

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:304
ANSWERED ON:20.10.2008
MOBILE TOWERS
Kaushal Shri Raghuvir Singh

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

- (a) the comparative figures of the GSM mobile service towers of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and the private mobile service operators in the rural areas of the country including Rajasthan, Secondly Switching Area (SSA-wise);
- (b) the reasons BSNL is lagging behind the private telecom companies in rural areas in terms of the number of towers and the number of subscribers;
- (c) whether there is any plan to expand the network of the BSNL in the rural areas; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

a) Sir, the comparative figure of Rural Base Transceiver Station (BTS) as on 31.3.08 for the country as a whole is as follows:

Name of GSM Service Provider No. of Rural BTS

BSNL 15140

Airtel 37363

Aircel 3153

Idea 12003

Vodafone 24178

Spice 1141

However, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. [BSNL] has provided 18572 GSM mobile towers in the rural areas of the country, including 1683 towers in the state of Rajasthan as on 30.9.2008. Secondary Switching Area [SSA-wise] details in respect of BSNL are enclosed as Annexure-I.

b) BSNL is lagging behind a few private telecom companies in rural areas in terms of the numbers of towers and the number of subscribers mainly due to lack of network capacities and delay in procurement of the equipments during the last two financial years. The number of Wireless Rural Subscribers of different service providers including BSNL as on 31.8.08 is given in Annexure-II.

(c)&(d) Yes Sir. BSNL plans to expand the Mobile services coverage to the villages having population more than 1000 progressively in next three years. BSNL has made tentatively plan for provisioning of 33,07,764 Mobile connections in its area of operation in the rural areas during the current financial year. 1,11,29,621 Mobile connections are working in rural areas of BSNL's network and 2,68,947 villages have already been covered with mobile services as on 31.08.2008.