

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.6186
TO BE ANSWERED ON 4TH APRIL, 2018**

COMMUNICATION POLICY

†6186. SHRIMATI KAMLA DEVI PAATLE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) the salient features of the current communication policy of the Government;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to evaluate the said policy;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to introduce an all India communication policy;
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) At present, the National Telecom Policy-2012 (NTP-2012) is in force and the salient features of the same are given at **Annexure**.

(b) to (f) The recent technological advancements in the Telecom Sector such as 5G, Internet of Things and changed global scenario in the social sector have necessitated the review of existing policy. Accordingly, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is in the process of formulating National Telecom Policy-2018 (NTP-2018).

Various Working Groups on themes viz. Digital India, New Technology, Licensing Framework, Make in India, Infrastructure, Spectrum Management, Security, Skill Development & Capacity Building, Allocation and Pricing of Resources, Disaster Management, Consumer Protection, Legislative Framework and Strategic Financial Planning were formed and have given their inputs. Further, inputs from academia and other stakeholders have also been received. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has also sent its input. Regular consultations and workshops have been held to prepare the policy. The work on formulation of NTP-2018 is in progress and is likely to be completed soon. Thereafter, draft NTP-2018 will be put in public domain, for inputs / comments.

SALIENT FEATURES OF NATIONAL TELECOM POLICY-2012

LICENSING, CONVERGENCE AND VALUE ADDED SERVICES

- Strive to create **One Nation - One License** across services and service areas.
- Achieve **One Nation - Full Mobile Number Portability** and work towards **One Nation - Free Roaming**.
- To orient, review and harmonise the legal, regulatory and licensing framework in a time bound manner to enable seamless delivery of converged services in technology and service neutral environment. Convergence would cover:
 - Convergence of services i.e. convergence of voice, data, video, Internet telephony (VoIP), value added services and broadcasting services
 - Convergence of networks i.e. convergence of access network, carriage network (NLD/ILD) and broadcast network
 - Convergence of devices i.e. telephone, Personal Computer, Television, Radio, set top boxes and other connected devices.
- To **move towards Unified Licence regime** to exploit the attendant benefits of convergence, spectrum liberalisation and facilitate **delinking of the licensing of Networks from the delivery of Services to the end users** to enable operators to optimally and efficiently utilise their networks and spectrum by sharing active and passive infrastructure.
- Put in place a simplified Merger & Acquisition regime in telecom service sector while ensuring adequate competition.
- To **facilitate resale at the service level** under the proposed licensing regime – both wholesale and retail.
- To **delink spectrum in respect of all future licences**. Spectrum shall be made available at a price determined through market related processes.
- To **frame appropriate Policies** for new licensing framework, migration of existing licensees to new framework, exit policy, measures for ensuring adequate competition etc. in consultation with TRAI.
- To facilitate **convergence of local cable TV networks** post digitalisation.
- To put in place an appropriate regulatory framework for delivery of **VAS at affordable price** to fuel growth in entrepreneurship, innovation and provision of **region specific content in regional languages**.
- To put in place a framework **to regulate the carriage charges, which are content neutral and based on the bandwidth utilisation**.
- **Reposition the mobile phone** from a mere communication device **to an instrument of empowerment** that combines communication with proof of identity, fully secure financial and other transaction capability, multi-lingual services and a whole range of other capabilities that ride on them and transcend the literacy barrier.

SPECTRUM MANAGEMENT

- Ensure adequate availability of spectrum and its allocation in a transparent manner through market related processes. **Make available additional 300 MHz spectrum for IMT services by the year 2017 and another 200 MHz by 2020.**
- To move at the earliest towards liberalisation of spectrum to enable use of spectrum in any band to provide any service in any technology as well as to permit **spectrum pooling, sharing and later, trading** to enable optimal utilisation of spectrum through appropriate regulatory framework..
- To undertake **periodic audit** of spectrum utilisation to ensure its efficient use.

- To refarm spectrum and allot alternative frequency bands or media to service providers from time to time to make spectrum available for introduction of new technologies for telecom applications.
- To **prepare a roadmap** for availability of additional spectrum every 5 years.

