

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2406  
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2010  
TELE-DENSITY IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS  
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has any proposal to bring the rural telephone density at par with that prevailing in cities;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the tele-density of urban and rural areas, Stae-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to bridge the gap between urban and rural tele-density in the country?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT)

(a) & (b) Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12), inter-alia, provides for achieving a target of 200 million rural connections by 2012 and a rural tele-density of 25% in the country. Government has also envisaged to attain a rural tele-density of 40% by 2014. As on 30.06.2010, about 219.18 million rural connections have been provided and a rural tele-density of 26.47% has been achieved. A statement indicating State-wise status of rural and urban tele-density is given in the Annexure.

(c) The steps taken / being taken by the Government to bridge the gap between urban and rural tele-density in the country are given below:-

(i) Subsidy support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for setting up of 7387 shareable towers in 500 districts spread over 27 States for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas including the hilly areas of the country, where there was no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. As on 30.06.2010, 7183 towers have already been provided under this scheme.

(ii) Subsidy support from USOF for installation of Individual Rural Direct Exchange (RDELs) in 1685 Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs) in the country, where cost of providing telephones is more than the revenue earned. The cut off date for installation of these RDELs expired on 31.03.2010. As on 31.03.2010, 79.3 lakh RDELs have been provided under this scheme.

Besides, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is also taking following steps to increase the tele-density in rural areas:-

(i) For financial year 2010-11 BSNL plan to give 20 million GSM connections, 7.5 million Broadband connections in which significant percentage will be provisioned in rural areas.

(ii) Presently 3,80,950 villages are covered with GSM service. BSNL has planned to cover the villages having population more than 1000 (as per census 2001) progressively in next three years subject to techno commercial viability.

(iii) BSNL has deployed Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) network in rural areas to meet the demand of scattered and far-flung rural areas where connection of telephone is not techno-commercially feasible on landline.