

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

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 61
TO BE ANSWERED ON 7th FEBRUARY, 2018**

SUBSCRIBERS OF BSNL AND MTNL

†*61. SHRI SANJAY KAKA PATIL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has launched any new scheme to increase the number of subscribers of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) and to enable these companies to have a professional competition with private telephone companies and if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) whether the Government is considering to provide any funds for the purpose and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) & (b) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

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STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) & (b) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *61 FOR 7TH FEBRUARY, 2018 ON “SUBSCRIBERS OF BSNL AND MTNL”.

(a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) are independent CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises) which have their own Board. BSNL and MTNL are taking various steps towards increasing their customer base and to have a professional competition with private companies as detailed at **Annexure-I**.

(b) Government has assigned various works/projects to BSNL and MTNL on nomination basis. The details of such works is at **Annexure-II**.

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Steps taken by BSNL to increase its customer base:

1. Augmentation of GSM Mobile network capacity-

Phase VIII : Formulation of next GSM expansion project

- a) PhaseVIII.1: Induction and integration of Wi-Fi Hotspot /LTE (4G) with existing GSM / UMTS network.
- b) Phase VIII.2: Strengthening of Data Network has been done and sufficient IPs are available to support the data network.
- c) Phase VIII.3 Intra circle roaming testing has been launched for M/s Aircel a seeker in Rajasthan Telecom circle and the testing has been initiated in other circles of BSNL. The Inter circle Roaming with M/s Vodafone in Delhi for “BSNL as a Seeker” is working fine to provide roaming options to BSNL’s pre-paid customers. Inter circle Roaming has also been launched with M/s Vodafone in MP & CG Circles for Vodafone as a seeker.
- d) Phase-VIII.4: GSM expansion project named Phase VIII.4 has been finalised for the following:
 - Replacement of old equipment having high operational cost & AMC.
 - Addition of 3G capacity for increasing 3G footprint.
 - Introduction of 4G services.
 - The project is presently envisaged to provide about 20881 2G BTSs, 22517, 3G Node Bs and 10000 4G E-Node Bs.

For West and South zone, project is likely to be completed by December, 2018 and for North and East zone by March, 2019.

2. Replacement of legacy Wireline exchanges by Next Generation Network (NGN) Switches:-

- Phase I: Total capacity of 1 million line equipment has been commissioned in Phase -I class-5 based New Generation Network (NGN). Implementation of phase-II of 3 million line equipment is in progress. The project is expected to be completed by March, 2018.
- With migration to Next Generation Network (NGN) system, the customer will get better communication and Enhanced Value Added Services like Personalized Ring Back Tone, Multi Media Video Conferencing and IP Centrex etc.

3. **Augmentation of Broadband network for meeting data growth:** - BSNL has commissioned Multiprotocol Label Switching - Transport Profile (MPLS-TP) based Next Generation Packet Aggregation Network (MNG-PAN).
4. **Setup of Network Monitoring system (NMS) for Wire-line, Wireless and Broadband network:** Purchase Order (PO) for the procurement and implementation of Broadband Network Management System covering BB P2.2, Multiplayand Fiber to the Home (FTTH) Networks has been placed. The equipment is in advanced stage of commissioning.
5. **Roll-out of Wi-Fi Service:** BSNL has so far installed and radiated 17320 Wi-Fi Hotspots under various Wi-Fi Hotspot projects.

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6. BSNL-ECR CONE (Enhanced Capacity & resilience of Core Network):

- Expansion of Provider Edge (PE) Network of BSNL: Out of planned 232 PE Routers, BSNL has commissioned 232 PE Routers along with their integration with Core Routers. This has resulted in the expansion of IPMPLS Network from 106 cities to 205 cities providing connectivity for broadband, NGN, 2G/ 3G requirements apart from increased connectivity to enterprise customer.
- In respect of creation of a Super Express Highway across the country and Super Express Transport Network with 200 Gbps (Gigabits per second) line capacity connecting 47 state Capitals and important cities. The work in 45 cities has already been completed. Installation and commissioning of Optical Transport Network (OTN) equipment has been completed in two cities Silliguri and Guwahati.
- For procurement of Converged Packet Access Network (CPAN), Purchase Order (PO) has been issued. Supply in respect of B1 & B2 switch has been completed and A1 and A2 switch is in progress.

