

- (e) whether it has also contradicted the 'zero loss theory' in 2G spectrum allocation;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) to (g) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in their letter dated 8th February, 2011 to the Secretary, DoT has recommended the following estimated price as per the 2010 value of spectrum in 1800MHz band on per MHz basis for a period of 20 years.

- (i) Rs. 1769.75 Crores per MHz all India upto 6.2 MHz
- (ii) Rs. 4571.87 Crores per MHz all India beyond 6.2 MHz (incremental spectrum)

Further, TRAI has recommended that the above values given by the experts be adopted as the best available figure. TRAI also recommended that the charging of spectrum in the 1800 MHz band beyond 6.2 MHz, on the basis of these estimated figures, should be unambiguously subject to the condition that the final price could be suitably modified to reflect the market price based on the following:

- (a) Auction of surplus 2G spectrum in 1800 MHz band if auctioned within 12 months of the decision by the Government in a given Licensed Service Area (LSA).
- (b) Otherwise, price in the LSAs where auction was conducted can be appropriately modified for the LSA where auction is not feasible.

TRAI also recommended that these prices may be made applicable from 1.4.2010, prorated for the remaining validity of the respective licences while charging for excess spectrum. These recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

Settlement charges for calls to Middle East countries

1763. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a disparity in settlement charges for calls to Middle East countries, amongst operators in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is considering a proposal for level playing field amongst operators, so that, customers are benefited by offering cheaper call rates to Middle East markets;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, whether DoT and TRAI have been assigned the task of intervening in the matter so that there is level playing field amongst operators, which would bring down the call rates benefiting the customers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) and (b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has reported that it has been brought to its notice that operators in Middle East have unilaterally raised the settlement rate paid by Indian International Long Distance Operators (ILDOs) for the traffic from India to those countries. However, the settlement rates paid by the foreign operators to Indian operators is low due to intense competition amongst Indian service providers.

(c) and (d) Regulation of tariff for telecom services has been mandated to TRAI vide TRAI Act of 1997.

(e) TRAI, in exercise of its powers, has put carriage charges for International Long Distance calls including International termination charges (i.e. International settlement) under forbearance. However, in view of (a) & (b) above, TRAI has sought views of the stakeholders on the issue.

Telephone circles

1764. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone circles functioning in the country and the area of their jurisdictions;

(b) whether Government is proposing to change the policy as regards telephone circles; and

(c) the details of the new policy and whether it is a fact that Government proposes to establish circles both for communications and for Postal Department, zone-wise to be created under the new policy?