

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 860
TO BE ANSWERED ON 9TH FEBRUARY, 2024**

SUSPENSION OF TELECOM SERVICES

**860 Shri K.C. Venugopal:
Smt. Rajani Ashokrao Patil:
Shri Kapil Sibal:
Smt. Ranjeet Ranjan:**

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has record of suspension of telecom services imposed across various States for last five years, if so, details thereof;
- (b) whether Government has any plan to bring a Standard Operating Procedure to review whether suspension of telecom services followed Supreme Court guidelines in Anuradha Bhasin vs Union of India, if so, details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government has taken cognizance of report published by Top10 virtual private network (VPN) that estimated cost of suspension of telecom services in 2022 is to the tune of \$172 million, if so, details thereof and steps taken by Government to address the same?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
(SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN)**

(a) to (c) As per seventh schedule of the Constitution, police and public order are State subjects. State Governments are empowered to issue orders for temporary suspension of internet service 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.

Hon'ble Supreme Court has mandated the publication of suspension orders in public domain; and all orders for suspension of Telecom Services must adhere to the principle of proportionality; and must not extend beyond the necessary duration. The said directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court have been communicated to all Chief Secretaries/ Administrators of States/ Union Territories (UTs) on 10.11.2020. As per Hon'ble Supreme Court orders, the information may be reviewed on the respective State/ UT website.

The contribution of internet for the well-being of citizens has to be balanced with stopping misuse by anti-social elements requiring temporary shutdowns as per the rules based on the assessment by Local (State/UT Government) Authorities.
