

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 218
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21ST JULY, 2023**

ALLEGATIONS OF PREDATORY PRICING BY TELECOM OPERATOR

218 SHRI RAJMANI PATEL:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that several telecom companies have leveled allegations relating to predatory pricing in Reliance Jio broadband plans offering TV channels through their apps or data connectivity plans;
- (b) if so, details of allegations made and action taken against Reliance Jio; and
- (c) whether by offering 400/500 channels as part of broadband offering, well below the market cost with a view to reduce the competition, is a clear case of predatory pricing; and
- (d) if so, action Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is contemplating to panelise the operator and stop these unfair practices forthwith?

**ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) & (b) As per the provisions of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Act, 1997, TRAI regulates tariffs for the telecommunications sector in India. TRAI received a complaint from a telecom service provider, wherein it was alleged that M/s Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd (RJIL) is offering services in contravention of the Tariff orders issued by TRAI. Relevant paras of the complaint are at **Annexure-I**.

(c) & (d) On receipt of the complaint, TRAI sought response from RJIL. On examination of the complaint and the response received from RJIL, TRAI is of the opinion that the tariffs offered by RJIL are not in violation of the Tariff orders.

ANNEXURE-I

Relevant paras of the complaint received at TRAI are as under:

“While offering broadband (Unlimited data and Voice) at Rs. 198 is low but still something that may be overlooked, offering 400 channels at Rs. 100 (Rs. 298 plan) or 550 channels at Rs. 200 (398 plan) is clearly not possible/cannot be matched by any DTH operator given the TRAI NTO Regulation. In fact, there cannot be any permutation or combination wherein 400/550 channels can be provided at such price as is being offered in the above-mentioned plans.

Not only such offerings are in contravention of TRAI's Tariff Order, but providing broadcast channels without a valid DPO authorization/license is also in violation of the extant licensing regime. Hence, the above tariffs are detrimental to the business of DTH and seriously predatory in nature based on the regulatory arbitrage (TRAINTO).

Also, offering 400/550 channels as part of the broadband offering well below the market cost with a view to reduce the competition is a clear case of predatory pricing, and is in contravention to the Telecom Tariff Order 1999 and requires the immediate attention of the Authority.”
