

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 553
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14th DECEMBER, 2018**

INVESTMENT BY TELECOM OPERATORS TO BOOST NETWORK

553. SHRI RIPUN BORA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that telecom operators have informed the Government that they would invest more than ` 74,000 crore in financial year 2018-19 on networks including telecom towers and Base Transceiver Stations (BTS);
- (b) if so, whether they have invested the same and the details of their investments; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government in the recent past over the worsening call drop situation in the country and the action it proposes to take in the near future?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)**

(a) & (b) Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have informed Department of Telecommunications (DoT) that they have planned to invest more than Rupees 74,000/- Crore for telecom networks during the financial year 2018-19.

During the year, TSPs have been making substantial investments in telecom networks which include about Rs. 12812/- Crore by M/s Bharti Airtel, Rs. 5800/- Crore by M/s Vodafone Idea, Rs. 32575/- Crore by M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm, Rs. 1330/- Crore by M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), and Rs. 180/- Crore by M/s Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) so far.

As a result thereof, about 2.88 lakh additional Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) for 2G/3G/4G-LTE services have been added by TSPs since 1st April, 2018 across the country. Hence, the number of BTS installed have significantly increased from about 17.19 lakh in March 2018 to about 20.07 lakh in November 2018.

(c) In order to address call drops, following steps have been taken by the Government/TSPs:

- (i) DoT has taken several policy initiatives to facilitate infrastructure growth for delivery of quality services. These include permitting trading/sharing/liberalisation of spectrum already granted, permitting passive & active infrastructure sharing, Notification of Right of Way Rules- 2016, making available government land/buildings for installations of towers etc.
- (ii) About 9.74 lakh additional BTS for 2G/3G/4G-LTE services have been added by TSPs since July, 2015 taking the total BTS count in the country to about 20.07 lakh in November 2018.
- (iii) In order to obtain direct feedback from subscribers, DoT has launched an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) wherein, around 2.15 Crore subscribers have been individually contacted since December 2016, out of which 30.1 lakh subscribers have participated in the survey. The feedback is shared with the TSPs every week for taking corrective actions in a time bound manner. As a result, about 85,000 individual cases of call drops have been resolved so far.

As a result of continuous efforts, significant improvement has been observed in terms of TSPs' compliance to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Quality of Services benchmark(s) on call-drop rate in spite of rapid-increase in traffic volume and more stringent TRAI benchmark(s) effective from 1st October 2017.
