

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3442
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD MARCH, 2022**

MOBILE TOWERS IN WEST BENGAL

3442. SHRI SAUMITRA KHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether mobile towers are not available in the remote villages of West Bengal so far, including Bankura district and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the effort made/being made by the Government for having mobile towers installed in remote areas of the State;
- (c) the time frame by which the vision of revolution in communication is likely to be fulfilled in remote villages and the efforts made by the Government in this regard so far; and
- (d) whether any policy framework has been prepared by the Government in this regard and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Sir, as on December 2020, it is estimated that out of 37,478 inhabited census villages in the State of West Bengal (as per Census 2011), 37,470 villages had been provided with the mobile network coverage. All the 3585 villages of Bankura District have been provided with the mobile network coverage.
- (b) to (d) Government of India has made efforts to cover the remaining villages of the country in a phased manner. The Government through various schemes/projects under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is providing mobile and internet services in the rural and remote areas of the country. Under the project in Left Wing Extremism (Phase-I) affected areas, 96 Towers had been commissioned in Bankura, Purulia and West Medinipur districts in the state of West Bengal. Under the Left Wing Extremism (Phase-II) project, 33 towers have been targeted to be installed in Bankura, Birbhum, Jhargram, Purulia and West Medinipur districts in the State. The “354 Uncovered Villages” scheme includes one location in Murshidabad district of the State.

The various schemes/ projects under USOF are (i) Left Wing Extremism affected areas (Phase-I & II) projects; (ii) Aspirational Districts scheme; (iii) Commissioning of Submarine Optical Fibre Cable connectivity from Chennai to Andaman & Nicobar Islands; (iv) Scheme for connecting submarine Optical Fibre Cable from Kochi to Lakshadweep Islands; (v) BharatNet (Phase-I & II) projects; (vi) Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan (CTDP) for mobile connectivity in the North Eastern Region; and (vii) Provision of 4G mobile coverage in uncovered villages and provision of seamless 4G mobile coverage of National Highway-4 (earlier NH-223) in Andaman & Nicobar Islands etc., through which Government is providing mobile and internet services in the rural and remote areas of the country.

DoT has also taken several policy initiatives to facilitate infrastructure growth for improving telecommunication network. These include notifying Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016, permitting trading/sharing/liberalisation of spectrum, permitting passive & active infrastructure sharing among the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), etc. More than 16.75 lakh additional Base Transceiver Stations (BTSS) for 2G/3G/4G-LTE services have been added by TSPs from March 2014 onwards across the country.
