

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5958
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2015
ECB IN TELECOM SECTOR
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the scope of infrastructure sector has been widened by the Government/RBI for the purpose of availing External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) in the Telecom sector of the country;
- (b) if so, the details including the sub sectors included under telecom sector thereof along with the ECBs availed for during each of the last three years, country-wise;
- (c) employment generated in telecom sector across the country through ECBs; and
- (d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to improve the services of telecom sector and make them affordable?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Yes, Madam. Telecommunication (Fixed network), Telecommunication towers, and Telecommunication & Telecom Services are notified as sub sectors in the Harmonised Master List of Infrastructure Sub-Sectors on 7th October 2013 by the Government and the companies in the telecom sector are permitted to raise ECB as per the borrowing framework.

The ECBs availed during the last three years, country-wise is as under:

Lender Country-wise ECB agreements for Telecom Sector (amount in USD million) Calendar Year			
Country	2012	2013	2014
China	1146	7	
Mauritius	10		
Sweden	186	435	
Luxembourg	750		
Singapore			
Korea	440		
United Arab Emirates			
Finland	100		
Norway	244	44	
United Kingdom	25		
Russian Federation			
Hong Kong			
Germany	30		
USA	1		
Others	100	234	1810
Grand Total	2,347	921	2,294

Note : Foreign currency convertible bonds (FCCBs) are classified under 'others'

(c) Employment generated in telecom sector across the country through ECBs cannot be quantified.

(d) To improve the services of telecom sector and make them affordable, TRAI has laid down the Quality of Service Parameters and benchmarks for Telecom Services through Quality of Service regulations issued from time to time and is closely monitoring the performance of service providers against the quality of service benchmarks. Wherever the quality of service benchmarks are not met, TRAI has also been imposing financial disincentives on service providers. As per the existing tariff framework, tariff for telecommunication access services is under forbearance except for national roaming and rural fixed line services. The telecom tariffs in India are considered to be one of the lowest amongst various countries. TRAI has substantially reduced the ceiling tariffs for voice calls and SMS while on national roaming through the Telecommunication Tariff (60th Amendment) order, 2015 dated 09.04.2015. Various schemes like, NOFN (National Optical Fibre Network), Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North Eastern Region, the scheme for Mobile Communication Services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected Areas, Village Public Telephones (VPTs) and Shared Mobile Infrastructure Scheme have been/are being executed by the Government to provide affordable telecom

services in every nook and corner of the country.