

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4383
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30TH MARCH, 2022**

PRIVATE TELECOM SERVICE PROVIDERS

†4383. SHRI RAMSHIROMANI VERMA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the telecom sector in the country is currently dominated by private telecom service providers and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the factors responsible for the low share of the Government Telecom Providers in the telecom sector despite having a huge infrastructure; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to increase the share of Government Telecom Providers in the telecom sector and the success achieved by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) Yes Sir. The number of telephone connections provided by public TSPs and private TSPs, as on 31.12.2021, are given below:

Type of TSP	Number of telephone connections		
	Wireline	Mobile	Total
Public TSPs (BSNL & MTNL)	10,348,229	117,615,635	127,963,864
Private TSPs *	13,439,165	1,037,003,984	1,050,443,149
Total	23,787,394	1,154,619,619	1,178,407,013

The market shares of public TSPs and private TSPs, as on 31.12.2021, are given below:

Type of TSP	Market share (in terms of number of telephone connections)		
	Wireline	Mobile	Total
Public TSPs (BSNL & MTNL)	43.50%	10.19%	10.86%
Private TSPs *	56.50%	89.91%	89.14%

* Private TSPs include Bharti Airtel Limited, Bharti Hexacom Limited, Quadrant Televentures Limited, Reliance Communications Limited, Reliance Telecom Limited, Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited, Tata Teleservices Limited, Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra) Limited and Vodafone Idea Limited.

(b) Public TSPs viz. BSNL and MTNL are major players in wireline segment however, they are facing intense competition in the mobile segment. BSNL/MTNL do not offer 4G services (except in a few places by BSNL). Due to lack of extensive 4G coverage across India and with increase in 4G handset penetration, the market share of Government TSPs is low in wireless segment.

(c) Government on 23.10.2019 approved the revival plan of BSNL and MTNL. The revival plan inter-alia includes measures like reduction in employee cost through Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), administrative allotment of spectrum for 4G services through capital infusion by the Government into BSNL/MTNL, debt restructuring by raising of sovereign guarantee bonds and monetization of assets of BSNL/MTNL. The following is the progress of implementation of revival measures:

- i. VRS has been successfully implemented in BSNL and MTNL. Total 92,910 employees (BSNL – 78,569, MTNL – 14,387) opted for VRS. As a result, salary expenditure is reduced by around 50% in BSNL and around 80% in MTNL during FY 2020-21.
- ii. Cabinet approved administrative allotment of spectrum for 4G services to MTNL and BSNL through capital infusion by the Government. The Government also approved the allocation of spectrum of Delhi and Mumbai (MTNL areas) to BSNL to have pan-India presence in 4G services. Amount of Rs. 23,270 crores is allotted for revised cost of 4G spectrum in FY 2022-23.
- iii. For monetization of Land/Building assets, DIPAM approved monetization of 11 assets of BSNL (tentative value Rs. 18,200 Crores) and 06 assets of MTNL (tentative value Rs. 5,158 Crores) in phase-1 for which IPCs (International Property Consultants) have been appointed. Out of these properties in phase-1, 4 properties (reserved price of Rs 670 crores) of BSNL and 2 properties (reserved price of Rs 290 crores) of MTNL have been taken for e-auction; However, the bids are received only for one property of MTNL.
- iv. With the help of sovereign guarantee extended by the Government, BSNL has raised Rs. 8500 Crores and MTNL has raised Rs. 6500 Crores. The amount realized through the bonds has been utilized to restructure existing high cost debt.
- v. The Government also approved in-principle approval for merger of BSNL and MTNL. Due to financial reasons including high debt of MTNL, the merger of MTNL with BSNL is deferred. However, close co-operation and service integration between BSNL and MTNL has been undertaken.
- vi. Further, Government has also issued instructions to all Govt. Departments/ CPSEs/ Central Autonomous Organizations for mandatory utilization of BSNL/MTNL network for internet/broadband, landline and leased line requirements.
