

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2289
ANSWERED ON:10.03.2006
UNIVERSAL SERVICE OBLIGATION FUNDS
Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai

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

- (a) whether telephone services to rural India have been badly hit due to delay in releasing the funds under Universal Services Obligation Fund;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the time by which the funds are likely to be released;
- (d) whether the Government has received any proposals from the States Governments for State Wide Area Network; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government on such proposals?

Answer

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

(a) No, Sir.

(b) & (c) The Universal Service Support Policy came into effect from 01-04-2002. 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 into Consolidated Fund of India. Allocations to USO Fund are made through Budgetary process. Allocations made to USO Fund have been fully utilized in all the years since its inception. The year-wise amount allocated and disbursed is as under:

Year	Amount Allocated	(Rs. in crore)	Disbursed
2002-03	300		300
2003-04	200		200
2004-05	1,314.58		1,314.58
2005-06	1,750		1,401.2
(Upto 15-02-2006)			

The balance amount of Rs. 348.98 crore will be utilized by 31.03.2006.

(d) & (e) Department of Information Technology has received 25 proposals for State-Wide Area Network from 25 State Governments/Union Territories. Government has so far approved 20 proposals out of the 25 above.