

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 597
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6TH DECEMBER, 2023**

SPECTRUM USAGE CHARGES

597. SHRI T.R. BAALU:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government agrees with the view that it should lower license fee and spectrum usage charges further so that telecom companies can free up capital that can then be invested in 5G networks, if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) the details of the measures proposed to be taken by the Government keeping in mind that 5G will enable the delivery of critical services such as telesurgery and Internet of Things (IoT) over a mobile network with unprecedented efficiency in addition to opening the floodgates for innovative applications that require a massive amount of high-speed bandwidth?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) & (b) As on 24-11-2023, 5G networks have been rolled out in 738 districts across the country and a total of 3,94,298 base stations have been installed with around 100 million subscribers using 5G services. India has seen one of the fastest 5G rollout in the world. Telecom service providers have also committed a total investment in excess of Rs. 2 lakh crore including a commitment of Rs.1.5 lakh crore for spectrum acquired through auction in July-August 2022. Further Gross Revenue of Telecom service providers has crossed Rs. 3 lakh crore for first time in FY 2022-23.

The growth in the Telecom sector has happened due to various structural and procedural reforms implemented by the government in last few years to promote healthy competition, infuse liquidity, encourage investment, reduce regulatory burden on Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) and protect interests of consumers. These are as follows:

- (i) Rationalization of Definition of Adjusted Gross Revenue.
- (ii) Allowing Spectrum Trading/Sharing.
- (iii) Incentivising Spectrum Sharing.
- (iv) Ensuring adequate Spectrum through open & transparent auction.
- (v) Permission for 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in telecom sector under automatic route subject to safeguards.

- (vi) Launch of PM Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal for centralized Right of Way (RoW) approvals.
- (vii) To facilitate faster and easier deployment of telecom infrastructure, Government has amended the Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules (RoW), 2016 on 17th August 2022 and 7th August 2023. These amendments paved the way for deployment of 5G small cells and optical fibre cable on existing street infrastructure and also rationalized the fees and charges paid by the Telecom licensees for the RoW permissions.
- (viii) Simplification of Standing Advisory Committee on Radio Frequency Allocation (SACFA) clearance process for installing telecom towers.
