

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3166
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14th MARCH, 2018**

MOBILE NETWORK PROBLEM AND POOR QUALITY SERVICES

3166. SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the mobile network problems is reportedly increasing day by day and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the companies call charges are very high but service quality is very poor and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to deal with the aforesaid matters;
- (d) the number of functional mobile towers in the country, State/UT-wise and the telecom company-wise; and
- (e) the availability of functional mobile towers per square kilometer?

ANSWER

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

(a) The Quality of Services benchmarks for telecommunication services are notified by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) under TRAI Act, 1997 at the level of License Service Area (LSA) as a whole. These LSAs cover all States and Union Territories of India. The latest Performance Indicator Report for the quarter ending September 2017 indicates that most of the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) comply to TRAI's Quality of Services benchmarks in majority of LSAs.

The non-compliance is mainly observed in case of M/s Aircel & M/s Dishnet Wireless Limited who have reported vide letter dated 22nd February 2018 that Aircel group is undergoing deep financial stress due to various reasons which has resulted in closing operations in six LSAs with effect from 31st January, 2018 and service-related disruptions in remaining LSAs.

Directions have been issued by TRAI to M/s Aircel & M/s Dishnet Wireless Limited on 27th February, 2018 to extend validity of Unique Porting Code (UPC) and to allow porting till 15th April, 2018. This would facilitate subscribers to migrate to other TSPs of their choice.

(b) As per the present tariff framework in the country, tariff for mobile telephone services is under forbearance except national roaming services and leased circuits. TSPs have flexibility to offer different tariff plans and schemes for mobile services with multiple combination of fixed charges, period of validity and usage charges. Different tariff combinations are being offered by TSPs taking into account several factors including input costs, level of competition and other commercial considerations.

As per data published by TRAI, the average Minutes of Usage (MOU) for voice services (per subscriber per month) was 374 in September 2015 which has increased to 437 in September 2017. Similarly, data usage of mobile users (per subscriber per month) was 120 Mega-Bytes (MB) in September 2015 which has increased to 1600 MB in September 2017. Despite the sharp increase in usage, the Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) has declined from Rs. 122/- per month to Rs. 84/- per month for 2G-GSM, 3G & 4G-LTE services in the corresponding period.

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(c) In order to facilitate improvement in Quality of Services and expansion of telecommunication services, the Department of Telecommunications has initiated a series of measures which includes following policy initiatives and development programs:

- (i) making available sufficient spectrum for mobile services including auction of 965 MHz in 2016.
- (ii) allowing Spectrum Sharing, Trading and liberalisation of administratively allocated spectrum as per guidelines to facilitate efficient utilisation.
- (iii) permitting sharing of active as well as passive infrastructure by the telecom service providers for achieving higher utilisation efficiency.
- (iv) notification of Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016 in November 2016 for regulating underground infrastructure (optical fibre) and over-ground infrastructure (mobile towers).
- (v) periodic review of expansion of mobile networks and related improvements carried out by TSPs, leading to addition of around 6.66 lakh additional Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) on aggregate basis for 2G/3G/4G services during the period- July 2015 to February 2018. In addition, about 6.67 lakh BTS Cells have been rectified/ optimised by TSPs during July 2016 to December 2017.
- (vi) facilitating use of Government estate for installation of mobile towers on sharing basis by multiple TSPs.
- (vii) launching of Interactive Voice Response Service (IVRS) on call drop to get direct feedback from mobile subscribers and sharing the feedback with TSPs for taking remedial action.

(d) A total of approximately 4,63,159 mobile towers are installed in the country as on 1st March 2018. These towers may be shared by multiple TSPs on case-to-case basis. LSA-wise count of mobile towers is placed at **Annexure-I** and LSA/TSP wise count of BTS is placed at **Annexure-II**.

