

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1477
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH FEBRUARY, 2021**

DEBT OF TSPS AND 5G SPECTRUM AUCTION

1477. DR. G. RANJITH REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the balance sheet of Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) is ridden with debt of more than Rs.8.55 lakh crore and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the TSPs will be able to participate actively in 5G services in view of the aforesaid debt and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to keep 5G spectrum prices at a reasonable level and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the reserved prices of 5G spectrum in the country in comparison with other countries such as China, US and Germany; and
- (e) the status of 5G spectrum auction in the country?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)**

- (a) An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG), vide its report dated 31.08.2017, has estimated that the debt exposure of Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) is more than Rs.7.87 Lakh Crore.
- (b) Participation by TSPs in 5G services is expected to be based on various factors such as company's growth plans, technological capacities, capex requirements, assessment of demand and revenue from 5G etc. After considering the financial stress in the telecom sector, the Government has taken measures to ease the financial burden, such as giving the option to TSPs to defer payment of spectrum auction instalments due for 2020-21 and 2021-22, either for one or both years.

(c) to (e) Reserve prices of spectrum at auction are fixed by the Government after considering the recommendations of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). In its recommendations dated 01.08.2018 on Auction of Spectrum, TRAI has stated that 3300-3600 MHz band, also called mid-band, has been identified globally as a 5G band. TRAI has further stated that after analysis of the auction of 3300-3600 MHz band in various countries, due to lack of adequate comparable data points, international benchmarking may not be appropriate. The Government has not yet decided on the reserve prices for auction of 3300-3600 MHz Band.
