

time zones given the longitudinal difference between the extreme regions of the country. The Committee observed that having separate time zones may not provide any major advantage to the States but may pose difficulties in view of differential timings to be framed for airlines, railways, communication services, etc. It recommended that advancing the work/institutional timing in appropriate States would be more effective solution which can be implemented through administrative actions by the concerned State.

#### **Approval from FIPB**

\*388. SHRI JAIPRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the telecom companies obtain licences by furnishing wrong information and thereafter fail to comply with conditions related to net worth, roll out, substantial equity, lock-in period, etc. and bring in foreign equity without any approval from Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB);

(b) if so, the details of the companies and their shareholding pattern;

(c) whether bringing in foreign equity without FIPB approval would not threaten national security; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to ensure that before fulfilling the criteria given in the licencing conditions, including roll out, these companies are not allowed to bring in foreign equity?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The telecom licenses are issued in terms of the extant Guidelines subject to fulfillment of eligibility criteria which includes requirement of networth, paid-up equity capital, compliance to substantial equity clause and compliance to FDI guidelines. Presently, no violation of FDI norms by telecom licensee companies has been found.

(c) In terms of Press Note 3/2007 of Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) applicable for telecom sector, 74% composite (direct + indirect) FDI is permitted for telecom services subject to licensing and security conditions. FDI upto 49% is permitted under automatic route. FDI of more than 49% and upto 74% is permitted through Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) subject to security vetting of foreign as well as Indian investors.

(d) Subject to license conditions, there is no prior requirement of completion of roll out obligations, before bringing in FDI in the licensee company.

#### **Water level in several cities**

\*389. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that water level in several cities including NCR is dipping at an alarming pace;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the precautionary steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) The study of ground water levels carried out jointly by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the State Governments revealed decline in ground water levels ranging between 0.07 and 3.32 metre per year in the country including NCR. About 15% of the blocks/talukas/mandals in the country are over-exploited. Decline in ground water levels has also been observed in parts of some cities in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Pondicherry and West Bengal including 7 out of 9 districts of NCR. Decline in the level of ground water is attributable to withdrawal of ground water in excess of natural recharge.

(c) The Government has implemented the following measures aimed at management and development of ground water resources in the country:-

- Circulation of Model Bill to all the States/Union Territories to facilitate regulation and control of development and management of ground water.
- Issue of directions by Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) to States having 'over-exploited' areas for taking necessary measures to adopt/promote artificial recharge to ground water/rain water harvesting, conservation of ground water and also to include provision for making construction of roof top rain water harvesting structures mandatory under the building bye-laws.
- Notification of 43 areas by CGWA in 10 States/UTs including South and South-west districts of NCT Delhi, Behror and Gurgaon blocks of Haryana, Municipal Corporations of Faridabad and Ghaziabad for regulation of ground water development.
- Implementation of schemes/programmes namely Artificial Recharge of Ground Water through Dugwell for over-exploited, critical and semi-critical areas of hard rock region covering seven States, Demonstrative Projects for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water and Rain Water Harvesting, Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies and Farmers Participatory Action Research Programme (FPARP).
- Institution of Bhoomijal Samvardhan Puraskars and National Water Award to encourage adoption of innovative practices of ground water augmentation.
- A Web Enabled Ground Water Information System (WEGWIS) for dissemination of ground water related information to all stake holders.

Further, the State Governments have also taken measures such as rainwater harvesting and recharge to ground water to address the issue of over-exploitation. The Government of NCT Delhi has issued directions which *inter-alia* provide that abstraction of ground water for any purpose would require prior permission from New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) in respect of NDMC areas and Delhi Jal Board (DJB) in respect of other areas of Delhi.

#### **Complaints regarding private mobile companies**

\*390. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) received in 2008-09 regarding the private mobile telephone companies;

(b) whether TRAI has addressed these complaints;

(c) whether it is a fact that private telecom and mobile companies are inaccessible and do not even respond properly on their stipulated service complaint numbers;

(d) whether it is deliberate strategy of such companies to avoid even the registry of such complaints; and

(e) in what manner TRAI would make private telecom companies responsive and be accessible to the public in respect of their complaints?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) During the year 2008-09, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) received 2186 complaints against private mobile telephone companies.

(b) TRAI takes cognizance of the complaints affecting a large number of consumers or complaints alleging violation of TRAI orders, directions or regulations. Individual consumer complaints received in TRAI are forwarded to the concerned service provider for necessary action. As per reports of service providers, these complaints are generally resolved.

(c) and (d) In order to make the telecommunications service providers easily accessible and responsive to the complaints of consumers, the TRAI notified the "Telecom Consumers Protection and Redressal of Grievances Regulations, 2007" on 4th May 2007, which provide for effective, speedy and inexpensive redressal of grievances of telecom consumers. As per this regulation, all telecom service providers are mandated to establish Call Centre, earmark, allot or establish a basic