastern States, Islands, Himalayan States, Western Border States and the Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas in the first phase. In this regard Government has approved the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) supported schemes/projects to provide/facilitate the mobile and broadband services in rural and remote areas across the country. These schemes are as follows:

- (i) Under Left Wing Extremism Phase-I project, provision of mobile connectivity at 2355 towers locations in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal has been implemented by Government of India.
- (ii) Under LWE Phase-II project, installation of 2542 mobile towers has been approved for providing mobile services in these states. The Request for Proposal (RFP) has been floated on 11-03-2021 for 2542 towers.
- (iii) Provision of mobile connectivity in 354 villages of uncovered border areas including J&K, Ladakh has also been approved and the agreement has been signed on 28-04-2020. The roll out period of this scheme is up to Oct, 2021.

- (iv) Aspirational District Scheme for provisioning of 4G based Mobile service in 502 uncovered villages in Aspirational Districts of four states Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh & Rajasthan has been approved on 20-12-2019 and the work has been awarded.
- (v) Two schemes funded from USOF have been approved for provision of 4G mobile services in Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh & two districts of Assam (Karbi Anglong & Dima Hasao) as mentioned below:
  - (a) Installation of 889 mobile towers in 1164 uncovered villages and along National Highways in Meghalaya. The Agreement has been signed on 04.09.2020 and the timeline for completion of the project is 21 months from the signing of Agreement.
  - (b) Installation of 980 mobile towers in 1683 uncovered villages in Arunachal Pradesh and 531 mobile towers in 691 uncovered villages in two districts of Assam (Karbi Anglong & Dima Hasao). RFP has been floated on 04.03.2021 for selection of implementing agency. After evaluation, the tender is under approval of the competent authority for award of work. The timeline for implementation of the project is 18 months after the award of the work.

In addition to above, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has also taken several policy initiatives to facilitate the infrastructure growth for delivery of quality services. These initiatives include trading/sharing/liberalisation of spectrum, sharing passive & active infrastructure, notification of Right of Way Rules 2016 and promoting the use of government land/buildings for installations of mobile towers etc. These initiatives have resulted in addition of around 16.05 lakh Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) for 2G/3G/4G-LTE services by Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) during the period from March, 2014 (6.49 lakh BTS) to 21th July 2021 (22.54 lakh BTS) across the country.

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