

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:152

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2005

MISLEADING OF SUBSCRIBERS BY TELECOM OPERATORS

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

- (a) whether various private telecom operators mislead their subscribers;
- (b) if so, the details of the complaints received by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in this regard during 2005 till date;
- (c) the action taken by the TRAI against such operators; and
- (d) the steps taken by the TRAI to check the recurrence of such incidents?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) & (b): TRAI had received a number of complaints from consumers that while taking new connections through franchisees/agents of service providers, they were promised certain tariffs for calls and certain facilities/services were not mentioned. However, when they received the bill, they noticed that the charges were not as promised by the franchisee/agent or that charges were levied for some service/facilities, which were not mentioned or shown to the customers at the time of their taking new connection.

(c) & (d): The complaints received in TRAI were taken up with the service provider for resolution. In order to protect the interest of consumers, in such cases, TRAI had, vide direction dated 29.06.2005, directed all cellular mobile service providers and unified access service providers to inform the customer in writing within a week of activation of services, the complete details of his tariff plan. In addition, as and when there are any changes in any aspect/item of tariff in the chosen package, the operator shall intimate, in writing, such changes to those subscribers whose tariff packages undergo a change. Also, in order to protect the interests of the consumer, TRAI vide its direction dated 16.09.2005 to all telecom service providers had directed that no tariff plans shall be offered, presented, marketed or advertised in a manner that is likely to mislead the subscribers and that all monthly fixed roaming charging which are compulsory for a subscriber under any given plan shall be shown under one head. This should also include charges for value added services like CLIP, if such value added services are not optional for the subscriber.