

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1928
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12TH DECEMBER, 2024**

IMPACT OF INTERNET SHUTDOWNS

1928 SHRI GOLLA BABURAO:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that internet shutdowns have implications on national economy, freedom of press, education and healthcare services;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to ensure that disruption to the above mentioned sectors are as few as possible in case of an internet shutdown;
- (c) whether Government has conducted any study on the impacts of internet shutdowns and their effectiveness in dealing with public safety and a public emergency; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. PEMMASANI CHANDRA SEKHAR)**

(a) & (b) The contribution of internet for the well-being of citizens has to be balanced with the need to prevent misuse by anti-social elements requiring temporary suspensions of internet services as per the Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024.

In temporary suspensions of internet services in a region, only internet services are suspended temporarily, and other telecommunication services like voice calling and Short Message Service (SMS) remain available during the suspension period of internet services, through which people in the region can communicate and access emergency services.

As per the Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024, the competent authority must first explore all reasonable alternatives to address the public emergency and public safety concerns before issuing an order for the temporary suspension of internet services. If such a suspension is deemed necessary, then the suspension order must be published clearly stating the reason and be limited to defined geographical area and specified duration.

(c) & (d) No, the Department of Telecommunications has not conducted any such study.
