

- (c) the reasons for the same; and
- (d) the details of funds likely to be spent on this scheme, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) to (d) A proposal to utilise the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to subsidise and incentivise phone usage in rural areas by facilitating easy access to mobile phone connections has been mooted but no decision on the proposal has been taken on the suggestions so far.

Improvement of infrastructure

2112. SHRI SHADI LAL BATRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether government envisages a comprehensive plan for improvement of infrastructure for expanding roads, railways, ports, airports, telecom and information technology;
- (b) if so, the constituent details thereof, sectorwise; and
- (c) the allocation made for each constituent infrastructure under the twelfth plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government envisages a comprehensive plan for improvement of infrastructure which will be incorporated in the Twelfth Five Year Plan document.

(c) The allocations would be included in the Twelfth Five Year Plan document which is under formulation.

Decline in infrastructure development

2113. SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that infrastructure development has declined during the last three years;
- (b) whether the lack of adequate infrastructure is a major constraint in our growth; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to increase investment in infrastructure development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING
(SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Inadequate infrastructure is recognised as a major constraint on rapid economic growth. The Eleventh Five Year Plan had, therefore, emphasised the need for massive expansion in investment in infrastructure. The Approach Paper to the Twelfth Five Year Plan has also recognised that we need to continue the pace of investment in infrastructure as this is critical for sustaining and accelerating the growth.

(c) The Government has taken following steps to increase investment in infrastructure:

Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure (CCI)

The CCI was constituted under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister on July 6, 2009. The CCI approves and reviews policies and annual targets and projects across infrastructure sectors.

Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC)

For streamlining and simplifying the appraisal and approval process for Central sector PPP projects, the PPPAC has been constituted under the chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs.

Empowered Committee/Institution (EC/EI)

An institutional framework has been established for appraising and approving PPP projects that require Viability Gap Funding (VGF) grant.

Viability Gap Funding (VGF) Scheme

To enhance the financial viability of competitively bid PPP infrastructure projects which do not pass the standard thresholds of financial returns, VGF grant up to 20 per cent of capital costs is provided by the Central Government to projects undertaken by any Central Ministry, State Government, statutory entity or local body. An additional grant of up to 20 per cent of the project costs can be provided by the sponsoring authority.

India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL)

The IIFCL was set up as a non-banking company for providing long-term loans for financing infrastructure projects that typically involve long gestation periods. The IIFCL lends up to 20 per cent of the project costs.

High Level Committee on Financing Infrastructure

The Government has appointed a High Level Committee on Financing Infrastructure to make a range of recommendations to enable the requisite flow of investment in infrastructure during the Twelfth Five Year Plan. The Committee has set up four key sub-groups on developing capital markets for intermediating long-term savings for investment in infrastructure projects, taxation and debt, foreign capital inflows in infrastructure financing, and flow of equity to infrastructure projects to make recommendations in their respective areas.

Infrastructure Debt Fund (IDF)

India's first Infrastructure Debt Fund (IDF) of US \$ 2 billion has been launched on March 5, 2012. This IDF would be structured as a non-banking finance company with an initial equity share of Rs. 300 crore and is envisaged to expand the availability of debt to infrastructure projects. Further, a few more IDFs are also expected to be launched soon.

Tribals forced to pay for UID cards

2114. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) glitch forces adivasis to pay for free enrolment; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Implementation of SCSP/TSP

2115. DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has taken care to implement the recommendations of the task force accepted by the Planning Commission with respect to Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP);

(b) the details thereof;

(c) which Ministry is satisfied with the Planning Commission recommendation; and