

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1065
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2007
TELEPHONE SERVICES IN VILLAGES
Pallani Shamy Shri K.C .

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

- (a) the number of villages covered by fixed/mobile telephone services in the country, State-wise;
- (b) the number of villages yet to be covered or in the process of covering by any of the telephone service, State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to link all the villages in the country by fixed/mobile telephone services?

Answer

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

- (a) Department does not maintain segregated data in respect of mobile services in the villages of the country. A Statement indicating the State-wise number of villages covered by fixed telephone services in the country is given in Annexure-I.
- (b) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in the remaining 66,822 unconnected villages in the country. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. Out of these, 39,741 villages have already been provided with VPTs by BSNL as on 31st January 2007. The remaining 27,081 villages will be provided VPTs progressively by November 2007. A Statement indicating the State-wise number of villages remains to be covered is given in Annexure-II.
- (c) Following steps have been taken by the Government to link-villages in the country by fixed/mobile telephone services
 - (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 Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) on demand in 1685 commercially unviable short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs).
 - (v) Government is in the process of launching a scheme to provide for setting up and managing infrastructure sites for provision of mobile services including other wireless services like Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) using Fixed/Mobile Terminals in the specified rural and remote areas of the country, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage.