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Title: Need to restore concessional tariff to rural landline telephone subscribers in Dakshina Kannada Telecom district.- Laid.

SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (UDUPI) : Landline subscribers have been the mainstay of Telecom Department's services but the Department has been neglecting landline subscribers in preference to cellular/WLL subscribers.

The Telecom Department has arbitrarily withdrawn the concessional tariff to many rural subscribers by converting their status as 'Urban' solely on the basis of 2001-Census figures. But the respective State Governments still consider these pockets as 'rural' and still retain them in the revenue records as 'rural' habitants. Many such rural exchanges, falling under Dakshina Kannada telecom district, hitherto enjoying 'rural' status and concessional rental tariff, have now been shifted to 'Urban' classification with urban slab to rentals. These subscribers are engaged in vocations like marginal farming, beedi rolling and other rural enterprises. I urge the Government to reconsider its decision and restore the 'rural' status for them.

I would also urge the Government to enhance the commission rate for PCO Booth operators, who are mostly from the weaker sections of the society as their families are solely dependent on the earnings of commission from PCO booth operations.