

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:134
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2005
TELECOM SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS
Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the digital divide between rural and urban areas is increasing day by day;
- (b) if so, the facts thereof and the reasons therefore;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to impose mandatory provision of rural telecom services on the private telecom operators;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to convert BSNL into statutory corporation;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

- (a) & (b) The rural tele-density as on March 1999 was 0.52 as compared to urban tele-density of 2.3. As on 30th September, 2005 the rural tele-density has increased to 1.77 as compared to urban tele-density of 31.25. Telecom service providers are not going for faster roll-out in rural areas mainly because of commercial unviability of providing communication infrastructure in rural areas.
- (c) There is no such proposal as on date.
- (d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.
- (e) No, Sir.
- (f) & (g) Do not arise in view of (e) above.