

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:149

ANSWERED ON:08.03.2010

TELE -DENSITY

Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether the Telecom Policy 1999 envisages provision of telecom services in all the villages and fixed a target of four per cent teledensity in the rural areas by 2010;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the allocation of funds and the expenditure incurred for the purpose and the break up of tele-density achieved so far in the urban and rural areas in the country, circle-wise
- (d) whether some parts of the rural and remote hilly areas do not have access to telephone services; and
- (e) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government for giving special emphasis on improving rural tele-density in the country?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA.)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 149 FOR 8TH MARCH, 2010 REGARDING "TELE-DENSITY".

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) New Telecom Policy 1999 (NTP-99) inter-alia provides for:-

# Make available telephone on demand by the year 2002 and sustain it thereafter so as to achieve a teledensity of 7 by the year 2005 and 15 by the year 2010.

# Increase rural teledensity from the current level of 0.4 to 4 by the year 2010.

# Achieve telecom coverage of all villages in the country and provide reliable media to all exchanges by the year 2002.

(c) A statement indicating the allocation of funds and expenditure incurred by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in rural areas from 2002-03 to December 2009 is given in Annexure-I. In addition, Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is also providing subsidy support to various service providers including BSNL for provision of telecom facilities in rural areas of the country. A statement indicating the allocation of funds and disbursement of subsidy support since 2002-03 is given in Annexure-II.

A statement indicating Circle-wise break-up of teledensity achieved in the urban and rural areas in the country as on 31.12.2009 is given in Annexure-III.

(d) & (e) Some parts of the rural and remote hilly areas do not have access to telephone services for the reasons given below:-

\$ Scattered and isolated villages not connected by roads including difficult and hilly terrain.

\$ Law and order problem in disturbed and insurgency affected areas.

Out of total 5,93,601 inhabited villages in the country as per Census 2001, Village Public Telephone (VPT) facility has been provided in 5,67,658 villages. The remaining uncovered inhabited villages including those lying in remote and hilly areas will be covered by VPT facility progressively by February, 2011. Further, against the envisaged target of 4% teledensity in rural areas by 2010 under NTP-99, the present teledensity is 21.99% as on 31.12.2009.

Government is taking following steps for improving rural teledensity in the country:-

(i) Subsidy support is being provided by USOF for installation of Individual Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in 1,685 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in the country, where cost of providing telephones is more than the revenue earned. As on 31.01.2010, about 72.3 lakh RDELs have been provided in the country.

(ii) Subsidy support is also being extended by USOF for setting up of 7,387 Shareable Infrastructure Sites in the country for provision of mobile services in rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. Out of these, 7020 towers in the country have been set up under this scheme as on January, 2010.

(iii) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has planned to add 8.99 million Global System for Mobile (GSM) connections during the year 2010-11 in rural areas. In addition, BSNL has also planned to cover the villages having population more than 1000 with GSM coverage progressively in next 3 years subject to techno commercial viability.