

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.5315
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28TH MARCH, 2018**

ILLEGAL OFFERS BY TELECOM SERVICE PROVIDERS

5315. SHRI Y.S. AVINASH REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) are luring the customers by adopting illegal offers which restrict the customers from shifting from one TSP to another;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has taken note of aforementioned malpractices by TSPs and if so, the details thereof and the response of the TRAI thereto; and
- (d) the action taken/being taken by the Government against such erring TSPs?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) As per the existing tariff framework, tariff for telecommunication access service is under forbearance except for National Roaming and Rural Fixed Line Services. The service providers have the flexibility to decide various tariff components for different service areas of their operation.

Tariffs are offered by service providers taking into account several factors including inputs costs, level of competition and other commercial considerations. Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have flexibility to design their products to suit consumer demand. TSPs have such plans on offer which provide subscribers a wide choice of telecom products as per their need. Offering different plans with various combinations of tariff components by a telecom company is not prohibited under present regulatory norms prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), provided they are consistent with regulatory guidelines issued from time to time.

TRAI has reiterated the regulatory principles of non-predatory, non-discrimination and transparency in tariff offers. As such, the transparency in tariff offers will be objectively observed by the telecom service providers vis-à-vis the guiding principles of transparency. Similarly, TRAI will also examine the tariffs of telecom service providers on the touchstone of accessibility, accuracy, comparability and completeness. It will also take in account whether tariffs are distinct and identifiable, explicit and non-misleading, simple and unambiguous etc. This would ensure transparent offering of telecom tariffs to consumers.

Contd....2/-

Further, the definition on Non-discrimination provides a clear benchmark to telecom service providers to bring tariff offers to consumers on non-discriminatory basis. Aforementioned regulatory principles provide greater clarity for enabling telecom service providers for designing their tariff in more innovative manner and also smoothly comply with the regulatory principles.

Further TRAI has written to operators to observe these principles while offering Tariffs to customers. They have been also asked to report all retail tariffs to TRAI and publish them transparently on their websites.
