

Landline and mobile connections of BSNL in Kerala

2303. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of landline and mobile connections of BSNL in Kerala circle at present;

(b) whether there is further demand for fresh connections of both, if so, the requirement thereof annually;

(c) whether continuous severed connections are due to unsatisfactory services;

(d) whether delay in replacement of old machines and accessories and overuse of the capacity of existing ones are some of the reasons for poor quality of BSNL service in Kerala; and

(e) if so, whether Government will take immediate measures to get this circle new machines and accessories?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Details of number of landline and mobile connections of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in Kerala circle at present is given below:

Landline connections	Mobile connections
23,70,733	69,17,185

(b) BSNL has reported that demand for fresh connections of landline and mobile services during current financial year from April to November, 2015 stood at 67,251 and more than 10 lakh respectively.

(c) and (d) No Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of (c) and (d) above.

Increase in mobile connectivity

†2304. SHRIMATI KAHKASHAN PERWEEN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of mobile connections is increasing while the number of landline connections is decreasing continuously in the country;

(b) whether the problem of call drop is increasing due to rise in number of mobile connections or it is due to other reasons; and

(c) the steps being taken by Government to deal with the problem of call drop, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Sir, It is a fact that the number of mobile connections (wireless) is increasing while the number of landline connections (wire line) is decreasing.

(b) As per Mobile service providers the common reasons attributed to call drops are equipment faults, frequent load shedding in some circles, difficulty in site acquisition for new sites, removal/shutting of existing mobile towers due to radiation concerns by various authorities/RWA, spectrum crunch in certain circles and restrictions near international border. In addition to these, poor Radio Frequency (RF) Network optimization, non upgradation of Network maintenance tools to international standards and inadequate investment in Network capacity expansion by Mobile service providers also leads to call drop problem.

(c) TRAI is closely monitoring the performance of service providers against the benchmarks for the various Quality of Service parameters laid down by TRAI through regulations issued from time to time. In this regard, the service providers have to submit compliance report on monthly/quarterly basis. Wherever the Quality of Service benchmarks are not met the explanation of the service providers is called for and after considering the response of the service provider financial disincentive are imposed. TRAI has now made the financial disincentives more stringent in cases of continuous non-compliance with the benchmark for mobile service. TRAI issued the 9th Amendment to the Telecom Consumers Protection Regulations on 16th October 2015, mandating compensation to the consumers by the mobile service providers for call drops with effect from 01.01.2016. As per these regulations, every originating service provider providing Cellular Mobile Telecom Service shall, for each call drop within its network,

- (i) Credit the account of the calling consumer by one rupee: Provided that such credit in the account of the calling consumer shall be limited to three dropped call in a day;
- (ii) Provide the calling consumer, through SMS/USSD message, within four hours of the occurrence of call drop, the details of amount credited in his account and

- (iii) In case of post-paid consumers, provide the details of the credit in the next bill.

In addition to above, elaborate testing of mobile service operators' Network is being done by Department of Telecommunication (DoT). Fortnightly review is being done at the highest level in DoT. Signs of improvements are already there and Operators are required to take further initiatives for addressing call drop issue.

**Telephone/mobile connectivity to scheduled caste category
households in rural areas**

2305. SHRI P. L. PUNIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that a considerable population of Scheduled Castes in rural India do not have any telephone/mobile connection;
- (b) if so, the details thereof for last five years, State-wise; and
- (c) the various steps taken by Government to ensure a telephone/mobile connection to Scheduled Caste households in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Telecom service providers do not maintain community-wise subscribers data.

- (b) Does not arise.

(c) There is no specific scheme to provide telephone/mobile connections to Scheduled Caste households in rural areas. However, Government of India is committed to ensure mobile connectivity in every part of the country including rural, tribal and remote areas. Government of India has, therefore, implemented/planned various schemes with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to provide wireline/wireless/broadband services to people in the rural and remote areas. The ongoing projects that will cover the mobile connectivity to rural, tribal and remote areas are given in the Statement.

Statement

Ongoing projects of Department of Telecommunication

- (i) **Bharat Net / National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN):** Bharat/NOFN Net was planned, in 2011, to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats in the country through optical fibre utilizing existing fibres of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), RailTel and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) (and of any desirous private operator) and laying incremental