

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2240
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2005
FREE TELEPHONE SERVICE TO EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS
Chauri Shri Bapu Hari

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

- (a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has provided free telephone service to the earthquake victims in Jammu & Kashmir;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the number of beneficiaries and the period for which this free service has been offered?

Answer

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b)

(i) 4 free telephones one each at Uri, Tangdhar, Srinagar and Jammu were provided for 15 days for talking to Muzaffarabad (POK). These services were closed on 02-11-2005.

(ii) 6 free local telephones on `95` dialing, 3 each at Uri and Tangdhar have been provided.

(iii) In addition to above, 105 INMARSAT based telephones have also been provided as per the following details:

(1) Army - 65

(2) State Administration - 37

(3) NGO Radha Swamy Satsang Beas - 2

(4) Air Force - 1

c) Approximately 10,000 people of Earthquake affected areas have taken the benefit from BSNL counters. More people have taken benefit of free satellite telephones covered under Para (b)(iii) above, for which data is not maintained by BSNL. 105 INMARSATs and 6 free local phones as mentioned above are still continuing in the affected areas till 30th December, 2005.