

## **Definition of Universal Service Obligation Fund :-**

As per the Indian Telegraph Act 1885 ( as amended in 2003 and 2006 ) Universal Service Obligation is defined as access to telegraph services to people in rural and remote areas at affordable and reasonable price. Accordingly USOF administers several schemes for bridging the digital divide between rural and urban areas. Details of the schemes being implemented in Madhya Pradesh and CCA's role therein are given below:-

## **Ongoing Agreements under USOF:-**

### **(1) BharatNet (Previously NOFN) :-**

BharatNet is planned to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats in the country with Optical Fibre for providing broadband connectivity in the Gram Panchayats. Non-discriminatory access to the network will be provided to all the telecom service providers so that they can launch various services in rural areas.

CCA MP is the Designated Monitoring Agency (DMA) of the project.

### **(2) Mobile Services in Left Wing Extremist Areas (LWE):-**

USP shall install and commission mobile towers, operate and maintain the mobile service provision under this USOF scheme for providing mobile services at locations identified by Ministry of Home affairs in areas affected by Left Wing Extremism. Mobile services shall be available to the general public as well as security personnel.

There are 22 such mobile towers in Balaghat district of MP state and the role of CCA mp is to monitor the implementation of the project and to disburse OPEX subsidy in accordance with terms and conditions of USOF agreement.

### **(3) 25000 WiFi Hotspots:-**

The objective of the scheme is to set up 25000 public WiFi Hotspots at Rural Telephone Exchanges of BSNL. USP shall provide broadband internet access over WiFi. USOF shall provide financial support as per the Financial Conditions of the Agreement.

There are such 1779 Rural Telephone Exchanges in MP state and the role of CCA MP is to monitor the implementation of USOF projects and to disburse CAPEX and OPEX subsidy.

### **(4) CSC WiFi Chaupal:-**

In this project USP shall set up WiFi Chaupals at 5000 Gram Panchayats (GP) using BharatNet end points at GPs and extending it over a WiFi network to nearby villages. This project aims to create a WiFi coverage zone in GPs and villages so as to cover inhabited areas of the villages.

There are 1316 such WiFi Chaupals in MP region and the role of CCA MP is to physically inspect and monitor the implementation of the project.

### **(5) 200 WiFi Hotspots at Rural Railway Stations Railtel:-**

The objective of the scheme is to setup public WiFi Hotspots at 200 Rural Railway Stations in inhabited areas. This project aims to test the robustness and feasibility and commercial viability of the model being deployed by the USP.

There are 12 such Rural Railway Stations in MP state and the role of CCA MP is to monitor the implementation of the project and to disburse CAPEX and OPEX subsidy in accordance with terms and conditions of USOF agreements.