

(b) The details of the budget allocations under Mechanisation and Modernisation and of postal services under the plan head during the past 3 years are as follows:—

Financial Year	Budget Estimate (B.E) (₹ in crores)	Revised Estimate (R.E) (₹ in crores)
2014-15	616.31	172.00
2015-16	357.20	412.70
2016-17	300.00	303.61

(c) Due to curtailment of overall funds by Ministry of Finance for the Department of Posts under Plan segment from ₹ 800 crore (B.E) to ₹ 300 crore at (R.E) stage, there was reduction of funds under 'Mechanisation and Modernisation' from ₹ 616.31 crore to ₹ 172 crore. This led to disparity between B.E and R.E for the year 2014-15 under 'Mechanisation and Modernisation' of postal services.

Participation of women in electronic start-ups

2299. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that women have little participation in electronic start-ups;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the road map for increasing their participation in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The gender disaggregated data with respect to startups recognized by the Government is available with the Government with effect from June 15, 2017 after the revised recognition process in line with the amended definition of startup was implemented. As per the data available with the Government, out of the 91 start-ups recognized from the Electronics Sector, 50 startups have at-least one woman Director/Partner.

- (c) Does not arise in view of above.

Disconnection of landline connections by customers of BSNL and MTNL

2300. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that most of the customers of BSNL and MTNL are disconnecting their landline connections due to increase in monthly rental charges and service problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of landline telephones that have been disconnected by BSNL and MTNL customers during the last three years; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by BSNL and MTNL to provide landline connections at affordable rate and quality service to the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Customers of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) have surrendered landline connections due to:—

- (i) Tendency of shifting to mobile service because of their convenience, utility and availability even while on move.
- (ii) Frequent interruption in landline service due to cable damages by digging work by various agencies for road widening, water and drainage activities, laying of electrical cable etc.
- (iii) Delay in restoration of damaged cables, obtaining permission from local authorities etc. which affect timely restoration of landline services.
- (iv) Migration of landline subscribers to mobile segment and shifting to other operators, there has been some surrender of landline telephones of BSNL and MTNL.

(b) Details of landline telephones that have been surrendered by customers of BSNL and MTNL during last three years are as under:

Year	Number of landline telephone surrendered by customers	
	BSNL	MTNL
2014-15	30,97,437	1,29,910
2015-16	28,52,231	1,18,895
2016-17	24,01,893	1,25,023

(c) Following steps are being taken by BSNL and MTNL to provide landline connections at affordable rate and quality service to the customer:

BSNL

- (i) BSNL has launched a promotional offer in which new customers can avail BSNL Landline service @₹ 49/- per month only. Under this scheme, Fixed Monthly Charges of ₹ 49/- shall be charged for first six months and one free BSNL prepaid SIM card will be provided to customer.
- (ii) Under the Sunday Free Calling Scheme, on all Sundays BSNL landline users are allowed to make unlimited free call to any network's mobile and landline within India.

- (iii) Under Free Night Calling scheme, BSNL landline users are allowed to make unlimited free calls to any network's mobile and landline within India between 9 PM to 7 AM.
- (iv) Retention of non-payment disconnected numbers by giving instalment payment options and pursuing the case on individual basis.
- (v) To bring back disconnected landline connection due to non-payment, BSNL has introduced waive off installation charges and first month Fixed Monthly Charges (FMC) to realise outstanding dues.
- (vi) To provide Quality of Service (QoS) to the consumer, BSNL has launched integrated services *i.e.*, voice, video and data by using the Next Generation Network (NGN) technology in the country. With migration to NGN technology, the customers will get better communication facilities on wireline by providing enhanced Value Added Services (VAS) like personalized Ring Back tone, Broadband VAS, Multimedia video conferencing and IP Centrex etc.
- (vii) To achieve further improvement in wireline, customer satisfaction etc. instructions have been issued to field units to monitor the performance personally and not to default on the benchmarks prescribed by TRAI.
- (viii) Circle/field units regularly take both corrective and preventive actions like replacing faulty drop wires, attending termination point, rehabilitation of outdoor network etc. to meet the prescribed benchmark on QoS parameters.

MTNL

- (i) Calls to any landline and mobile network both Mumbai as well as Delhi are free between 10 PM and 7 AM.
- (ii) All STD Calls are charged as local calls between 10 PM and 7 AM.
- (iii) Upgradation/Rehabilitation of external plant is being done periodically.
- (iv) Regular change of drop wires to make it joint free.
- (v) Regular check of subscribers wiring.
- (vi) New exchanges are being installed/provided to bring the cable loop length within three kilometer range in order to improve the connectivity network.
- (vii) Close coordination with other agencies during digging work to avoid damage to underground cables.
- (viii) The theft prone routes are being patrolled in the night to check theft of cables and cable theft alarms are being installed on primary cable.
- (ix) Monitoring at different stages so that faults can be attended at the earliest.

- (x) Customers are contacted on mobile to fix convenient time to attend the fault. In case of locked premises SMS being sent to expedite fault rectification.
- (xi) Faults handling is improved through provisioning of SMS to line staff/officers, as well as customers.

Internet facility in remote villages of Chhattisgarh

†2301. SHRI RAM VICHAR NETAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is no internet facility in many remote villages of Chhattisgarh despite Digital India Campaign and the speed of internet is very slow in those villages in which it is available, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) the details of villages devoid of internet connections in the country, especially Chhattisgarh, district-wise;

(c) by when the high speed internet connectivity in each and every village of Chhattisgarh could be expected; and

(d) the measures taken to improve internet speed in the villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (d) BharatNet Project, which is one of the pillars of Digital India Programme, is planned to establish a network infrastructure by connecting all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country through Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) and by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, aerial fibre, radio and satellite media, for providing broadband connectivity by all categories of service providers on non-discriminatory basis.

The project is planned to be implemented in phases. Under Phase I of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are to be connected by laying underground OFC by November, 2017. Under Phase II, connectivity will be provided to balance GPs in the country by March, 2019. The State-wise status of BharatNet, Phase I as on 23.07.2017, is given in Statement-I (*See below*).

State-wise and District-wise details of villages in the country without internet connectivity are not available. Telecom Service Area-wise rural subscriber base of Internet as on March, 2017 as submitted by service providers to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is, however, given in Statement-II (*See below*).

With the implementation of BharatNet, it is expected that internet speed will improve.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.