

- (c) if so, the details of the aforesaid consultations made; and
- (d) the details of the steps being taken by the centre as revival plan for BSNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) The recommendations made by Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad in its report for revival of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) *inter alia* included:—

- (i) Accelerate Land Asset Transfers and Real Estate Monetization.
- (ii) Facilitate 4G Spectrum Allocation.
- (iii) Implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS).
- (iv) Funding for BSNL Revival.
- (v) Organisational Restructuring.

(b) and (c) The revival plan for BSNL has been prepared considering the recommendations of IIM, Ahmedabad, which was prepared by it after consultations with various Unions/Associations/employees of BSNL.

(d) The Government has approved the revival plan for Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) on 23.10.2019. The revival plan *inter alia*, includes the measures to reduce the Staff cost through a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for the employees of age 50 years and above, administrative allotment of spectrum to BSNL for providing 4G services, monetisation of assets of BSNL and debt restructuring by raising Sovereign Guarantee bonds.

Accordingly, BSNL has offered VRS to its employees of age 50 years and above. 78,569 employees of BSNL have opted for VRS. Alternative Mechanism of Department of Investment and Public Assets Management (DIPAM) has approved monetisation of 11 properties of BSNL following the DIPAM guidelines. BSNL has requested for spectrum for 4G services from July, 2020.

Pending AGR dues to DoT

2900. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether telecom companies are facing a gigantic task of paying ₹ 1.48 lakh crore worth of pending AGR (Adjusted Gross Revenue) dues to the Department of Telecom (DoT) and have requested for Government's help;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto; and

(c) what are the reasons for the telecom companies not being able to pay the AGR despite Government reducing AGR from 15 per cent to 8 per cent and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI DHOTRE SANJAY SHAMRAO): (a) The telecom companies and Cellular Operator Association of India (COAI) have written to the Government about the financial stress being faced by the telecom companies.

(b) A meeting of the Digital Communications Commission (DCC) was held on 28th February, 2020 wherein an agenda item on the issues related to the Telecom Sector was also discussed. The DCC discussed the issue of payments received from and payable by the Telecom Licensees pursuant to the judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) matter and the implications thereof.

Pursuant to the recommendations of the DCC, a proposal on the implementation of the judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 24.10.2019 in the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) matter was taken up for consideration and approval by the Cabinet. Consequent to the approval by the Cabinet an application has been moved before the Hon'ble Supreme Court on 16.03.2019 seeking *inter alia*, permission of the Hon'ble Court for the licensees impacted by the AGR judgement to pay the unpaid or remaining to be paid amount of past DoT assessed/calculated dues in annual instalments over 20 years duly protecting the net present value of the said dues using a discount rate of 8%.

(c) As per TRAI's consultation paper on Tariffs in telecom sector, there have been concerns raised in many quarters about the health of the telecom service sector, including intense competition and pricing pressures leading to a decline in revenues and profitability.

Monopoly in telecom sector

2901. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRARAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that day by day the number of telecom service provider companies is coming down giving scope for monopoly in telecom services sector;