

enhancement in minimum support prices of agricultural commodities, increase in credit flow to agriculture sector, debt waiver/relief, interest subvention on crop loans, etc.

Demand for telephone towers and landline phones

*279. SHRI BASAWARAJ PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge demand for telephone towers and landline phones from customers;

(b) whether Government is facing problem in meeting these demands for best communication services; and

(c) by when, Government would fulfill these demands?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) to (c) Sir, mobile phone towers are deployed by the Telecom Service Providers as per the Radio Frequency (RF) Network planning based on various parameters such as quantum of spectrum used, type of network, geography/terrain of the area, population density of the mobile users etc.

Cellular mobile connections are available on demand in the area of operation. At present there is no waiting list of GSM mobile customers in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) network.

Demand for landline phones is not huge as the average waiting list for the landline phones is only 0.2 % in BSNL by the end of January, 2013. Demand for the same is met by BSNL based on techno commercial viability and feasibility for best communication. To augment the mobile network, BSNL has concluded the tendering process for adding a capacity of 14.37 Million GSM lines. The landline telephones are mostly available on demand in the area of operation of MTNL.

Demand for telecom services are met by the telecom service providers including BSNL and MTNL. However, the areas where the services of telecom service providers are not available, the Government is providing support through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) schemes for provision of telecom services.