

12.00 NOON

श्री मोती लाल वोरा (छत्तीसगढ़): महोदय, मैं भी अपने आपको इस विशेष उल्लेख के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

डा. डी. पी. वत्स (हरियाणा): महोदय, मैं भी अपने आपको इस विशेष उल्लेख के साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

**Demand for release of Performance grant to Tamil Nadu
Urban and Rural Local Bodies**

SHRI S. MUTHUKARUPPAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the 14th Finance Commission had allocated an amount of ₹ 365.37 crore and ₹ 414.92 crore to the Urban Local Bodies. ₹ 194.78 crore and ₹ 221.20 crore to the Rural Local Bodies in Tamil Nadu as the Performance Grant for the year 2017-18 and 2018-19. The financial year 2018-19 has already ended. All Urban Local Bodies and Rural Local Bodies are in dire need of funds to carry out their day to day affairs to provide basic amenities to citizens. Non-release of Performance Grant for the last two financial years and the second installment of Basic Grant to the Local Bodies for the Financial Year 2018-19 is causing serious financial constraint on Urban Local Bodies and Rural Local Bodies in addressing the severe drought prevailing in the State. If the fund is released immediately, it would help the severe drought-affected areas.

I, therefore, request the Ministry of Finance to release the Performance Grant of ₹ 560.15 crore and ₹ 636.12 crore (₹ 780.29 crore to Urban Local Bodies and ₹ 415.98 crore to Rural Local Bodies) for the years 2017-18 and 2018-19 and the second installment of Basic Grant of ₹ 1,608.03 crore (₹ 731.09 crore to Urban Local Bodies and ₹ 876.94 crore to Rural Local Bodies) for the financial year 2018-19 to Local Bodies in Tamil Nadu under 14th Central Finance Commission.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The other Special Mentions will be taken up in the evening. If there is time they can read, otherwise, they have to be laid on the Table of the House. Now, Question Hour.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

2G Services by BSNL

*136. SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL still provides 2G services in the country, especially in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the internet services provided by BSNL are low as compared to private operators;

(d) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is providing 2G mobile services in all of its Licensed Service Areas (LSA) including Tamil Nadu. Total 87,629 number of 2G Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) of BSNL (including 7,779 number of 2G BTS in Tamil Nadu) are working in its LSAs.

(c) to (e) As per Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the market share of internet subscribers of BSNL as compared to private operators as on 31.03.2019 is as below:—

Sl. No.	Internet Service Provider	Share (%)
1.	Reliance JioInfocomm Ltd.	48.17
2.	Vodafone Idea Limited	22.98
3.	Bharti Airtel Ltd.	22.41
4.	Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.	4.73
5.	Tata Teleservices Limited	0.48
6.	Atria Convergence Technologies Pvt. Ltd.	0.22
7.	Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.	0.20
8.	Hathway Cable & Datacom Pvt. Ltd.	0.13
9.	You Broadband India Pvt. Ltd.	0.12
10.	GTPL Broadband Pvt. Ltd.	0.04
TOTAL OF TOP 10 ISPs		99.47
OTHERS		0.53
GRAND TOTAL		100.00

TRAI also monitors the performance of telecom service providers including BSNL against the benchmark for various Quality of Service (QoS) parameters laid down by TRAI by way of QoS regulations issued from time to time, through Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs).

As per latest PMR issued by TRAI for the quarter ending March, 2019, for internet (wireline and wireless) services, BSNL is meeting the benchmarks for all the parameters in all the service areas including Tamil Nadu.

(MR. CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*)

SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Sir, as per the TRAI, our internet service provider, BSNL's share is 4.73 per cent only. Vodafone and Airtel are having a share of 22 per cent each. Reliance is having a share of 48.17 per cent. What is the Government doing to increase the market share value? What steps have they taken?

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, we need to understand that BSNL is having 50 per cent of the fixed line broadband. There is a need for more. We need 4G also. We are working on a proper package for their improvement, but we need to also understand the larger issue and I would like to flag this to this House. The total number of employees of BSNL is 1,65,179 and the employee's cost is 75.06 per cent of the total income. In case of Airtel it is 2.95 per cent. They have 20,000 employees. In Vodafone, they have 9883 employees and the cost is 5.59 per cent. Therefore, the PSUs have certain other issues. But what is happening, Sir, is the coming up of new companies has also led to India having the cheapest mobile rate, cheapest data and I am very happy to convey to this House, Sir, in data consumption, India has become the top most country in the world.

SHRI A. VIJAYAKUMAR: Normally, the private internet service providers like Airtel, Reliance and Vodafone are giving 4G and 5G. In BSNL we are still in 2G and 3G. What steps have you taken for improving this?

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, there was a historical reason for it. When the auction was taking place, a view was there that if a Government PSU is in the field, and if Government is participating in the auction, it may not be the right message. But the hon. Member is right. There is a need for induction of 4G if you are a working person, but this House needs to note that in times of natural calamities, be it Kashmir floods, earthquake in Nepal, Cyclone in Tamil Nadu and Odisha, it was only the BSNL which gave support and free services to the people. That also we need to acknowledge.

SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Sir, I agree with the hon. Minister about the services rendered by BSNL and other related Government communication firms. But I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to South Avenue where more than 200 Members of Parliament and Ministers are housed. We don't get any connection there; the private providers have better connection in comparison to the Government's. This place is so close to the Parliament.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: He has brought it to my notice. The MTNL's operation is there. I will surely look into it and then try to improve it.

SHRI T. K. S. ELANGO VAN: Sir, BSNL caters to the needs of the common man where 2G service is very essential and most of the BSNL users are 2G users. They use phones only for calls, but I understand that TRAI has not extended the 2G licence period for BSNL for some reason. What step is the Government going to take to extend the 2G license period to BSNL?

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, I believe, the BSNL is very effectively using 2G operations. How can it do without a licence? But, since a senior Member has raised that issue, I will look into it whether there is any gap as far as licence part is concerned.

श्री अमर शंकर साबले: सभापति महोदय, चूंकि पूरे इंडिया में बीएसएनएल की सबसे ज्यादा reach है, इसलिए मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि प्राइवेट कंपनियों की तरह बीएसएनएल कब अपग्रेड होगा?

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद: सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने जो प्रश्न उठाया है, वह बहुत ही प्रासंगिक है। जैसे मैंने आरंभ में अपनी टिप्पणी में बताया कि एक महीने पहले इस विभाग का मंत्री होने के बाद मैं स्वयं लगा हुआ हूँ कि हम इनको और competitive करें, professional करें, इनकी कमियों को दूर करें और मैं इसके लिए एक पैकेज पर विचार कर रहा हूँ।

सर, इसके साथ ही मुझे सदन में एक बात अवश्य कहनी है कि सरकार की ओर से पूरी कार्रवाई होगी, लेकिन बीएसएनएल हो या एमटीएनएल हो, इनके कर्मचारियों और पदाधिकारियों से मेरी अपेक्षा होगी कि वे भी सहयोग करें, professional बनें ताकि यह जो एक important PSU है, देश के लिए strategically important है, इसको हम और productive बना सकें।

National policy on electronics

*137. DR. BANDA PRAKASH: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has finalised the National Policy on Electronics to boost electronics manufacturing as well as design and innovation on a large scale in the country along with domestic production;