7. Customer Centric Initiatives:

- BSNL has focused on customer care services by installing exclusive call centres for GSM services, Wire- line and Broadband services.
- Unlimited free night calling from landline to any network between 2230 Hrs to 0600 Hrs in India to its landline customers.
- BSNL introduced unlimited free calling during day & night on all Sundays on pan-India (except HP Circle) to its landline customers.
- Minimum 512 Kbps broadband speed upgraded to 2 Mbps.
- The new plan "Experience LL 49" which also allows free calling facility during night hours from Monday to Saturday of the week and 24 hours free calling on Sunday. The scheme has been extended in all circles (except J&K, NE-I & NE-II) & is applicable up to 31.03.2018.
- BSNL has waived off installation charges for New Landline. The same is applicable up to 17.07.2018.
- BSNL has introduced new LL Plan "LL-299" with Fixed Monthly Charges (FMC) Rs.299. In this plan, 250 free calls are allowed to any network within India.
- BSNL has revised the existing landline plans w.e.f. 01.08.2017 & now customer will get free calls on BSNL Network equal to FMC.
- BSNL has introduced new annual landline tariff plans "LL 1200" and "LL 1500" which allows free calling facility during night hours from Monday to Saturday of the week and 24 hours free calling on Sunday. The tariff plans are applicable w.e.f. 01.12.2017 up to 28.02.2018.
- BSNL has introduced Virtual landline Connection under plan "ASEEM" in which customer can get a Virtual Landline number and get diverted all calls received on that number to a mobile number of his/her choice. This plan can also be provided in Technically Not Feasible (TNF) areas.
- BSNL has introduced replacement of Instrument Free of cost for existing customers, who have paid last six months bill for Landline/Combo connection with total amount of Rs.3600/- or above and having Landline for last three years.

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- BSNL Landline may be booked through Facebook/Twitter. One month Fixed Monthly Charge on landline booked through Facebook/Twitter is being waived off. The scheme is applicable for one year w.e.f. 30.10.2017.
- Rs 249 unlimited Broadband plan (upto 2 Mbps till 1 GB & up to 1Mbps beyond).
- Introduction of a scheme to waive off Installation charges for new Landline/Digital Subscriber Line/Fiber to the Home connections (voice/Broadband/combo) in all the Circles, for a period of One Year-w.e.f. 18-07-2017.
- Introduction of a scheme for sale of Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) Wi-Fi Modem @ Rs. 1500/- with 100% Cash back @ Rs. 50/- per month for maximum 30 month or till the Broadband connection remain active to the Broadband customers who subscribe under any Broadband plan with Fixed Monthly Charge (FMC) Rs.675/- & above.
- Introduction of new Broadband plan 'BBG Combo UL 599' with 'Flat 2 Mbps Speed' and reformulation of certain pan-India DSL Broadband plans, which are currently being offered to the customers in pan-India basis – w.e.f. 10-07-2017.
- Tariff Plan for 2Mbps FTTH/ILL Backhaul @ Rs. 17820/- for Wi-Fi Hotspots under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) in all the circles-w.e.f. 20-07-2017.
- Reformulation of Broadband plans; offering 'Upto 10 Mbps' & Upto 8 Mbps' initial download speed (subject to technical feasibility) across all the DSL/FTTH Broadband plans [pan-India (except A&N circle)] with FMC ≥ Rs. 675/- & FMC < Rs.675 respectively, on pan-India basis-w.e.f. 01-11-2017.
- BSNL has introduced unlimited local / STD BSNL to BSNL with 300 Mb data for only Rs.99 with validity of 28 days for its prepaid mobile customers in Kolkata Telecom District, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, Gujarat, MP, Chhattisgarh, and Maharashtra & Rajasthan. In other circles, it varies from Rs.119 to Rs. 149.
- BSNL has introduced Special Tariff Voucher (STV) of Rs 339 for 28 days with unlimited Local/STD BSNL to BSNL + Local /STD BSNL to others + Unlimited data (With FUP (Fair Usage Policy) of 2GB /day with no speed restriction and thereafter with speed restriction of 80 KBPS).
- BSNL has introduced new STV plan "BSNL CHAUKKA" "444" Unlimited data (Speed reduced to 80 Kbps after 4GB/day) offer under prepaid mobile service.
- BSNL has introduced new plan "BSNL SIXER" "666" Unlimited data (Speed reduced to 80 Kbps after 2GB/day) & Unlimited free voice (Local/STD) for 60 days any net in Home Public Land Mobile Network (HPLMN) under prepaid mobile service.
- BSNL has introduced the new plan of Rs.429 only which is giving free voice (Local /STD) on any network and 90 GB data @ 1GB per day) for 81 days on pan-India basis (except Kerala Circle).

8. Twitter Seva:

- BSNL has devised an efficient customer centric social media redressal program that has helped its customers to raise their grievances for efficient resolutions.
- Until now, BSNL has received 71,314 grievances on the Twitter Seva platform and resolved 71,145 grievances with a resolution rate of 99.76%.

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Measures taken by MTNL to increase its customer base:

MTNL has taken following steps to improve its network capabilities, provide better quality of service to its customers and improve market share.

