

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:198

ANSWERED ON:03.03.2006

RURAL TELEDENSITY

Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Nikhil Kumar Shri

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

- (a) whether any year-wise targets have been set for achieving high teledensity in the rural areas upto 2012;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to achieve the targets?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 198 FOR 3RD MARCH, 2006 REGARDING RURAL TELEDENSITY.

(a) & (b) No, Sir. New Telecom Policy 1999 (NTP-99) has fixed a rural teledensity target of 4.0% by the year 2010.

(c) Following steps are being taken/planned for increasing teledensity in rural areas:-

(i) A non-lapsable Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has been set up to provide support for expansion of telecommunication services in rural and remote areas. Both public and private sector licensees are eligible for such support.

(ii) Provision of rural fixed line individual connections in 1685 commercially unviable short distance charging areas (SDCAs).

(iii) Provision of shared infrastructure for mobile services in rural areas to facilitate speedy penetration of mobile services in rural areas.

(iv) A number of initiatives have been taken by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to increase rural teledensity including planning of large-scale deployment of WLL network in rural areas, relaxation of the distance for laying outdoor cables from 2.5 Km to 5.0 Km for Landline exchanges to facilitate larger coverage from the existing exchanges and deploying its mobile network in all the highways, important towns, pilgrim centres and State highways to give incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

(v) In addition to the efforts made by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), the private operators are also offering their services to meet the rural demand for telephones.

(vi) Village Public Telephones(VPTs) have been provided in 5,37,236 villages. 49,640 remaining uncovered villages which have more than 100 population and are not lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infected areas etc. will be provided with VPTs by November,2007.