

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:488
ANSWERED ON:28.02.2000
VILLAGE PUBLIC TELEPHONES
RAM SHAKAL;VSM (RETD.) COL. CHOUDHARY

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has taken a decision to formulate a policy for the expansion of telephone system in the rural areas of the country so as to make it easily accessible to all;
- (b) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard;
- (c) the extent to which it will be helpful in expanding the rural telephone network in the country;
- (d) the number of VPTs planned and installed in the Western Rajasthan especially, Thar, Barmer and Jaisalmer districts during 1999-2000, district-wise;
- (e) whether about 70 percent rural telephones in Barmer and Jaisalmer districts are not functioning satisfactorily due to poor maintenance and quality; and
- (f) if so, the steps taken by taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS (TAPAN SIKDAR)

(a) No Sir, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has not formulated any such policy for Village Public Telephones.

(b) & (c): Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(a) A Private Basic Service Provider is to provide VPTs in the remaining villages in Rajasthan. There is no target for DTS for 1999-2000. However, it has provided 207 VPTs so far including one in Western Rajasthan i.e. Jaisalmer District. No VPT has been provided in Barmer Distt.

(b) No Sir, Fault rate of Barmer and Jaisalmer is 7% and 9% respectively.

(c) No applicable in view of (e) above. However, for further improving the performance of MARR VPTs, department has entered into Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) with the suppliers of MARR systems. Over head lines replacement is being done by Under Ground Cable for better performance and reliability. Optical Fibre Cable is being provided for connectivity to rural exchanges.