

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2301

ANSWERED ON:10.03.2006

VILLAGE PUBLIC TELEPHONE SCHEME

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Athawale Shri Ramdas;Jogi Shri Ajit;Sugavanam Shri E.G.

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

- (a) whether the Village-Public-Telephone-Scheme has proved a failure;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has not achieved the targets for the sector during the first three years of the current plan;
- (d) if so, the reasons for not achieving the targets; and
- (e) the concrete measures taken to achieve the target during the remaining period of Tenth Five Year Plan and to improve the rural telephone services?

**Answer**

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

(a) No, Sir.

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

(c) & (d) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 to provide Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 remaining unconnected villages by November, 2007. This excludes villages having less than 100 population and lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. Against a target of 13,364 VPTs by November, 2005, a total of 17,182 VPTs have been provided as of December, 2005.

(e) As on 31.12.2005, 49,640 unconnected eligible villages remain to be provided with VPTs. Adequate Budgetary provision is being made and the scheme is being closely monitored, so as to ensure that the unconnected villages identified are provided with a Village Public Telephone (VPT) by the targeted date of November, 2007.