

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5323
ANSWERED ON:05.05.2008
GRANADA PHONE SCHEME
Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed

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

- (a) whether Reliance Communications has proposed to announce the Gramada Phone Scheme in Karnataka;
- (b) if so, whether this programme runs under the guidelines of Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund, stipulated by the Department of Telecommunications;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether a total of 90 lakh people living in over 10,000 villages in part of Kodagu, Mandya, Tumkur, Hassan, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur, Kolar, Chhikkaballapur, Udupi, and Dakshina Kannada districts are covered in this scheme;
- (e) if so, the main features of the scheme;
- (f) the time by which it is likely to be introduced; and
- (g) the manner in which it will be helpful to those areas?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M.SCINDIA)

- (a) to (b) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into an agreement in March, 2005 with M/s Reliance Communications Limited (RCL), and other service providers for installation of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) including in Karnataka.
- (c) A total of 180 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in Karnataka have been identified for installation for RDELs under USOF scheme. Out of these 43 SDCAs are being allocated to M/s RCL for installation of RDELs.
- (d) The people living in villages in part of Secondary Switching Area/SDCA of Kodagu, Mandya, Tumkur, Hassan, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur, Kolar, Chikkaballapur and Dakshina Kannada are covered in this scheme.
- (e) & (f) These RDELs will be provided in commercially unviable areas as per census 2001 at the tariff prescribed in the agreement entered between USOF and M/s RCL. USOF provides support in the form of front loaded subsidy for the RDELs installed between 01.04.2005 and 31.03.2009. The equated annual subsidy where payable shall be given upto a maximum period of validity of the agreement which will expire in March, 2010.
- (g) The scheme has already been introduced with effect from 01.04.2005. M/s RCL has so far provided 1,28,288 RDELs in its 43 allocated SDCAs in the rural areas of Karnataka during the period from 01.04.2005 to 31.03.2007.