

the capability of the service providers to raise the resources and invest in telecom networks for up gradation and maintenance. Telecom Commission has requested TRAI to revisit and review its tariff orders/direction/decisions in the larger interest of Government revenues as well as the telecom sector as also to ensure orderly growth of the telecom sector.

TRAI has responded that the promotional tariffs are as per the prevailing guidelines/directions and reduced tariff *inter-alia* maximizes the overall economic growth of the sector and results in increase in productivity. Further, stating that reduction in tariffs has benefited the customers. The fixation of tariff and consequent impact of Government revenues needs to be seen in the perspective, based on access and equity.

TRAI has requested Telecom Commission to consider its recommendations with respect to the license terms and conditions for different telecom services, methodology of estimation of revenue for levying license fee and spectrum usage charges, increased duration and installment for payment of spectrum fee and amount of Universal Services Obligation Fund.

An Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) has been formed by the Government to look into the issue of Stress in Telecom Sector. The IMG is seized of the matter.

4G data traffic

706. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the high speed broadband technology 4G drove data traffic across the country in 2016, making up 60 per cent of incremental data volumes;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as 4G and 3G technology usage increases, service providers will need to improve capacity through site connectivity to fibre and use of optical fibre backhaul as an efficient and higher capacity data transfer solution; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the 4G coverage is yet to penetrate across all circles, if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes Sir, high speed broadband technology 4G drove data traffic across the country in 2016.

(b) As 4G and 3G technology usage increases, site connectivity is to be augmented by using appropriate technology for backhaul like optical fibre or high bandwidth microwave.

(c) 4G services are available in all circles.

Decline in revenue of telecom operators

707. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the decline in telecom operators' revenue was due to falling tariff, which impacts their capacity to invest and can also lead to delay in spectrum payment, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that telecom service providers' debt is almost ₹4,60,000 crore, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Yes, Sir. Details of revenue figures for Q1-Q4 of 2016-17 are as below:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Revenue (in Rupees crores)	60838.9	60862.2	53998.4	35926.6

(b) Yes, Sir. As per information from State Bank of India, Telecom industry owes about Rupees 6.10475 Lakh crores to various Financial Institutions and Banks as detailed below:

Debt Liabilities of Telecom Services Providers (in ₹ crores)

Particulars	Liabilities ¹
Airtel ^{2,3}	160,322
Idea ⁴	68,211
Vodafone ⁴	70,136
Reliance Communications ³	73,224
Tata ³	52,390
Aircel ⁴	29,569