

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:217

ANSWERED ON:03.12.2003

SERVICES PROVIDED BY BSNL AND MTNL

A. VENKATESH NAIK;ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL;SUBODH ROY;VINAY KUMAR SORAKE

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that frequency of BSNL's and MTNL's Cellular Service and their roaming facility and SMS service in the country are not up to the mark as compared with that of private operators and that MTNL/BSNL are lagging far behind in respect of number of subscribers and quality of service;

(b) if so, the facts and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to improve these facilities?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI , PRADHAN)

BSNL

(a) & (b): BSNL is providing national roaming and Short Messaging Service (SMS) right since its launch of cellular services across the country and same are comparable to its competitors. The mobile subscribers base on BSNL network as on 31.10.2003 is 4372026.

(c) BSNL is taking several measures to improve the facilities. International roaming and additional SMS based services is expected to be available to CellOne subscriber of BSNL during the current financial year.

MTNL

(a) & (b): MTNL has roaming agreement with BSNL which has connectivity all over the country and also with many private operators for its Cellular mobile service. Its SMS services are also up to mark. Quality of Service (QoS) parameters of MTNL's Cellular service are mostly within the benchmark specified by TRAI. MTNL Cellular Mobile Service was launched after the other private operators had already established considerable subscriber base. MTNL's subscriber base as on 31.10.2003 was 1,56,316 in Delhi and 165,721 in Mumbai. The growth of MTNL Cellular Mobile Service has not been as fast as that of some of the private operators due to several constraints including non-availability of capacity for pre-paid service and value added services such as GPRS, MMS etc.

(c) MTNL is taking several measures to improve their services such as expansion of capacity by 4 lakh lines each in Delhi & Mumbai with GPRS facility. Continuous monitoring through drive tests is being carried out and RF optimization is done to improve RF signal strength. MTNL is also offering competitive/affordable tariffs to its customers beside improving customer care service.