

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3439
ANSWERED ON:22.12.2004
COMMUNITY TELEPHONE FOR URBAN SLUMS
Swain Shri Hari Har

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the poor residents of the urban slums are equally in need of Community Telephone similar to Village Public Telephone;
- (b) if so, whether any steps have been taken in this regard by making its conditional/mandatory on telecom service providers to provide the same under the Universal Service Obligation;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether this option is available to all telecom service providers to provide such services in urban areas (slums) on the lines of VPT under USO; and
- (e) if so, the time by when this scheme is likely to be implemented?

Answer

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

- (a) In rural areas Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in most cases are the only source of communication for the entire village. In urban areas Public Call Offices (PCOs) are present in most of the areas. These facilities serve the need for Community Telephone.
- (b) Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund is meant for providing access to basic Telegraph/Telecom Services to people in the rural and remote areas and does not cover urban slums.
- (c) to (e) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.