for conducting the auction of spectrum in the 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300-3400 MHz and 3400-3600 MHz bands for providing Access services using any technology including 5G.

(d) and (e) Normally in the interest of wider participation, there is no restriction on participating in the auction apart from the stipulation for having/acquiring a Unified License with Access service authorization. In order to facilitate the competitive bidding for spectrum, no preferential treatment given, is mooted right now.

Problem of mobile subscribers

629. SHRI DHIRAJ PRASAD SAHU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether mobile subscribers are facing problems of call drops, cross connections and Non-availability of network as the network of telecom companies are not functioning properly; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) The call drop in a mobile network can happen due to many reasons including characteristics of radio propagation for wireless communications, non-availability of sites due to acquisition problems, sealing of sites by local authorities due to fear of Electro-Magnetic Fields (EMF) from mobile radiations etc. Therefore, the occurrence of call drops is found to be common in mobile networks across the world with varying degree of occurrences. Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) in India are required to ensure that the call-drop rate in their mobile networks remain within the benchmarks laid down by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

TRAI has issued "The Standards for Quality of Service for Basic (Wireline) and Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (Fifth Amendment) Regulations, 2017" effective from 1st October 2017. These Regulations have prescribed two revised parameters for assessing call drop in mobile network, *viz.* Call drop-rate Spatial distribution measure (benchmark < 2%) implies that at-least 90% of Cells in the network should perform better than specified 2% benchmark on at-least 90% of days. Similarly, another new parameter, Call drop-rate Temporal distribution measure (benchmark < 3%) will give confidence that on at-least 90% of Days, network performed better than specified 3% benchmark for at-least 97% of the Cells.

Revised approach for assessing call drop-rate gives better insight into the network performance of service providers and help to highlight the specific areas and specific days when network performance was excellent or good or poor. The performance on these parameters is monitored quarterly through Performance Monitoring Reports (PMR) submitted by service providers for the service area as a whole.

As per the PMR for Cellular Mobile Telephone Services for the quarter ending March 2019 of

TRAI, all TSPs are complying to Drop Call Rate (DCR) benchmarks despite rapid increase in traffic volume and more stringent benchmarks, except M/s BSNL in West Bengal.

Moreover, for assessing Network availability, two parameters "BS Accumulated down-time (not available for service) (%age) (benchmark < 2%)" and "Worst affected BSs due to down-time (%age) (benchmark < 2%)" have been prescribed by TRAI. All the service providers have met the benchmarks for these parameters.

Significant reduction has been observed in number of complaints pertaining to call drops/ improper network coverage received on Centralised Public Grievance Redressal And Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) in DoT during last three years. The number of complaints received in 2017 was 4534 which is reduced to 1678 in 2018 and 533 for the period from 1st January 2019 to 31st May 2019.

TRAI has no information regarding the problem of cross connection faced by the subscribers. In order to address call drops, following steps have been taken:

(i) DoT has taken several policy initiatives to facilitate infrastructure growth for delivery of quality services. These include permitting trading/sharing/ liberalisation of spectrum, permitting passive and active infrastructure sharing, notification of Right of Way Rules 2016, making available Government land/ buildings for installations of towers etc.

(ii) About 14.95 lakh additional Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) for 2G/3G/4G-LTE services have been added by TSPs since March 2014 taking the total BTS count in the country to about 21.45 lakh in June 2019.

(iii) In order to obtain direct feedback from subscribers, DoT has launched an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) wherein, around 2.73 crore subscribers have been individually contacted since December 2016, out of

which 38.3 lakh subscribers have participated in the survey. The feedback is shared with the TSPs every week for taking corrective actions in a time bound manner. As a result, about 1 lakh individual cases of call drops have been resolved so far.

Implementation of recommendations of 7th Pay Commission

630. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recommendations of 7th Pay Commission has not been implemented in BSNL and MTNL and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) by when these are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The recommendations of 7th Pay Commission are applicable to Central Government employees and not to the employees of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) including Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL).

Miserable condition of MTNL

†631. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH NAGAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the services of Government telecom company MTNL is in a very miserable condition and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(b) by when its network and speed of internet would improve?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) is meeting benchmarks of most of the Quality of Service (QoS) parameters prescribed by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in respect of its Landline, Broadband and Mobile services. While endeavours are always made to improve the services, steps taken by MTNL to improve its network and speed of internet are given in Statement.

Statement

Steps taken by MTNL to improve network and speed of internet:

1. Redeployment of Digital Subscribers Line Access Modules (DSLAMs) of existing wireline broadband network near to the subscriber premises thereby reducing copper length and enhancing the quality of broadband service. A total of 242

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.