

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3727

ANSWERED ON:19.04.2010

INCREASE IN TELECOM CHARGES

Chauhan Shri Sanjay Singh;Laguri Shri Yashbant Narayan Singh;Premdas Shri ;Rathod Shri Ramesh;Sinh Dr. Sanjay;Sudhakaran Shri K.

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

- (a) Whether some telecom companies including Airtel are charging exorbitant rates in the guise of STD, monthly rental or roaming charges since Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is unable to exercise its authority and control over them;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the corrective steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (d) whether some telecom companies have been charging STD and roaming charges for the users while roaming from one place to another using the same network;
- (e) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to protect the interest of consumers and exercise great control over malfunctioning/deficient services of private telecom companies?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT)

(a): Regulation of Tariff has been mandated to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) vide the TRAI Act of 1997. As per the existing guidelines of TRAI, tariff for telecom services are under forbearance except with regard to Fixed Line Service in Rural Areas, National Roaming Service and Leased Line Service. Thus, the Telecom Companies including Airtel have the flexibility to offer a combination of tariffs for various components including STD and Monthly rental. The roaming charges are subject to the ceilings prescribed by TRAI.

However, Telecom companies are required to report to TRAI any new tariff for telecom services and changes in tariff within 7 days after its implementation for information and record of TRAI after conducting a self check to ensure that the tariff plans are consistent with the regulatory principles in all respects. Currently, telecom service providers are offering variety of tariff plans according to needs of customers and competitive scenario. The telecom tariff levels in the country have shown a continuous downward trend.

(b) & (c): Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) & (e): Government of India has issued licenses for mobile services separately for each circle/Metro areas on local service area (LSA) basis. As per TRAI Regulations, roaming charges are not levied when the user is going from one place to another place within the licensed service area and uses the same network. However, roaming charges become payable when subscriber uses the service outside the licensed service area of his operator. STD charges are payable on outgoing calls according to the tariff plan chosen by the subscriber.

(f): TRAI has been issuing various Regulations and Directions with the objective of protecting the interest of consumers and keeping regular checks and monitoring on the quality of services being provided by service providers including private telecom companies. This includes, inter-alia, various reporting requirements mandated by TRAI.