

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) A total of 40949 subscribers have been provided telephones as on date in Manipur by BSNL and the telephone subscribers now in waiting list are 3773.

(d) and (d) To clear the wait-listed applicants, BSNL has reported that it has planned 8,500 as tentative target during the year 2003-2004 for Direct Exchange Lines (DELS) including Wireline and those on Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) to expand telephone service in Manipur including rural and hilly districts subject to availability of resources.

BSNL has sought relief from the Government for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) on satellite media to 1215 uncovered villages in Manipur and shall initiate actions to provide telecom facilities to these uncovered villages after receipt of funds.

Internet charges

2324. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that internet browsing charges are likely to increase due to rise in telephone tariff;

(b) whether Government propose to moderate the charges; and

(c) what are the measures contemplated in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Tariffs for Internet browsing through dialup constitute two components, *i.e.* Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) component (charges for local call) and the Internet usage charges. As per the existing rate, during peak hours, the average cost per hour for PSTN component is Rs.24/- whereas *w.e.f.* 1 April, 2003, as per the revised pulse duration announced by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) *vide* 24th Amendment to the Telecommunication Tariff Order (TTO), 1999, the average cost per hour during peak hours for PSTN component will be Rs.36/-. However, TRAI has also specified reduced

dial-up charges for off-peak hours to be provided for Internet browsing. Thus the actual cost for PSTN component could be considerably less than Rs. 36/- depending upon the usage pattern of the subscriber.

(b) and (c) As per the TRAI Act, TRAI is mandated to decide the tariffs for all Telecom Services, accordingly TRAI has issued the 24th Amendment to TTD, 1999. However, the tariffs announced by TRAI are in form of the Standard Tariff Package and the operators including Government sector operators are at liberty to offer tariff packages with lower/higher pulse duration.

Spurt In software piracy

2325. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to State:

(a) whether the software piracy rate, after recording a fall in 1999, has again recorded a spurt to 70 per cent during 2001 and whether the estimates for 2002 are pegged at 73 per cent.

(b) whether 7 out of every 10 software packages sold in the country are pirated;

(c) whether the high-profit margin in pirated software packages is attracting investments by the underworld in the trade; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to check the piracy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI S. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) and (b) The estimates for software piracy, as per National Association of Software Services Companies (NASSCOM), for the last four years, are as follows:

Year	Software Piracy (%)
1999-2000	59
2000-01	61
2001-02	64
2002-03	67 (provisional)