

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1098
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2007
VILLAGE PUBLIC TELEPHONES
Sonowal Shri Sarbananda

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

- (a) whether as against the target of providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 uncovered villages under the programme, only 30,251 villages have been provided VPTs as on August 31, 2006;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the target of providing VPTs to villages of Assam region has been achieved; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Universal Services 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 remaining 66,822 unconnected villages in the country by November, 2007. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest area/naxalite infested areas. The roll out period for provision of VPTs under this agreement has been prescribed as 20%, 40% and 40% respectively in a phased manner for a period of 3 years. 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.

(c) & (d) 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 remaining 8,931 unconnected villages in the State of Assam by November 2007. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest area/naxalite infested areas.

Out of these, 7,882 villages have already been provided with VPTs by BSNL as on 31st January 2007. The remaining 1,049 villages will be provided VPTs progressively by November 2007.