

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5471
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25TH MARCH, 2026**

**DEACTIVATION OF INCOMING MOBILE SERVICES IMMEDIATELY AFTER
EXPIRY OF RECHARGE VALIDITY**

5471. SHRI RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that several telecom operators deactivate incoming calls and SMS immediately after the expiry of prepaid recharge validity, often from the very next day and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken note that millions of poor, rural and migrant users keep mobile connections mainly for receiving incoming calls, bank OTPs and Government scheme alerts linked with platforms such as Unique Identification Authority of India and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes, in consultation with the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, to mandate that incoming calls and essential SMS services remain active for at least six months even without recharge; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to safeguard citizens' access to essential communication services?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(DR. PEMMASANI CHANDRA SEKHAR)**

(a) to (d) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 empowers the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to notify the rates of telecommunication services. As per the existing tariff framework, tariff for mobile and data services is under forbearance, except for services such as national roaming, rural fixed line services, mobile number portability and leased circuits. Subject to compliance with extant regulatory provisions, service providers are free to design and offer tariffs based on their understanding of the market situation and other commercial considerations. Competition exists in the market and the policies of the government and regulatory framework notified by TRAI has resulted in India having one of the lowest tariffs for subscribers of mobile services
