

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4177  
ANSWERED ON:19.12.2012  
CALL RATE OF PSU TELECOM COMPANIES  
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**Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the rates provided by the PSU telecom companies are competitive as compared to the private telecom companies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the steps taken by the PSU companies to bring the call rates at par with private telecom companies;
- (c) whether the telecom companies calculate the call time period for billing from time of call ring whereas as per the guidelines of TRAI, the charges can be made only for the talking period after the call is picked up; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government against telecom operators for violation of TRAI's guidelines, operator-wise?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) As per the existing tariff framework, tariff for telecommunication access services is under forbearance except for national roaming and Rural Fixed Line Services. The service providers have the flexibility to offer different tariff schemes depending on the market conditions and other commercial considerations. Each service provider devises various schemes in such a manner as to suit its commercial interest in accordance with the tariff regulatory guidelines issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) from time to time. All tariff schemes implemented are reported to TRAI both by private operators and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL)/ Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) after the same are implemented in the market. These tariffs are scrutinized in TRAI with a view to ensure their consistency with regulatory guidelines.

(c) & (d) Pursuant to Quality of Service (Code of Practice for Metering and Billing Accuracy), Regulations, 2006 the access service providers have been undertaking audit of their metering and billing system every year through any one of the auditor from the panel notified by TRAI and an audit report thereon is submitted to TRAI. During this audit the metering of service providers is checked to see whether the recorded call duration is within the accuracy limit laid down by TRAI. In the audit reports submitted by service providers during the year 2011-12 there is no audit observation regarding inclusion of ring time in the calculation of call duration for charging of calls. Also it is seen that the recorded call durations observed during audit are within the accuracy limit of plus/minus 1 second. However, in the audit of 2010-11 in the network of M/s Bharti Airtel Limited the recorded call duration in some cases was observed to be in excess of the prescribed accuracy limit and show cause notice has been issued to M/s Bharti Airtel Limited in the matter.