GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1480
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2006
UTILISATION OF FUNDS FOR RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji

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

(a) whether the funds provided by the Government for telecommunication services in rural areas have not been utilized and the work undertaken in this regard is also not satisfactory;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the details of rural areas in the country particularly in Maharashtra which have not been provided with telecom facilities;

(d) whether the Government has undertaken any review of the work done in this regard; and

(e) if so, the outcome thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) No, Sir. The Universal Service Support Policy came into effect from 1-4-2002. Provisions relating to Universal Service Obligation (USO) were incorporated in Indian Telegraph Act in January, 2004. As per the provisions in Indian Telegraph Act, USO Levy Collections are credited in to Consolidated Fund of India. Allocations to USO Fund are made through Budgetary process. Allocations made to USO fund have been further utilised in all the years since its inception. The year-wise amount allocated and disbursed is as under:

Year	Amount (Rs. in Crore) Allocated	Utilised
2002-03	300	300
2003-04	200	200
2004-05	1,314.58	1314.58
2005-06 (upto 15.02.06	1,750	1401.2

(c) to (e) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones in 66,822 unconnected villages, having more than 100 population and not lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas. Out of these villages, 17,182 villagaes have already been provided with VPTs as on 31-12-2005 and the balance 49,640 villages will be provided with VPTs progressively by November, 2007. 4,252 villages in Maharashtra remain to be provided with telecom facilities.

A statement indicating state-wise number of eligible villages which remain to be provided with telephone facilities is given in the Annexure.

ANNEXURE

STATE-WISE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VILLAGES TO BE PROVIDED WITH TELEPHONE FACILITIES AS ON 31-12-2005

Sl.No	Name of the Service Area	No. of Villages to be provided with VPT
1	Andhra Pradesh	837
2	Assam	6,565
3	Jharkhand	1,664
4	Gujarat	2,179
5	Himachal Pradesh	768

6	Jammu & Kashmir	1,533
7	Madhya Pradesh	7,492
8	Chhattisgarh	4,151
9	Maharashtra	4,252
10	Nortrh East-I	2,051
11	North East-II	1,520
12	Orissa	4,899
13	Rajasthan	8,054
14	Uttaranchal	3,675
Total		49,640