

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.6036  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2018**

**RISING CALL RATES**

†6036. SHRI ARJUN LAL MEENA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to introduce any new scheme to reduce the rising rate of phone calls in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the measures taken by the Government to provide phone connectivity across the country?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) 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 input costs, level of competition and other commercial considerations. The average outgo for voice services in India has shown a continuous downward trend, particularly in the recent past. Details are shown in the Table below.

**Average outgo for Voice**

<b>Quarter Ending</b>	<b>Average outgo per minute (Rs.)</b>
Jun-16	0.49
Sep-16	0.48
Dec-16	0.44
Mar-17	0.31
Jun-17	0.27
Sep-17	0.23
Dec-17	0.19

(c) the measures taken by the Government to provide phone connectivity across the country are as under: -

- (i) Bharat Net Project is being implemented in a phased manner to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2,50,000) in the country. In December 2017, Phase-I of Bharat Net has been completed by connecting one lakh GPs. As on 25.03.2018, by laying 2,68,963 km Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), a total of 1,13,964 Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been connected, of which 1,04,889 Gram Panchayats have been made service ready. As part of this project, the last mile connectivity, through Wi-Fi or any other suitable broadband technology is to be provided at all the GPs in the country. The project is targeted to be completed by March 2019.
- (ii) Under Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for NER, USOF has signed an agreement with BSNL, to install 2817 mobile towers for providing mobile (including data) coverage in 4119 uncovered villages at an estimated cost of Rs. 2258 Cr.
- (iii) Agreement has also been signed with M/s Bharti Airtel limited and M/s Bharti Hexacom Limited to install 2004 mobile towers for providing mobile (including data) coverage in 2128 villages and National Highways in NER.
- (iv) Department of Telecom executed Phase- I project for providing Mobile Services in 2355 locations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. As on date 2329 towers are radiating. A proposal for providing mobile services (including data service) at 4072 MHA identified locations in LWE affected area in Phase-II has been recommended by Telecom Commission with an estimated cost for Rs. 7,330/- Crores (excluding taxes). The proposal is being submitted to Cabinet.
- (v) Virtual Network Operators (VNO) have been introduced. VNOs can provide voice, data and video services within a licensing framework, without owning spectrum or network infrastructure.

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