

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is taking action for improving the mobile services in rural areas of Pali and Jodhpur Service Switching Areas (SSAs) by planning of new mobile Base Transceiver Stations (BTSS). 9 numbers of BTSS and 23 number BTSS have been commissioned in rural areas of Pali and Jodhpur SSAs respectively under Phase VII Project of BSNL recently. 1 number and 13 numbers BTSS are being installed in Pali and Jodhpur SSA respectively in the balance period of the current financial year.

Department has identified 3 numbers of villages (Osian, Bhopalgarh and Shergarh) in Pali and 3 numbers of villages (Raipur, Rohat and Desuri) in Jodhpur, which are not covered by 2G mobile services and where connectivity has been planned. DPR for connectivity to these villages has been targeted along with connectivity to other uncovered villages in Rajasthan in the current financial year.

Free roaming and nation-wide MNP facility

1445. SHRIMATINAZNIN FARUQUE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any time-frame has been fixed to provide free roaming and Nation-wide Mobile Number Portability (MNP) facility as per the National Telecom Policy, 2012; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Department of Telecommunications has not fixed any time frame to provide free roaming. However, in the context of decline in costs and one of the objectives of the National Telecom Policy, 2012, is to work towards One Nation - Free Roaming throughout the country, the tariffs for national roaming service were reviewed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in the year 2013.

The issue of free national roaming *i.e.* tariff regime (*i.e.* a tariff regime in which incoming calls would become free of charge while the outgoing calls would be charged at the same tariff as that for the outgoing calls made from the home service area) was raised in the consultation paper on 'Review of tariff for National Roaming' issued by TRAI on 25.02.2013. From the comments of the stakeholders on the Consultation Paper, it was observed that most of the stakeholders were not in favour of free national roaming regime. Stakeholders were strongly averse to a regime in which incoming calls while on national roaming could become free. After analyzing the comments received from the

stakeholders, a view was taken by TRAI that fully free national roaming across all the tariff schemes is not practicable due to the following reasons:—

- (i) Tariff regime of ‘home equal to roam’ for outgoing voice calls and Short Messaging Service (SMS) may result in cross subsidization of roaming subscribers at the expense of non-roaming subscribers, as a result of which the home tariffs may increase.
- (ii) Tariff regime of free incoming voice calls while on national roaming may create serious distortions in the telecom service market. Such a regime would create arbitrage opportunity that could lead to SIM movement behaviour across the circles.

Through the Telecommunication Tariff Order (TTO) (55th Amendment), 2013 dated 17.06.2013, which came into effect on 01.07.2013, TRAI made the following changes in the tariff regime for national roaming service:

- (i) Reduce the ceiling tariffs for national roaming service, as indicated in the following table:

Item	Ceiling tariff prior to TTO (55th Amendment), 2013	Ceiling tariff as per TTO (55th Amendment), 2013
Outgoing local voice call	₹ 1.40 per minute	₹ 1.00 per minute
Outgoing long distance (inter-circle) voice call	₹ 2.40 per minute	₹ 1.50 per minute
Incoming voice call	₹ 1.75 per minute	₹ 0.75 per minute
Outgoing local SMS	Forbearance	₹ 1.00 per SMS
Outgoing long distance (inter circle) SMS	Forbearance	₹ 1.50 per SMS

- (ii) Permitted Special Tariff Vouchers (STVs) and Combo Vouchers (CVs) for national roaming service to provide flexibility and convenience to the consumers; and
- (iii) Mandated the wireless access service providers to offer special roaming tariff plans in which subscribers can avail partially free roaming, or fully free roaming in lieu of payment of fixed charges.

National Telecom Policy 2012 envisages achieving of One Nation-Full Mobile Number Portability in the country. In this regard, the Department has issued instructions on 3rd November, 2014 to telecom service providers to implement full mobile number portability throughout the country within a time period of six months.

Manufacturing of telecom equipments within the country

1446. SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any initiative to encourage manufacturing of telecom equipments within the country; and .

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has taken the following initiatives to encourage manufacturing of telecom equipments within the country:

- The policy for providing preference to domestic manufacturers for 23 notified telecom products in Government procurement has already been implemented.
- Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) Scheme provides financial assistance for creating world-class infrastructure for electronics manufacturing units and Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS) provides financial incentives to offset disability and attract investments in the manufacturing of electronics products (including telecom).
- Government has approved setting up of two semiconductor wafer fabrication (FAB) manufacturing facilities in India which would create the necessary ecosystem for design and manufacturing of telecom equipments.
- The Government has imposed basic custom duty at 10% on specified telecommunication products that are outside the purview of the information technology agreement and has also imposed education cess on imported electronic products to provide parity between domestically produced goods and imported goods.
- Foreign direct investment up to 100% is allowed in manufacturing of telecom products under the automatic route.

Further, Telecommunications Standards Development Society, India (TSDSI)- an industry led autonomous “not for profit” Standards Development Organization (SDO)