

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5612
ANSWERED ON:30.04.2013
RENTAL CHARGES BY DTH SERVICE PROVIDERS
Sharma Shri Jagdish

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that Direct-to-Home (DTH) service providers in general and Bharti Airtel in particular unilaterally and randomly increase their rentals at regular intervals;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government is also aware that the customers are left with no option except to pay the increase rentals of DTH service providers;
- (d) if so, whether there is any mechanism to address such problems of the customers/ subscribers;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and?
- (f) whether there is any option for portability of DTH service for the customers/ subscribers and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): The tariff for the Direct-to-Home services (DTH) is governed by the Telecommunication (Broadcasting & Cable) Services (Fourth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2010 dated 21st July, 2010. As per this tariff order the DTH operators are free to price and package their services, based on their business model and subject to certain conditions prescribed in the said tariff order. To protect the interests of consumers, a provision has been made in the said tariff order which prescribes that no service provider, who provides broadcasting services or cable services using an addressable system to its subscribers, shall, increase the charges for a subscription package offered by him, for a minimum period of six months from the date of enrolment of the subscriber for such subscription package. Clause 6(4) of the said tariff order provides that it shall be open to the service provider to specify a minimum monthly subscription, not exceeding one hundred and fifty rupees (exclusive of taxes) per month per subscriber, towards channels chosen by the subscriber, either a-la-carte or bouquet, for availing the services of such service provider.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), in its regulation for the Quality of Service (QoS) for Direct-to-Home services namely, the Direct to Home Broadcasting Services (Standards of Quality of Service and Redressal of Grievances) Regulation, 2007 dated 31.08.2007 has provided for a mechanism to protect the interests of the consumers. As per the said regulations, it is mandatory for all DTH operators to establish 24X7 toll free call centres for subscribers for their grievance redressal. It provides that 90% of complaints regarding non-receipt of signals are to be redressed within 24 hrs. and 90% of other types of complaints are to be redressed within 48 hrs. No complaint has to remain pending beyond 5 days. All billing complaints are to be redressed within 7 days. DTH operators are required to nominate Nodal Officers at the state level for redressal of grievances of those subscribers who are not satisfied with the redressal at call centre level. The Nodal Officer will redress the grievances within 10 days of registering of the complaint. The said regulations also make it mandatory for DTH operators to offer customer premises equipments (including the set top box) to its subscribers on outright purchase basis, hire-purchase basis and rental basis. The DTH operator will make provision for refund to be given to subscribers if they choose to return the customer premises equipment. All DTH operators are required to comply with the aforesaid provisions. Detailed tariff order and DTH quality of service regulations are available at www.trai.gov.in.

(f): The number portability which exists in the telecom sector does not exist in the DTH sector as of now.