

Population not connected to internet

712. SHRI A. U. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number and percentage of population not connected to the internet currently;

(b) whether Government has taken cognizance of 'slow/fast lanes' sponsored data and prioritization, if so, the details thereof and the corrective action taken, if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government has formulated the legal framework for net neutrality and digital consumer right, if so, the details thereof and the time-line for the same, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Sir, as per information received from Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), there are 331.66 million internet subscribers in the country as on 31st December, 2015.

However, as per the report of Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) on the subject "Internet in India 2015" published in November, 2015, there were 375 Million ever internet users (users claiming to access the internet at least once in their lives) in the month of October 2015 and the same were expected to reach 402 Million in December, 2015 and 462 Million in the month of June, 2016.

(b) and (c) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has requested TRAI to provide its recommendations on Net Neutrality including traffic management. The same is under consideration in TRAI.

Further, in order to have proper policy response with respect to various issues involved in Net Neutrality, DoT had also constituted a six member committee in January, 2015. The Committee has submitted its report in May, 2015, which has been placed in public domain.

Policy on Net Neutrality including traffic management shall be finalized after taking into consideration the recommendations of committee constituted by DoT and recommendations of TRAI in the matter.