

[19 August, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

(a) by when, Government are going to come-out with a comprehensive policy on spectrum to redress the several problems that are being faced by the telecom operators;

(b) whether any consultations have been started by TRAI in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) TRAI has issued a consultation paper on Spectrum related issued viz. "Efficient Utilization, Spectrum Allocation and Spectrum Pricing" and comments have been received from various stakeholders. Open House discussions are proposed to be held by TRAI in few cities during August and September, 2004. Recommendations when received from TRAI, would suitably be considered for revision of the existing National Frequency Allocation Plan, 2002.

Mobile phone sets in N.E.R.

1663. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mobile phone sets in the North-Eastern States;

(b) the names of the sub-division of Tripura covered/not covered by mobile phones;

(c) whether the terrorist prone areas have been covered by mobile phones;

(d) whether all out efforts would be taken to cover the major towns of the State of Tripura within a shorter time-frame; and

(e) whether more sets of mobile phones would be made available for Agartala?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The number of cellular phone users in North Eastern States as on 31.07.2004 are 1,62,812.

(b) Sadar and R.K. Pur Sub-Divisions of Tripura have been provided with Cellular mobile services. The sub-divisions of Tripura where mobile

service have not been provided are Sonamura, Bishalghar, Khowai, Belonia, Sabroom, Amarpur, Dharamnagar, Kailashahar, Kamchanpur, Ambassa, Kemalpur, Longtorai Valley and Gandhachera.

(c) and (d) Mobile Service Providers have plans to cover all major towns up to Sub-Divisional Headquarters during 2005 subject to Techno-commercial feasibility and clearance from Ministry of Home Affairs for towns falling within 10 Km of the International border.

(e) Yes, Sir.

Rural telephone obligation

1664. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has proposed switching over to revenue sharing regime for collection of Access Deficit Charge, the money to be paid by operators of BSNL for carrying out rural telephone obligations;

(b) if so, whether this move could lead to a fall in tariff especially from mobile phones to fixed line phones;

(c) if so, to what extent this proposal would be beneficial to the telephone users; and

(d) to what extent, rural telephone obligations would be met by this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued a Consultation paper on "Access Deficit Review" on 23.6.2004 seeking comments of the various Stake Holders on various issues including the collection of Access Deficit as a percentage of revenue share. TRAI has not taken any decision so far.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.