

(b) whether the salaries of BSNL and MTNL employees are pending for the months of August and September in 2019, if so, reasons therefor; and

(c) the plan of action for the merger of BSNL and MTNL announced by Government and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) No Sir. The Government is not planning to change the retirement age of BSNL and MTNL employees to 50 instead of the current age of 60.

(b) BSNL has informed that salary to its employees is paid up to the month of September, 2019. MTNL has informed that salary to its employees is paid up to the month of August, 2019. The delay in salary payment is due to financial constraints faced by these two companies.

(c) The Cabinet in its meeting held on 23.10.2019 also gave in-principle approval for merger of BSNL and MTNL. The process of merger will follow the relevant rules/guidelines of Government.

Crisis in telecom sector

1126. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons why revenue generated through non-core activities is being included under the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) for the telecom sector despite counter judgements in lower courts and the concerned tribunal being made in the past;

(b) the share of money that will be paid by each operator out of ₹92,642 crore demanded by Government;

(c) whether the amount, if paid, would affect the survival of any operator or bring it under debts; and

(d) the estimated impact this will have on the growth of the sector currently under a debt of about ₹ 4 lakh crore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) and (b) The Hon'ble Supreme Court in Civil Appeal Nos. 6328-6399 of 2015 [Union of India Vs. Association Unified Telecom Service Providers of India etc.] pronounced its judgment dated 24.10.2019 wherein the appeals filed by the

Department of Telecom were upheld and the appeals filed by the Telecom Service Providers were dismissed.

The Supreme Court has upheld the definition of the Gross Revenue and Adjusted Gross Revenue as enumerated in the License Agreement. The Hon'ble Supreme Court *vide* judgement in AGR matter dated 11.10.2011 had ordered the inclusion of revenue earned from non-core activities in the Gross Revenue. The same judgement has been upheld once again by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its judgement dated 24.10.2019.

The provisional dues of the Telecom Service Providers on account of License Fee are based on the assessments carried out/demands raised and are subject to revision in light of the Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 24.10.2019. Details for are given in Statement License Fee (*See* below).

(c) and (d) As per the Inter-Ministerial Group report of 31.08.2017, the Total debt of the telecom industry was ₹ 7.88 lakh crores.

(₹ in crore)

Particulars	Telecom Service Providers	Tower Companies	Total
Indian Debt	159675	18049	177724
Foreign Debt	83918		83918
Total Bank/FI Debt	243593	18049	261642
Bank Guarantees	50000		50000
Deferred Spectrum Liabilities of DoT	295864		295864
Other Third Party Liabilities	175464	4763	180227
Total (Outside Liabilities)	764922	22812	787734

The Cellular Operators Association of India *vide* their letter dated 29.10.2019 has submitted that in the absence of an immediate grant of relief by the Government, two of the three private mobile operators *viz.* Airtel and Vodafone-Idea, will face an unprecedented crisis and sought urgent intervention of the Government to avert such an unprecedented impact on the financial health of their member companies. However, one of the members of the Cellular Operators Association of India *i.e.* Reliance Jio Infocom Ltd. has submitted a divergent opinion on the said matter.

Statement

*TSP-wise Provisional License Fee outstanding as per
demand up to July-19*

Sl. No.	Name of the Company	Total Outstanding (₹ crore)
1.	Idea Cellular Ltd.	8485
2.	Vodafone Group of Companies	19824
3.	Bharti Airtel Group of Companies	21682
4.	Telenor India Private Ltd.	1950
5.	Tata Group of Companies	9987
6.	Reliance Jio Infocom Ltd.	13
7.	Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.	2099
8.	Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.	2537
9.	Aircel Group of Companies	7853
10.	Etisalat DB Telecom Private Ltd.	29
11.	Quadrant Televentures Ltd.	116
12.	S.Tel Pvt Ltd.	42
13.	Videocon Telecommunications Ltd.	1033
14.	Sistema Shyam Teleservices Ltd.	302
15.	Reliance Communication Ltd. /Reliance Telecommunication Ltd.	16457
16.	Loop Telecom Pvt. Ltd.	233
	TOTAL	92642

Mobile towers in villages of Madhya Pradesh

†1127. SHRI AJAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the efforts being made by Government for installing mobile towers in remote villages of Madhya Pradesh, which do not have towers till date;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.