

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 648
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05TH FEBRUARY, 2026**

VOICE-ONLY RECHARGE PLAN CALLS

648 SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that most telecom recharge plans compulsorily bundle mobile data with voice calls, leading to higher costs for consumers who do not use the internet;
- (b) whether this practice disproportionately affects poor households, senior citizens and basic phone users who require only calling facilities;
- (c) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has examined the affordability impact of mandatory data bundling on vulnerable sections;
- (d) whether Government proposes to mandate or encourage telecom service providers to offer affordable, voice-only recharge packs nationwide; and
- (e) the steps taken to ensure equitable access to basic telecom services without forcing unnecessary data usage?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e) As per the existing regulatory framework, tariff including rates and related conditions for telecommunication services is under forbearance except for national roaming, rural fixed line services and leased circuits, Mobile Number Portability(MNP), and Unstructured Supplementary Service Data (USSD).

Further, after examining the issue, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has notified the Telecom Consumers Protection (12th Amendment) Regulations dated 23.12.2024, which inter-alia mandated that every Telecom Service Provider (TSP) shall offer at least one Special Tariff Voucher exclusively for Voice and SMS with validity period not exceeding three hundred and sixty-five days. Consequently, TSPs have launched Voice and SMS only plans of various validities for customers.