BROADBAND AND RURAL TELEPHONY

- **Increase rural teledensity from the current level of around 39 to 70 by the year 2017 and 100 by the year 2020. .**
- To recognise telecom, including broadband connectivity as a basic necessity like education and health and work towards '**Right to Broadband**'.
- **Provide affordable and reliable broadband-on-demand by the year 2015 and to achieve 175 million broadband connections by the year 2017 and 600 million by the year 2020 at minimum 2 Mbps download speed and making available higher speeds of at least 100 Mbps on demand.**
- **Provide high speed and high quality broadband access to all village panchayats through a combination of technologies by the year 2014 and progressively to all villages and habitations by 2020.**

R&D, MANUFACTURING AND STANDARDIZATION OF TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

- Promote the ecosystem for design, Research and Development, IPR creation, testing, standardization and manufacturing i.e. complete value chain for domestic production of telecommunication equipment to **meet Indian telecom sector demand to the extent of 60% and 80% with a minimum value addition of 45% and 65% by the year 2017 and 2020 respectively**
- **Create a corpus to promote indigenous R&D, IPR creation, entrepreneurship, manufacturing, commercialisation and deployment of state-of-the-art telecom products and services during the 12th five year plan period.**
- To promote **setting up of Telecommunications Standard Development Organisation (TSDO)** as an autonomous body with effective participation of the government, industry, R&D centres, service providers, and academia to drive consensus regarding standards to meet national requirements including security needs.
- **Provide preference** to domestically manufactured telecommunication products, in procurement of those telecommunication products which have security implications for the country and in Government procurement for its own use, consistent with our World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments.

TELECOM INFRASTRUCTURE/ ROW ISSUES, GREEN TELECOM, CLEAR SKYLINE, MITIGATION EFFORTS DURING DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES

- To work towards **recognition of telecom as Infrastructure Sector for both wireline and wireless** and extension of the benefits available to infrastructure sectors to telecom sector also, to realize true potential of ICT for development.
- To facilitate increased use of alternative sources (Renewable Energy Technologies) of energy for powering telecom networks through active participation of all the stakeholders – the government, the telecom industry and the consumer for green telecommunications. Sector specific schemes and targets for promotion of green technologies will be finalised in consultation with Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and other stakeholders.

QUALITY OF SERVICE AND PROTECTION OF CONSUMER INTEREST

- To strengthen the regulator for ensuring compliance of the prescribed performance standards and Quality of Service (QoS) parameters by the Telecom Service Providers
- To formulate a **Code of Practice for Sales and Marketing Communications** to improve transparency as well as address security issues relating to Customer Acquisition
- To **undertake legislative measures** to bring disputes between telecom consumers and service providers **within the jurisdiction of Consumer Forums** established under Consumer Protection Act.

SECURITY

- To create an institutional framework through regulatory measures to ensure that **safe-to-connect** devices are inducted into the Telecom Network and service providers take measures for ensuring the security of the network..
- To ensure security in an increasingly insecure cyber space, indigenously manufactured multi-functional SIM cards with indigenously designed chips incorporating specific laid down standards are considered critical.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC SECTOR

- To **assess the manpower requirement at different skill and expertise levels by partnering** with **National Skill Development Council** and **industry** to identify the relevant needs of the sector and prepare a roadmap.

CLOUD SERVICES

- To recognise that cloud computing will significantly speed up design and roll out of services, enable social networking and participative governance and e-Commerce on a scale which was not possible with traditional technology solutions.
- To take new policy initiatives to ensure rapid expansion of new services and technologies at globally competitive prices by addressing the concerns of cloud users and other stakeholders including specific steps that need to be taken for lowering the cost of service delivery.

TELECOM ENTERPRISE SERVICES, DATA USE NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND IPV 6 COMPLIANT NETWORKS

- To facilitate the role of new technologies in furthering public welfare and enhanced customer choices through affordable access and efficient service delivery. The emergence of new service formats such as **Machine-to-Machine (M2M) communications** (e.g. remotely operated irrigation pumps, smart grid etc.) represent tremendous opportunities, especially as their roll-out becomes more widespread.
- To recognize the importance of the new Internet Protocol IPv6 to start offering new IP based services on the new protocol and to encourage new and innovative IPv6 based applications in different sectors of the economy by enabling participatory approach of all stake holders.

FINANCING OF TELECOM SECTOR

- To create a ***Telecom Finance Corporation*** as a vehicle to mobilize and channelize financing for telecom projects in order to facilitate investment in the telecom sector.
- To ***rationalize taxes, duties and levies affecting the sector and work towards providing a stable fiscal regime*** to stimulate investments and making services more affordable.

ROLE OF REGULATOR, CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

- To review the TRAI Act with a view to addressing regulatory inadequacies/ impediments in effective discharge of its functions.
- To undertake a comprehensive review of Indian Telegraph Act and its rules and other allied legislations with a view to making them consistent with and in furtherance of the above policy objectives.
