

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:552  
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2009  
UNUTILISATION OF FUNDS  
Chavan Shri Harischandra Deoram

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

- (a) whether the funds allocated by the Government in Telecom Sector in rural areas of the country has not been utilised and the work started in this regard has not been satisfactory;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) the details of such rural areas in the country including Maharashtra where telecommunication facilities has not been provided;
- (d) whether any review has been made by the Government in this regard; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT)

(a) & (b) The funds allocated by the Government to Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for providing access to telecom services in rural and remote area of the country are being utilized. Although there have been delays in the implementation of USOF schemes they have resulted in significant achievement in the provision of telecom facilities in rural and remote areas of the country.

(c) As on 31.10.2009, about 5.6 lakh inhabited villages, which constitutes 94.7% villages in the country, have been provided with Village Public Telephones (VPTs) and 95.5% of the total villages in Maharashtra have been provided with this facility.

For the provision of mobile services in rural and remote areas phase I of the Shared Mobile Tower Scheme has been implemented. Under this scheme, as on 31.10.2009, 6648 towers which constitute 89.4% of the total targeted towers have been set up in the country while 94.4% of their total targeted towers have been set up in Maharashtra.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Government is providing VPT facility in the remaining uncovered villages, as per Census 2001, in the country with the subsidy support of Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). The remaining uncovered villages in the country will be provided with VPT facility in a phased manner by February, 2011.

Shared Mobile Tower Scheme phase-II is proposed to be implemented to cover the remaining remote & rural areas in the country for mobile services.