

- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) The Telecom Commission, in its meeting held on 11th July, 2018, has granted its approval to the recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Net Neutrality, with minor modifications, upholding the principles of Net Neutrality.

(b) The Telecom Commission has also cleared the draft National Digital Communications Policy - 2018, which was released on 1st May, 2018 for public consultations, with minor modifications in its meeting held on 11th July, 2018.

(c) Government is committed to the fundamental principles and concept of Net Neutrality and strives for non-discriminatory access to Internet for all citizens of the country. To ensure that the regulatory framework adheres to the fundamental principles and concepts of Net Neutrality, the policy directives on Net Neutrality have been issued incorporating the principles of non-discriminatory treatment of content.

The draft National Digital Communications Policy - 2018 has several goals to achieve the overall objectives of the policy. The policy *inter-alia* contains following goals:

- (i) Attract investments of USD 100 Billion in the Digital Communications Sector,
- (ii) Provide Universal broadband coverage at 50 Mbps to every citizen.

It is proposed to achieve the goals by catalysing investments for digital communications sector and establishing a 'National Broadband Mission - Rashtriya Broadband Abhiyan' to secure universal broadband access.

Collection from licence fee and spectrum charges

1993. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government's collection from licence fee and spectrum charges has fallen;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that this reflects financial difficulties being faced by the Telecom sector;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the overall collection of licence fee and spectrum charges during the year 2017-18 was less than that collected in 2016-17; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) to (e) The details of Government's collection from licence fee and spectrum charges for two years is as under:

		(₹ in crore)
Licence Fee	15615	13262
Spectrum Charges	7244	4985
TOTAL	22859	18247

Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) was constituted on 16/05/2017 with following terms of reference:

- To examine systemic issues affecting viability and repayment capacity in telecom sector and furnish recommendations for resolution of stressed assets,
- Policy reforms and strategic interventions for Telecom sector.

As per the IMG, there are pockets of financial difficulties in the sector. However, each TSP has varying levels of debt exposure, cash flows and different capital structure.

Based on the recommendations of the IMG the Government has *inter-alia* taken the following steps to help the sector:

- (a) Increase in number of instalments from 10 to 16 for "Deferred Payment Liability of TSPs".
- (b) Relaxation of Spectrum cap to enable optimal utilization of Spectrum.

Survey for broadband/internet facility in gram panchayats

1994. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted/proposed to be conducted across the country for linking the Gram Panchayats with broadband/internet facility;