

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1050
ANSWERED ON:15.11.2010
INFLATED TELECOM BILLS
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has been receiving complaints against cell phone operators regarding rampant inflated bills or charging for services which have not been asked for or provided to customers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to protect the interests of the mobile phone subscribers and penalise the mobile phone operators who indulge in such activities?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT)

(a) & (b) Sporadic complaints/grievances have been received in public grievances cell of Department of Telecommunications (DoT) against various service providers related to billing /charging issues. State-wise details given in the Annexure.

(c)

(i) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has mandated service providers through the Quality of Service (Code of Practice for Metering and Billing Accuracy) Regulations for audit of metering and billing system of service providers through any one of the auditors from the panel of auditors notified by TRAI. These regulations have helped in identifying billing deficiencies and also in effecting improvements in billing system including refund of excess charges to affected customers.

(ii) For addressing complaints relating to charging for value added services not subscribed by the consumers, TRAI has issued directions on provision of Value Added Services, which mandate the service providers to obtain explicit consent of consumers before activating value added services. Based on outcome of investigation of complaints, TRAI in some cases has ordered refund of charges levied from customers for value added services activated without the explicit consent of the customers.