

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:247
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2009
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 rural tele-density is extremely low as compared to the urban tele-density in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the tele-density of rural and urban area during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the tele-density level in India is very low as compared to the world level;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to remove the disparity of the tele-density between the rural and urban areas 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. 247 FOR 7TH DECEMBER, 2009 REGARDING "TELE-DENSITY IN URBAN AND RURAL AREAS".

(a) & (b) The rural tele-density in the country is 18.97% as compared to urban tele-density of 101.38 %, as on 30.09.2009. The Circle-wise rural and urban tele-density for the last two years and the current year (upto 30.09.2009) is given in the Annexure.

(c) & (d) The country's tele-density is 44.87% as on 31.10.2009 compared to world's tele-density of 78.11% as on 31.12.2008 (latest available).

(e) The following steps are taken/being taken by the Government to remove the disparity of the tele-density between the rural and urban areas in 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. It now plans to further expand its WLL network (Mobile Switching Centre based) and the additional deployment of WLL network in rural areas will result in availability of telephone connections on demand in most of the places.

3. Remote and far-flung areas, which are not possible to be covered with terrestrial technology, are planned to be covered with Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPTs).

4. BSNL has deployed its mobile network on national highways, important towns, pilgrim centers and state highways. It now plans to cover gaps in existing coverage and additional requirements based on customer base besides covering villages with population 5000 & above and thereafter going up to villages with population 1000 and above with subsequent expansion. BSNL plans to cover villages having population more than 1000 by mobile services progressively in next three years.

5. Support is being provided from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provisioning of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in all the 1685 net cost positive Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs). As on 31.10.2009, about 67.85 Lakh RDELs have been provided with subsidy support from USO Fund.

6. A scheme has been launched by USO Fund to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing 7437 number of infrastructure sites (towers) in 500 districts spread over 27 states, for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage in the country. As on 31.10.2009, 6648 towers have been set up under this scheme.

