

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:644

ANSWERED ON:22.05.2012

DTH SERVICES

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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Direct-to-Home (DTH) Services has brought the desired changes from the audience response point of view;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the mandatory introduction of the Digital Addressable System has increased the responsibilities and financial burden of the service providers;
- (d) if so, whether the Government proposes to provide additional incentives to them;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the manner in which the interests of the consumers will be protected in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. AMBIKA SONI)

(a) to (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 644 FOR ANSWER ON 22.5.2012

(a) & (b): The Direct-to-Home (DTH) sector has established the acceptability of digital addressable broadcasting services among the masses as it offers a wider choice of channels in digital quality to subscribers. DTH services in India have been growing at a rapid pace since its inception in the year 2003. As reported by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the number of registered pay DTH subscribers is around 46.25 million as on March 2012. As per the quarterly reports submitted by the pay DTH operators to TRAI, the registered subscriber base of pay DTH services is growing at the rate of around one million subscribers per month, on an aggregate basis, in addition to the popular free to air DTH services provided by Doordarshan.

A survey titled "A Follow-up Rapid Assessment of Cable & Satellite (C&S) subscribers in 22 Cities" by TRAI, has indicated a decreasing trend in cable subscription fee across the cities due expansion and availability of cable and satellite channels through (DTH) service.

(c) to (e) : Digitalization with addressability is being implemented in the cable TV sector in a phased time bound manner with sunset date for complete switch off of analogue services by December, 2014. The Digital switch over will entail capital investments by the industry to upgrade the cable headends, cable networks and supply of digital Set-top- Boxes (STB) to consumers.

Based on the recommendations of TRAI on "Implementation of Digital Addressable Cable TV systems in India" the Ministry had formulated a proposal for grant of tax holiday and customs duty exemption to the broadcasting industry which was however not supported by a Committee of Secretaries (CoS).

(f) With a view to protect the interest of subscribers; the TRAI has issued Tariff order, Standards of Quality of Service and Consumer Complaint Redressal regulations.