

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3240

ANSWERED ON:14.12.2005

DILUTION OF TELECOM POLICY

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji; Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba; Singh Shri Chandra Bhushan; Verma Shri Ravi Prakash

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

- (a) whether the provision of phones in villages has suffered because of the dilution of the telecom policy;
- (b) if so, the facts thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is unable to persuade private companies to provide connectivity to rural India;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Private Operators have not done much to provide connectivity to rural India;
- (f) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (g) whether the Government proposes to fix quota on each private player to provide connectivity in rural areas;
- (h) if so, the details thereof; and (i) if not, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (f) Licence granted to six private Basic Service Operators in 1997-98 stipulated a condition of providing 97806 Village Public Telephones within first three years of effective date of licence. The private basic operators failed to fulfill their commitments and liquidated damages of Rs. 53.75 crores were recovered for delay in commencement of service and non-provisioning of Direct Exchange Lines and Village Public Telephones. Consequent to announcement of Unified Access Service Licence regime in November, 2003, all private Basic Operators migrated to Unified Access Service Licence regime after payment of prescribed entry fee equivalent to 4th cellular service licence and accordingly, the roll out obligations were changed equivalent to that of 4th cellular service licence i.e. coverage of 50% of District Headquarters or any other town in a District in lieu of the District Headquarters within three years. At present, there is no mandatory roll out obligations for private operators in rural areas.

(g) No such proposal is under consideration.

(h) Does not arise in view of (g) above.

(i) Universal Service Obligation Fund has been set up w.e.f. 01-04-2002 to provide access to basic telegraph services to people in rural and remote areas at affordable and reasonable price.