

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2167

ANSWERED ON:07.12.2011

TELE-DENSITY IN THE COUNTRY

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

- (a) the number of telephone users in the country separately for Mobile and Landlines, State-wise and operator-wise;
- (b) the comparative details of telephone connections in rural and urban areas in the country, State-wise and operator-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has envisaged to attain 40 per cent tele-density by 2014 in rural areas and has achieved the targeted tele-density during the current Five Year Plan;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has raised its concerns over the low tele-density in rural areas;
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (g) the target fixed and the action plan proposed in the National Telecom Policy, 2011 for achieving rural tele-density?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

(SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a) The service area-wise and operator-wise details of number of telephone connections in the country separately for Mobile and Landlines, as on 30.09.2011, are given in the Annexure-I.

(b) The service area-wise and operator-wise details of number of telephone connections in the country separately for rural and urban areas, as on 30.09.2011, are given in the Annexure-II.

(c)&(d) A target to achieve rural tele-density of 25 % was set in the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) which was achieved in May 2010. No separate targets were set for overall tele-density and urban tele-density. As on 30.09.2011, the overall tele-density of the country is 75.48 % with urban and rural tele-density being 165.62 % and 36.44 % respectively.

(e)&(f) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in its recommendations dated 11th May 2010 on 'Spectrum Management and Licensing Framework' has raised concern about low rural tele-density. TRAI has suggested to replace existing roll-out obligations for coverage of villages of different category of population. The Government is taking following steps to increase the tele-density in rural areas of the country:

1. To meet the demand of wire line telephones in rural areas, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is now laying cable up to 5 Kms. of exchange against the earlier standard of 2.5 Kms. based on demand and techno-commercial consideration.
2. 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 landlines.
3. BSNL has deployed its mobile network on national highways, important towns, pilgrim centres and state highways.
4. As on 30.09.2011, about 5,79,714 villages i.e. 97.66% of the Census 2001 inhabited revenue villages have been covered with Village Public Telephones (VPTs). VPTs are being provided in remaining inhabited revenue villages under ongoing Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) schemes.
5. A scheme has been launched by USO Fund to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing 7353 number of infrastructure sites/ towers (revised from 7871) in 500 districts spread over 27 states, for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there was no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. As on 30.09.2011, 7289 towers i.e. about 99.13% towers have been set up under this scheme. The infrastructure so created is being shared by three service providers for provision of

mobile services. As on 31.08.2011, 15309 BTSs (Base Transceiver Stations) have been commissioned by Service Providers and mobile services are being provided.

(g) The draft of the National Telecom Policy-2011 (NTP-2011) has been put on the web-site of the Department of Telecommunication for wider public consultation. One of the objectives of the draft NTP-2011 is to increase rural tele-density to 60 % by the year 2017 and 100 % by the year 2020.