

Details of internet shutdowns

2643. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA:

SHRI P. L. PUNIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry maintains records of details pertaining to suspension of internet services in the country during law and order situations, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Ministry has taken any necessary steps to ensure that people have access to emergency communication services during internet shutdowns, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI MANOJ SINHA): (a) Central Government has not issued any order of internet shutdown under the provisions of Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017.

Police and public order are State subjects as per the Constitution and States are responsible for prevention, detection and investigation of crimes through their law enforcement machinery. Concerned State Governments are empowered to issue orders for temporary suspension of internet services to maintain law and order in the State or part thereof under the provisions contained in the Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017. Records related to internet shutdowns ordered by State Governments are not maintained by DoT.

(b) and (c) In temporary shutdown of internet services in a region, internet/data services are suspended temporarily only and other communication means/services like voice calling and Short Message Service (SMS), remain available during the suspension period of internet services, through which people in the region can communicate and access emergency communication services.

Internet users in the country

2644. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is the second highest user of internet in the world;

(b) if so, whether the people of the country prefer mobiles than Wi-Fi to access internet data therein;