

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2696

ANSWERED ON:17.03.2006

TELECOM SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS

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

- (a) whether the communication facilities in the rural areas of the country are hampered due to frequent breakdown in landline and mobile telephone connections of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken or being taken by the Government for providing better telephone and mobile services in rural areas of the country;
- (d) whether the Government has assessed the advantage being taken by the private mobile companies of the poor communication network of BSNL; and
- (e) if so, the effective steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) No, Sir. However, faults occur due to variety of reasons such as power failure, cutting of cables and natural causes like heavy rains etc. Efforts are made to restore them at the earliest.

(c) Improvement of telecom services in the rural areas is a continuous effort by BSNL and other service providers. Some of the steps taken by BSNL are:-

(i) Upgradation of transmission media, external plant, power plant, batteries and rural exchanges and their expansion.

(ii) Provision of maintenance battery sets and engine alternators for back up power supplies.

(iii) Provision of high capacity external maintenance batteries with Fixed WLL Terminals (FWTs) for providing larger talk time and standby time.

(iv) More Base Transceiver stations (BTS) to enhance the coverage of WLL system.

(v) Continuously augmenting and optimizing the Mobile Network.

(vi) A Proposal is under consideration to provide support for shareable infrastructure to the eligible service providers and infrastructure service providers for cellular mobile services in rural and remote areas.

(e) No, Sir. The growth of mobile services of BSNL in the rural areas is favourable when compared with the private sector. BSNL is continuously expanding its network and coverage. BSNL also provides attractive tariff plans.

(e) Does not arise in view of above.