

public may not be able to contact their families in emergency situations. As such mandating such instructions may create more problems to the common citizen instead of helping the security agencies to trace the hoax calls.

Sale of SIM cards without valid proof of identity

2303. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that private cellular companies are giving SIM cards to customers without collecting any valid proof and identity, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether TRAI has taken any action on the erring cellular companies in this matter, the details thereof; and
- (c) the remedial measures being taken by TRAI to curtail such illegal business by private service providers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Sir, During the verification/audit of Customer Acquisition Forms (CAFs) of mobile connections belonging to different Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) including the private cellular companies carried out by Telecom Enforcement, Resource and Monitoring (TERM) Cells, cases of invalid address proof and identity, missing CAF etc. have been noticed.

A total of around 7.43 crore CAFs of all the TSPs including private companies, have been audited by the TERM Cells as on 29.02.2016, out of which a total of 41.42 lakhs CAFs were found to be non-complaint to CAF verification norms.

(b) and (c) Actions for non-compliance of CAF guidelines on defaulting TSPs are being taken by TERM Cells which include imposition of applicable financial penalties on erring TSPs and filing of complaints/FIR against the apparently forged cases. In addition, in case of non-complaint CAF, TSP has to either disconnect the connection or submit the compliant CAF to TERM Cells within 72 hours.

A total financial penalty of ₹ 2234.71 crores have been imposed on defaulting TSPs for violation of CAF verification norms as on 29.02.2016.

TSPs have been mandated by DoT to carry out adequate verification of each and every Customer before enrolling them as subscribers by verifying their identity with specified documents for Proof of Identity (Pol) and Proof of Address (PoA). DoT has been issuing various guidelines to TSPs to strengthen the verification process. The existing

instructions on subscriber verification dated 09.08.2012 have been issued by DoT in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Further, TERM Cells carry out sample verification of CAF and related documents of the acquired customers, by all TSPs, on monthly basis, by generating random samples of 0.1% of the customer base at the end of each month. The sample size in respect of J&K, NE and Assam service areas is 0.2% on quarterly basis. This verification process by TERM Cells brings out non-compliant cases where DoT guidelines were violated by TSPs in acquiring the customer.

Aims and objectives of National Optical Fibre Network

2304. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the aims and objectives of the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) for Gram Panchayats;
- (b) whether it is a fact that some Gram Panchayats have been identified for implementing the above on pilot basis, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the identified Gram Panchayats were given 100 Mbps bandwidth till October, 2012; and
- (d) if so, whether the period has further been extended and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)/BharatNet project aims at connecting all Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the country through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC), radio and satellite medium for providing broadband connectivity. The project is being executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), namely, Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL), which has been incorporated on 25.02.2012 under Indian Companies Act, 1956. Under this project, at least 100 Mbps bandwidth has to be provided in all the estimated 2.5 lakh GPs for utilization by all categories of service providers on non-discriminatory basis including Internet Service Providers. These access providers like mobile operators, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Cable TV operators, content providers can launch various services in rural areas. Various applications for e-health, e-education, e-governance etc. can be provided.

(b) to (d) Three pilot projects were conducted in three blocks covering 59 Gram Panchayats in three different States. These blocks were Arian in Ajmer district (Rajasthan), Parvada in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Panisagar in North Tripura district (Tripura). The pilots were completed on 15.10.2012. Bandwidth of 100 Mbps is available in each of these Gram Panchayats.