GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 514
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 19.07.2017

CELL PHONE QUALITY

514. SHRIMATI KOTHAPALLI GEETHA:

Will the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology be pleased to state: -

(a) whether the Government has any system in place to check the quality of cell phones quality to avoid call drops and to ensure data speed and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
(b) whether many unlicensed companies and untested companies without valid certificates are manufacturing thousands and lakhs of smart phones and selling in the market throwing safety measures in the air and if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
(c) whether LTE smart phones with the facility of having 2 sims are not maintaining data speed properly and there is need to adopt a policy decision by the Government in this regard and if so , the details thereof and the steps being taken in this regard; and
(d) whether the consumers are facing lot of difficulties after purchasing such smart phones in the market and if so, the details thereof and corrective steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY)

(a): As per details provided by Indian Cellular Association (ICA), call drop rate and the other network parameters like Network Downtime: Percentage non-availability of mobile network in a month, percentage of calls made by subscribers and successful within operator's network, percentage of Calls with good voice quality call, etc. are monitored by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on a regular basis. These parameters help determine the quality of network and benchmarking the performance. At present, internet data speed or mobile broadband speed offered to a subscriber is not measured or committed by the network operators to the subscriber. TRAI has recently flagged a consultation process on "Data Speed Under Wireless Broadband Plans" to help subscriber make an informed choice and choose suitable data plans. Owing to the various factors as pointed in the Consultation paper like variable number of concurrent users, distance of a user from the Base Transceiver station/NodeB/ eNodeB, peak time event or the type of application (video, text, etc.) being accessed, a minimal download speed for wireless/mobile networks is difficult to be committed by an operator. However, government can ensure a better subscriber experience by asking the operators to specify Minimum download speed in the network i.e. the worst performing speed as well as average download speed to clarify the network quality before releasing a mobile internet plan similar to ' US Broadband label' as suggested by TRAI in its consultation paper.

(b): Keeping in view the safety of Indian consumers, mobile phones have been notified under the "Electronics and Information Technology Goods (Requirements for Compulsory Registration) Order, 2012" for mandatory safety testing of the product as per IS 13252 (Part 1):2010 at Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) recognized laboratories. The manufacturers have to get their product tested for safety compliance and seek registration from the BIS before selling in the market place. BIS has granted 948 registrations for mobile phones as on 13th July 2017.

(c) and (d): As per details provided by TRAI, 4G enabled dual SIM smart phones have issues relating to speed. In these phones only one slot is 4G enabled, which is either pre-defined by the manufacturer or which can be selected by the user through options in the phone. In general, there will be degradation in speed in case of these phones for specific scenario when both SIMs are being used at same time as the resources are shared for two SIMs. The extent of degradation may be dependent upon radio network type SIM configured by the customer and the type of services offered by the service provider such as 2G, 3G, 4G. In case 4G SIM is put in 3G/2G slot there will be relatively higher degradation and it may be reduced by putting SIM in appropriate slot. There could also be higher degradation in case two 4G SIMs are used by the customer and one of the service provider is offering only 4G services. As such, there is a need for educating the customers about the use of slots in the dual mobile handsets. The extent of degradation may also be reduced by improvements in algorithms provided by chip manufacturers. The mobile handset manufacturers are required to take appropriate action for improving algorithm used in this regard. TRAI had discussed the matter with the service providers, Industry Associations, Cellular Operators Association of India & Indian Cellular Association and chipset manufacturers. The Indian Cellular Association was advised to take up the matter with the manufacturers so as to upgrade the algorithm in the handsets. Also the service providers were advised to educate the consumers about proper use of SIM slot in dual SIM Smart Phones.

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