

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1253
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2005
PRE- PAID COUPONS OF MOBILE PHONES
Singh Shri Ganesh

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

- (a) the procedures for purchasing the pre-paid coupons of mobile cellphones and per coupon talk time given to the subscribers;
- (b) whether only a talktime of Rs. 175 is given to subscribers for a coupon of Rs.320;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) the details of the billing process in post paid mobile phones;
- (e) whether the mobile phones do not function even within its service area;
- (f) if so, whether the Government has received complaints in this regard; and
- (g) if so, the action taken thereon?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) No specific procedure has been prescribed for purchase of pre-paid coupons. However, the operators are required to ensure adequate verification of the subscribers before enrolling them.

Tariff for mobile services are forborne except for national roaming. Depending on the market conditions and other commercial considerations, service providers offer recharge coupons of various denominations. Thus, there are a large number of recharge coupons available in the market with varying combinations of talk time, validity period and processing charges. The talk time contained in these recharge coupons depends on various factors like call charges, validity period, value added services etc. Some operators even offer recharge coupons with full talk time. Service Tax would in any case be payable. No recharge coupon of Rs. 320/- with talk time of Rs. 175/- is currently offered by mobile service providers as per tariff reports filed with Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The mobile subscribers get billed as per the tariff plans chosen by them which are duly filed with TRAI and conform to regulatory guidelines.

(d) Like basic telephones, for post paid mobile phones also, the bills are generated at the end of billing cycle and sent to subscribers for payment.

(e) Yes, Sir. Sometimes the mobile phones do not function even within its service area due to several reasons including the following reasons:

(i) Out of coverage area or areas where coverage is less such as basement of a building etc.

(ii) Signal strength of an operator is poor.

(f) Yes, Sir. The issue of poor coverage of mobile service has come to the notice of the Government.

(g) With the expansion of subscriber base, mobile networks are to be upgraded by various service providers to meet Quality of Service (QoS) standards. This is a continuous process in terms of reengineering of network by addition of more Base Transceivers Station (BTS), adopting techniques such as installation of boosters and adoption of micro cell architecture. It is noticed that network upgradation exercise is not commensurate with the increase in subscriber base which, inter-alia, include installation of additional BTS.

The Government has taken steps to simplify procedures for clearance of sites for installation of towers apart from releasing more spectrum by coordination with existing users.