

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:322
ANSWERED ON:26.02.2013
TRANSPARENCY IN CABLE TV SERVICES
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Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has fixed the price of set top boxes, free channels and paid channels in the country including the NCT of Delhi;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has taken note that cable operators in various parts of the country do not provide computerized bills to consumers and charge arbitrarily;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to check overcharging and bring in more transparency in the working of cable operators to safeguard the interests of the consumers?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MANISH TEWARI)

(a) to (e): The price of Set Top Boxes (STBs) is not regulated by the Government. However, Multi System Operators (MSOs) are offering STBs on outright purchase, rental or hire purchase as per the convenience of the consumers. TRAI's Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable) Services (Fourth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2010 dated 21st July, 2010, as amended on 30.4.2012, regulates tariff and pricing for the digital cable TV Systems. As per the said tariff order, it is mandatory for the service providers to offer all channels (pay and free to air) on a-la-carte basis to subscribers. The tariff order further provides that the operators of digital addressable cable TV systems would offer to the consumers a Basic-Service-Tier (BST) comprising of minimum 100 free-to-air (FTA) channels, at a maximum charge of Rs. 100/- (excluding taxes) per subscriber per month. The tariff order also stipulates that it shall be open to the subscriber to choose any combination of free to air channels up to one hundred channels, in lieu of the basic service tier offered by the multi-system operator. The said tariff order also provides for protection of consumer against increase in prices. The detailed tariff order is available at www.trai.gov.in.

It has been brought to the notice of this Ministry that in some areas of Phase-I cities, computerized bills are not being provided to consumers. TRAI has issued necessary directions to the Multi System Operators (MSOs) and Local Cable Operators (LCOs) in this regard.

The introduction of Digital Addressable System (DAS) in the Cable TV Network will revolutionize the broadcasting industry as it would make the broadcasting sector dynamic, transparent and accountable. Digitization will result in overall economic advantage to the country.