

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:62

ANSWERED ON:17.02.2006

CONCESSION FOR INSTALLATION OF PHONES IN RURAL AREAS

Masood Shri Rasheed

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

- (a) whether the Government has fixed any target for installing telephones in villages;
- (b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be achieved;
- (c) whether the private companies have asked for any concession for installing telephones in villages;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to establish any Board to do away with the problems regarding rural telephones; and
- (f) if so, the time by which it is likely to be established?

Answer

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

(a) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has signed agreements with M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), M/s Reliance Infocomm Limited (RIL), M/s Tata Teleservices Limited (TTL) and M/s Tata Teleservices Limited, Maharashtra {TTL(MH)} in March 2005 for provision of individual rural household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in the commercially unviable 1685 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in the country. The share of SDCAs amongst M/s BSNL, M/s RIL, M/s TTL and M/s TTL(MH) is 1267, 203, 172 and 43 SDCAs respectively.

(b) As per the Agreement conditions, the Service Provider should provide at least 100 lines per Secondary Switching Area (SSA) within six months. Thereafter all the wait listed subscribers are to be provided with rural telephones within a period of three months in these SDCAs.

(c) & (d) While pointing out the problems faced for provision of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) like non-availability of interconnection, treating Fixed Wireless Telephones (FWTs) as mobile connections etc., private operators have sought extension in time for implementing the roll out period as envisaged in the agreement signed with USOF Administration.

(e) & (f) There is no such proposal at this stage.