- **Expansion of GSM / 3G Radio Frequency (RF) network in MTNL Delhi:** MTNL is in the process of expansion of 3G mobile network by adding 1080 nos. of 3G sites, 800 nos. of hybrid microwave to meet the backhaul capacity and data handling capacity to 10 Gbps.
- **Upgradation / replacement of 3G RF network in MTNL Delhi:** MTNL is upgrading the existing 3G network (720 Node-Bs) and 754 nos. of existing 8Mbps Microwave Hops to 400 Mbps capacity to improve network capabilities and provide better speed.
- **3G Network Up-gradation in Mumbai:** MTNL is upgrading the existing 3G network (720 Node-Bs) and 497 nos. of existing 8Mbps Microwave Hops to 400 Mbps capacity to improve network capabilities and provide better speed.
- **Redeployment of DSLAMs (Digital Subscriber Line Asynchronous Mode) of existing Broadband Network:** MTNL has launched a special program to progressively increase the fibre length by redeploying the broadband nodes (DSLAMS) near to the subscriber premises in Delhi and Mumbai thereby reducing copper length and enhancing the quality of broadband service. 186 DSLAMs in Delhi and approx.169 in Mumbai have been redeployed thereby reducing copper length and enhancing the quality of Broadband service. This has improved customer experience and reduced the number of complaints.
- **Fibre to the Home (FTTH):**FTTH revenue share policy was modified to make it more flexible to attract new partners with enhanced revenue share to encourage partners to rollout more connections; 10 Partners each in Delhi and Mumbai have already started operations. Active monitoring is being done to ensure achievement of the envisaged targets of the policy. Regular advisories are being issued to field units. In the calendar year 2017, total 699 connections have been provisioned in Mumbai while 188 connections were provisioned in Delhi.
- **Steps taken to further improve quality and Quantity of services:**
 - Tariff of Wireless services has been rationalized significantly in view of the cut throat competition. MTNL now offers three times more data at the same price.
 - To give boost to customer experience, download speed of broadband subscribers is being upgraded to 8 Mbps progressively without any additional cost depending upon feasibility and line parameters. This year, 24,332 connections have been upgraded as on 31.12.2017 in Delhi while 3,86,882 numbers have been upgraded in Mumbai.
 - Tariff re-balancing of Broadband service has been done for giving more competitive and attractive tariff package to the customers.
 - Training is being given to line staff to improve maintenance and installation practices.
 - Refurbishing of 20% pillars and DPs every year, is planned in a phased manner. 1236 Pillar and 7199 DP have been refurbished by MTNL this year as on 31.12.2017
 - To improve copper pair quality, 81,492 existing drop wires have been replaced with twisted drop wires or thermo sleeves have been put at open joints at DPs by MTNL this year, as on 31.12.2017.
 - Proactive Monitoring of Broadband Faults through radius attempt.

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Government Support to BSNL and MTNL

BSNL:

- Implementation of providing mobile connectivity in 2199 identified locations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas at an estimated cost of Rs. 3567.58 crores on 4.6.2013.
- Implementation of Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands through augmentation of satellite connectivity/bandwidth at an estimated cost of Rs. 120.49 crores on 7.11.2014.
- Optical Fibre Cable based Network for Defence Services (NFS) Project has been given to BSNL on nomination basis at the cost of Rs.13,334 crore.
- Laying of 2,54,813 Km. OFC to connect 1,01,792 Gram Panchayats (GPs) under BharatNet project out of which, 91,001 GPs are connected with OFC with the laying of 2,20,510 Kms of OFC. For execution of BharatNet project, Government has provided Rs.5744 crore in Phase-I and earmarked Rs.6500 crore in Phase-II to BSNL.
- Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region for provision of mobile services in uncovered villages in Arunachal Pradesh and two districts of Assam at estimated project cost of Rs. 1975.38 crore and implementation of Transmission-Media Plan for North Eastern Region at an estimated cost of Rs.295.97 crore on 10.9.2014.
- Submarine Optical Fiber Cable Project at the cost of Rs.1900 crore has been given to BSNL on nomination basis for providing connectivity to Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- Work of setting up of 25000 Wi-Fi Hotspots at Rural Telephone Exchanges has been given to BSNL on nomination basis at the cost of Rs.940 crore.
- The work of setting up of Satellite Gateway at the cost of Rs.54 crore has been given to BSNL on nomination basis.

MTNL:

- Refund of surrendered BWA (Broadband Wireless Access) spectrum in two service areas held by MTNL and in 6 service areas held by BSNL. Under this head, Rs. 4533.97 crore has been refunded to MTNL through bonds and Rs. 6724.51 crore has been refunded to BSNL through budgetary resources.
- The pension liability of MTNL staff who were absorbed from DoT, has been taken over by the Government.
- Notional loan of Rs. 1411 crore to BSNL which was due to be paid to the Government was waived-off.
- Financial support of Rs. 492.26 crore has been given to MTNL on account of liability arising from levy of Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT).
- Refund of Rs. 458.04 crore to MTNL and Rs. 169.16 crore to BSNL on account of surrender of CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) spectrum.
- Provision of High Speed Internet on FTTH and Wi-Fi at the Hon'ble M.Ps residences. The Project cost of about Rs 43.2 Crore was funded by DoT.