(e) As there are different types of technologies deployed for mobile networks using various radio frequency spectrum bands in the country, the number of BTS to be rolled out in any LSA are decided by TSPs based on propagation of radio waves, ever-changing demand pattern for voice as well as data services and compliance to the licensing conditions including Roll Out Obligations as well as Quality of Services Regulations notified by TRAI.

Mobile towers per square kilometer are approx 0.15 (number of towers divided by 31.66 Lakh square KM). However, the number of towers in urban areas are located more closely due to higher number of subscribers per square kilometer, as compared to sub-urban and rural areas.

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LSA Wise Total Tower Count (as on 01-March-2018)

Sr	LSA	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	36213
2	Assam	10386
3	Bihar	32242
4	Chennai	11157
5	Delhi	21375
6	Gujarat	26717
7	Himachal Pradesh	4982
8	Haryana	10270
9	Jammu & Kashmir	8080
10	Karnataka	28147
11	Kolkata	10145
12	Kerala	16015
13	Mumbai	14883
14	Maharashtra	36139
15	Madhya Pradesh	30937
16	North-East	6634
17	Odisha	15682
18	Punjab	18305
19	Rajasthan	24725
20	Tamil Nadu	27707
21	Uttar Pradesh (East)	29654
22	Uttar Pradesh(West)	24386
23	West Bengal	18378
Grand Total		463159

Source: Tarang Sanchar Web-portal (as on 01.03.2018)

Note: Towers may be shared by multiple TSPs.

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LSA & TSP-wise Total BTS Count - 2G GSM/ 3G / 4G-LTE (as on 07-March-2018)

Sr	LSA	Aircel	Airtel	BSNL	Idea	R Jio	MTNL	Reliance	Telenor	TTSL	Vodafone
1	Andhra Pradesh	3274	34393	12464	24965	38687	0	0	5153	2688	7983
2	Assam	3845	9477	2673	2358	9094	0	109	116	0	6997
3	Bihar	4269	24515	5122	15551	27585	0	64	5092	842	8577
4	Chennai	4300	11973	3345	4752	9440	0	0	0	1176	9471
5	Delhi	4071	25088	0	10211	21941	956	2463	0	0	20780
6	Gujarat	0	21449	7216	19398	27217	0	0	3847	2610	25785
7	Himachal Pradesh	0	4887	1886	2670	5028	0	94	0	5	867
8	Haryana	0	9206	3640	8722	10142	0	0	0	1179	9378
9	Jammu & Kashmir	3167	8717	1821	2869	8188	0	395	0	0	1692
10	Karnataka	4124	37482	8743	14009	27910	0	0	0	284	19924
11	Kolkata	4243	9415	2460	4341	10765	0	1617	0	1386	6962
12	Kerala	182	16809	9452	21273	18754	0	0	0	1454	16356
13	Mumbai	1851	14734	0	6735	11569	847	2020	0	1699	14566
14	Maharashtra	0	29810	10102	31577	33742	0	0	4525	5549	28733
15	Madhya Pradesh	0	22554	8320	25449	28562	0	275	0	3168	5825
16	North-East	2640	6642	2446	1628	4756	0	108	0	0	3845
17	Odisha	3329	12933	5388	3925	11983	0	123	0	1054	5633
18	Punjab	1037	22185	5524	14627	20471	0	148	0	1685	9774
19	Rajasthan	2565	23405	6778	11509	26775	0	454	0	1162	16500
20	Tamil Nadu	9703	24907	8603	8087	25419	0	0	0	1581	17935
21	Uttar Pradesh (East)	2742	23791	8008	17226	27605	0	0	5700	201	25606
22	Uttar Pradesh (West)	0	18818	6011	19559	25341	0	0	5031	177	13923
23	West Bengal	3994	17403	3571	7072	17416	0	80	0	35	17557
Total of each-TSP		59336	430593	123573	278513	448390	1803	7950	29464	27935	294669
Grand Total (all TSPs)		17,02,226									

Source: Tarang Sanchar Web-portal (as on 07.03.2018)