

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4494

ANSWERED ON:21.12.2011

NATIONAL POLICY ON INSTALLATION OF TOWERS

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a national policy on setting up of mobile towers;
- (b) if so, whether this policy would specify the minimum radiation standards as well as minimum distance to be maintained from public places such as schools, hospitals, residential areas and tourist places;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the number of illegal towers functioning in the country as on date, Statewise and the action taken by the Government against the mobile operators in this regard, operator-wise?

**Answer**

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

(a) Madam, as per the existing policy for installation of towers, Wireless Planning & Coordination (WPC) wing of Department of Telecommunications (DoT) issues siting clearance for installation of mobile towers for each and every site from the point of view of interference with other wireless users, aviation hazards and obstruction to any other existing microwave links.

However, siting clearances of DoT are issued without prejudice to other applicable bylaws, rule and regulations of local bodies such as municipal corporation, Gram Panchayat etc. Accordingly, before installation of tower, the telecom service providers have to obtain necessary clearances from concerned local authorities/ State Government bodies also. Various local bodies/State Government have formulated their own policy regarding grant of such permissions for installation of mobile towers.

(b)&(c) Government of India has adopted the basic restriction and limiting reference levels of Electromagnetic radiation from Mobile towers prescribed by International Commission on Non- Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). Vide letter No. 800-15/2010-VAS dated 8th April 2010, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed all the Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) / Unified Access Service (UAS) licensees for compliance of the reference limits/ levels prescribed by ICNIRP by way of self certification of their Base Transmitting Station (BTS) for meeting the EMF radiations norms.

Based on media reports and growing concern about the radiation from mobile towers, DoT had constituted an Inter-Ministerial Committee consisting of officers from DoT, Indian Council of Medical Research, Ministry of Health, Department of Biotechnology and Ministry of Environment and Forest on 24.08.2010 to examine inter-alia the effect of EMF Radiation from base stations.

Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) in its report has indicated that most of the laboratory studies were unable to find a direct link between exposure to radio frequency radiation and health; and the scientific studies as yet have not been able to confirm a cause-and- effect relationship between radio frequency radiation and health. The effect of emission from cell phone towers is not known yet with certainty. Further, the committee has suggested certain safeguards including lowering the BTS Radio Frequency (RF) exposure limits to 1/10th of the existing level. The committee has also recommended to formulate uniform guidelines at national level to enforce restrictions on establishment / setting up of BTS towers. The recommendations of the Committee have been accepted for implementation.

(d) Installation of tower without obtaining siting clearance from WPC has not come to the notice of DoT so far. Compliance to the guidelines/instructions issued by local authorities/ State Government for installation of tower is ensured by the concerned local authorities/ State Government. DoT is not keeping such records in this regard.