

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2224
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2011
INTERNET TELEPHONY
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has accorded permission for internet telephony services;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the norms/criteria in this regard;
- (c) the details of companies providing internet telephone services in the country; and
- (d) the benefit accrued as a result of internet telephony services alongwith its likely impact on basic telephone services?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MILIND DEORA)

(a)&(b) Internet Service Providers (ISPs) were permitted to offer Internet Telephony Services w.e.f. 1st April 2002. The present criteria for grant of ISP licence is as per the Guidelines dated 24.08.2007 for grant of licence for operating Internet Services wherein ISPs are allowed to provide Internet Telephony services by the use of Personal Computers (PC) or IP based Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) in the following manner:-

(i) PC to PC; within or outside India.

(ii) PC/a device/Adapter in India to Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN)/Public Land Mobile Network (PLMN) abroad.

(iii) Any device/Adapter connected to ISP node with static IP address to similar device/Adapter; within or outside India. The ISPs are not permitted to have PSTN/PLMN connectivity. Voice communication to and from a telephone connected to PSTN/PLMN and following E.164 numbering is prohibited in India. However, Access Service Providers (ASPs) were allowed to provide unrestricted Internet Telephony including connectivity to PSTN/PLMN in terms of the Unified Access Service Licence (UASL) Guidelines dated 14th December 2005.

(c) 217 ISPs and 279 ASPs have been licenced to offer Internet Telephony service, as per the scope of their respective licences, in various service areas in the country.

(d) Internet Telephony has helped in generating competition in the International Long Distance (ILD) sector and enabled the reduction in tariff for the benefit of subscribers.