

[1 August, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) In the TRAI's Telecom. Tariff Order (20th Amendment) dated 14th March, 2002, the rental for commercial subscribers has been increased from Rs. 250/- to Rs. 310/- per month and number of free calls per month was reduced from 75 to 30. However, this Tariff order could not be implemented by MTNL due to difficulty of segregating/classifying the subscribers into commercial and non-commercial subscriber categories as per the definition in the TRAI Order. Besides, it was felt that at the present juncture of evolving competition, a tariff increase could involve loss of customers to other competitors. So, MTNL is at present continuing with the existing tariff structure.

(c) In the standard package for commercial subscribers, the TRAI has reduced the number of free calls permitted per month of a billing cycle to 45 for rural subscribers and 30 for urban subscribers, as against earlier standard package of 75 and 60 metered calls respectively.

(d) Since the TRAI's Telecom Tariff Order (20th Amendment) 2002, specifies an upper limit, the operators are free to fix tariffs below this level.

Computerisation of Post Offices in Chhattisgarh

†1656. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Post Offices proposed to be computerized in Chhattisgarh during 2002-2003;

(b) the amount likely to be spent for this purpose; and

(c) by when, the said project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SANJAY PASWAN): (a) During the year 2002-2003, three post offices are proposed for computerization in Chhattisgarh.

(b) The anticipated expenditure involved is Rs. 30 lakh approximately.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The completion of project will depend on timely availability of funds, development of necessary infrastructure and procurement of required hardware.

Outstanding telephone dues

†1657. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the outstanding dues pertaining to telephone bills and other items of BSNL and MTNL, till date;

(b) whether it is a fact that BSNL and MTNL have decided to seek cooperation of departmental employees and others on Commission basis to recover the outstanding bills;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when, it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) As on 31.03.2002 the amount outstanding for over three months old bills and other items in respect of BSNL and MTNL is as under.

	Rs. in crores	
	Telephones	Other items
BSNL	2310	185
MTNL	860	73

(b) to (d) An incentive scheme for its staff for recovery of the old outstanding dues against closed connections was in operation in BSNL till 31.03.02.

MTNL is allowing incentive to its staff against realization of old outstanding dues against closed connections as per following rates:

(a) dues over 10 years old	25%
(b) dues between 5 to 10 years old	20%
(c) dues between 2 to 5 years old	15%
(d) dues over 1 year but less than 2 year old	5%

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.