

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5936
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2015
FREE INTERNET DATA
Reddy Shri Ch. Malla

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

- (a) whether the Government has received any proposal from Telecom companies to allow them to offer access to some applications and services at zero data charge;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has circulated any consultation papers in this regard before taking any regulatory steps;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the response received by the Government from Internet Users?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) M/s Bharti Airtel Limited has informed Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) that it has launched a technology platform namely 'Airtel Zero' that connects application providers to the customers for free; the platform allows any content or application provider to enroll on it so that the customers can visit these sites for free. The service provider has also informed that the platform is open to all application developers, content providers and Internet sites on an equal basis and the rate card for this platform will be standard based on slabs of use, which will be offered to all the providers on a totally non-discriminatory basis.

(c) to (e) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released a consultation paper on "Regulatory Framework for Over-the-top services" on 27.03.2015 for inviting comments from various stakeholders. The last date for receiving comments and counter comments is 24.04.2015 and 08.05.2015 respectively. Further, this consultation paper is available on TRAI website www.trai.gov.in.