

Autonomy to Postal Department

3216. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Postal Department in the country is not able to compete with the private players since it is totally under the control of Government and does not have any autonomy like Railways, Civil Aviation, etc.;

(b) whether it is also a fact that if autonomy is given to Postal Department it will have independence to formulate its own policies so as to compete with private sector;

(c) if so, the reasons for not providing autonomy to Postal Department; and

(d) the steps that Government proposed to take to give autonomy to Postal Department?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) No, Sir. Department of Posts through its large network, provides services all over the country including rural, hilly and remote areas. The Postal Network is used not only for mail services, it is also used for Money Order, Saving Banks, Postal Life Insurance, Rural Postal Life Insurance and for carrying out various welfare activities of the Government, such as payment of old age pension, disbursement of wages through Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme etc. In comparison, private couriers provide services in limited areas, mostly in urban parts.

(b) No, Sir. The Department has the independence to frame its policies with the approval of the competent authorities wherever necessary.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

(d) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Call drops

3217. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the consumers incur financial loss on account of call drops;

(b) if so, the action being taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) to what extent the consumers are being compensated for call drops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) to (c) Sir, the Call drop in a network can be caused by any or combination of the reasons relating to equipment, transmission, interference, handover failure due to inadequate coverage and congestion, antenna related problem etc. Call drop can happen at any point of time after the call is established. In cases where the call has dropped, call charges are levied to customers upto the duration of the call and rounded to the

pulse rate as per customer's tariff plan. In case of per second plan the charges are levied for actual duration of the call in seconds.

Role of DoP in UIDAI

3218. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Department of Posts will be participating in the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) project;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the exact role of the Department of Posts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Department of Posts has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on 30.04.2010 for a period of two years for undertaking collection, packaging and delivery of data sticks (flash drives or hard disk drives) through Speed Post and for printing, enveloping, addressing, pre-sorting and delivery of 'Aadhaar' (UID) letters through Speed Post to the recipient, at present.

Cellular tower infrastructure

‡3219. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that in view of the need of existing consumers, the condition of cellular tower infrastructure in the country is not so strong as it should be;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether Government is aware that the radiation emitting from the cellular tower has adverse impact on environment and human health; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) to (c) Sir, Cellular towers take care of the three major vitals of mobile telephony, that is, coverage, capacity and mobility. All operators plan their installation of cellular towers keeping in mind their network and business requirement. Need of existing consumers is being met with available Cellular tower infrastructure which is being augmented by the operators from time to time to meet additional coverage and capacity requirement.

(d) and (e) A committee, setup under the Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to study the effects of radiations from mobile phone towers and related aspects, concluded that "overall there is not enough evidence to show direct health hazards of

‡Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.