

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:567

ANSWERED ON:06.05.2015

PROTECTION OF NET NEUTRALITY

Gutha Shri Sukender Reddy;Singh Shri Kunwar Haribansh

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

- (a) whether a large number of internet users in the country have sent e-mail petitions to TRAI urging to protect network neutrality in the country, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government/TRAI thereto;
- (b) the details of internet usage, speed and accessibility in India as compared with the developing and developed countries of the globe; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government/ TRAI to increase internet penetration at affordable rates and ensure prescribed/ better internet speed?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

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

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 567 FOR 6th MAY, 2015 REGARDING "PROTECTION OF NET NEUTRALITY".

a) Madam, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released a consultation paper on "Regulatory Framework for Over-The-Top (OTT) Service" on 27.03.2015 wherein comments from stakeholders were invited by 24.04.2015 & counter comments by 08.05.2015. TRAI has received a large number of e-mails in response to the consultation paper on "Regulatory Framework for Over-the-top services".

b) As per the information provided by TRAI, the number of internet including broadband subscribers in the country is 267.39 million, as on 31st December 2014. Further, according to a report 'Internet in India 2014' jointly published by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMA) and Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB) International, the internet users are estimated to be more than 300 million. India has third largest numbers of Internet users in the world behind China and United States. Further, as per TRAI, data usage in India has increased from 49645 Tera Byte (TB) in Oct 2013 to 90267 TB in December 2014, showing a cumulative annual growth of 65.2%.

An international comparison of average broadband speed, based on the information provided by TRAI, is placed at Annexure-I.

c) In order to provide basic infrastructure for facilitating provision of broadband services in rural areas by telecom service operators, National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project is being implemented to connect all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 Lakh) in the country through optical fibre. Under this project, at least 100 mbps (Mega Bits Per Second) bandwidth will be made available at each Gram Panchayat to be used by all the service providers on non-discriminatory basis. Apart from NOFN, Government has undertaken rural wireline broadband scheme and optical fibre network augmentation schemes in North East region. Details of the same are placed at Annexure-II.

For ensuring broadband connection speed for Broadband service (wireline), TRAI has been monitoring the performance of service providers against the benchmark for the parameter "Broadband Connection Speed (download)", the benchmark for which is >80% from ISP Node to user. For broadband service (wireline), TRAI has not prescribed any speed to be offered to customers. TRAI monitors the performance of the service providers against the Quality of Service benchmarks laid down by TRAI, through the quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports (PMRs) submitted by the service providers for License Service Area as a whole.

As regards broadband service wireless, TRAI has not specified any minimum download speed to be provided by the service providers. However, as per the Quality of Service Regulations, the service providers have to report the minimum download speed and average throughput for Packet Data achieved in their network.