

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:160
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2006
TELEPHONE SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS .
Rathod Shri Harisingh Nasaru

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

- (a) Whether private service providers are not interested to extend their telephone services in rural areas;
- (b) If so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) Whether the Government proposes to make it mandatory for all service providers to extend their services in such areas; and
- (d) If so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN)

(a) to (d): 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 (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 160 FOR 2ND AUGUST, 2006 REGARDING TELEPHONE SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS.

(a) & (b) The private sector telecom service providers are generally focusing more on urban areas because of higher revenue per line in urban areas compared to that in rural areas. Higher economic and literacy status as well as easier availability of supporting infrastructure in the urban areas are also contributing factors.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Following steps have been taken by the Government to improve telecom services in rural areas:-

(i) Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in all the remaining uncovered eligible villages, excluding villages having less than 100 population, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc.

(ii) Provision of Rural Community Phones (RCPs) with population more than 2000 and where there are no Public Call Offices (PCOs)

(iii) Replacement of Multi-Access Radio Relay (MARR) VPTs.

(iv) Provision of Rural Individual Phone Connections (RDELs) on demand in 1685 commercially unviable Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs), through subsidy from Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund.

(v) Large scale deployment of Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) network in rural areas by BSNL.

(vi) Relaxation of the outdoor cable norms to 5 Kms as against the earlier norm of 2.5 Kms for landline exchanges by BSNL

(vii) BSNL has planned extensive infrastructure rollout which will provide mobile coverage.