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Title: Regarding telephone connectivity in Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir - Laid

**SHRI JAMYANG TSERING NAMGYAL (LADAKH):** In the last few years, tourism in Ladakh has been on rise; and what once was considered a destination for adventurous types is now also considered for family vacations. However, the fact remains that Ladakh is still a region that gets cut out from the rest of the country for six-seven months altogether; in winter and where even some of the basic amenities are missing in several areas. One of such amenities is mobile phone and internet connectivity; which is still hard to get in the upper Himalayan region. In terms of network providers, BSNL has the widest coverage range followed closely by Airtel and Jio. It is because of the fact that only BSNL, Airtel and Jio have networks in Ladakh. Internet and mobile phone connectivity is an integral part of our lives nowadays. Lack of proper telecommunication facilities is a big hurdle in the system since many tourists that come to Ladakh also go for treks to remote areas, and there are hardly any facilities for quick transfer of information and evacuation in the event of a mishap. Rural areas like Waris-Fastan and Digar-Tangyar in Nubra, Demjok, Chumur, Korzok, Kharnak and other regions of Changthang, Domkhar, Kanji, Singay-Lalok areas of Leh and Zaskar Valley, Dartsigs-Garkhone, Batalik areas and many areas in Kargil district in Ladakh should be given the same facilities and civic amenities that the urban areas enjoy. Better telephonic connectivity of villages in Ladakh should be given priority. These villages are remote, backward because of lack of mobile telephone facilities and poor connectivity. There has been an ongoing problem with DSPTs in rural

areas and approximately 30% of villages in Ladakh are still unconnected with Mobile Phone facilities.

I, therefore, request the Ministry of Communications and Technology to please consider the villages and hamlets of strategic border areas of Ladakh for installing Mobile Towers under any appropriate scheme within a targeted time frame.