

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3999
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2006
COMMUNICATION NETWORK IN VILLAGES
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government's initiative to connect all villages in the country with a robust communication network has been successful;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has sought help of PSUs for the effective implementation of the initiative; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the target date by which all the villages are likely to be connected with communication network?

Answer

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

(a) to (d) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is supporting the provision of telecom facilities in the rural areas of the country for development of robust communication network in the country. USOF has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Private Service Providers for provision of following communication services in rural areas:-

(i) Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) by November 2007 in all the remaining 66,822 unconnected eligible villages, out of a total of 6.07 lakh villages, as on November 2004. This excludes villages having less than 100 population, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. Out of these villages, 24687 eligible villages have been provided with VPT facilities as on 31.03.2006.

(ii) Provision of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) in 46,253 villages with population more than 2,000 and where there are no Public Call Offices (PCOs). Of these villages 25,302 have been provided with RCPs as on 31.03.2006 and the remaining are likely to be provided with RCPs by September, 2007.

(iii) Replacement of 1,86,872 Multi-Access Radio Relay (MARR) based VPTs. Out of these, 1,49,715 MARR based VPTs have so far been replaced as on 31.03.2006 and the remaining such VPTs are likely to be replaced by June, 2006.

(iv) Provision of Rural Individual Phone Connections (RDELs) on demand in 1,685 commercially unviable Sort Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs). 4,05,622 RDELs have been provided as on 31.03.2006.