

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:131  
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2005  
INTERNET TELECOM CONNECTIVITY IN RURAL AREAS  
Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed

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

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- (a) whether the rural economy is set to go hi-tech as a result of internet and telecom connectivity;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to set up a Village Knowledge Centre based on broadband internet connectivity in all the Villages of the country during 2007;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government also proposes to set up one lakh Common Service Centres with broadband connectivity in the remote villages by 2007;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the extent to which both Centre and States are making efforts to implement this project?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY{DR.SHAKEEL AHMAD)

- (a): Internet & Telecom connectivity would benefit the overall economy of the country including the rural economy.
- (b & c): In the Union Budget for the year 2005-06, Government made a provision of Rs.100 Crores out of the RIDF (Rural Infrastructure Development Fund) routed through NABARD (National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development) to support project proposals for setting up of the Knowledge Centres in Villages through Mission 2007 - a national initiative launched by an alliance comprising over 100 organisations including civil society organizations.
- (d,e & f): Department of Information Technology is working on a Plan to establish 100,000 Information & Communication Technology (ICT) enabled Common Services Centres (CSCs) predominantly in the rural areas across the country by the year 2007. Such Centres would have the flexibility to offer a mix of services (both Government and non-Government including localized services) that may be needed by the local community. These CSCs would be promoted on a sustainable entrepreneur - based model supported by the Central and State Governments.