

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2147  
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2006  
FUNCTIONING OF PCOs  
Athawale Shri Ramdas

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

- (a) the number of PCOs functioning as on date, State-wise;
- (b) whether PCOs have been closed in the States during the last three years;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether PCOs installed at public places and railway stations are not functioning properly/satisfactorily;
- (e) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Union Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) The data of Public Call Officers (PCOs) excluding Village Public Telephones (VPTs) is maintained Circle-wise and not State-wise by BSNL/MTNL. Number of PCOs functioning in all the circles as on 31.10.2006 is given in Annexure.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The details of PCOs closed during last three years are given in Annexure.

There are various reasons of closure of PCOs. Some of the reasons are

- (i) franchisees are getting some other employment,
- (ii) franchisees are shifting to some other cities,
- (iii) death of franchisee,
- (iv) closure due to non-payment,
- (v) churning to other operators,
- (vi) reduction in STD/ISD tariff, etc.

(d) & (e) All efforts are made to ensure that PCOs installed at public places and Railway Station function properly. However, sometimes few PCOs remain out-of-order due to the reasons beyond the control of BSNL/MTNL such as vandalism, theft/damage of instrument by unscrupulous elements, damage to under ground cables/Drop-wire, etc.

(f) The steps taken for proper and satisfactory functioning of PCOs at Railway Stations/other public places by BSNL/MTNL are installation of new CCB PCO instrument in case of theft, replacement in case of damage, priority in repair in case of instrument fault, early repair of cable in case of cable fault, creation of pole less network (to reduce drop wire fault), periodic check up, etc.