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TRAI undertakes assessment of quality of service by conducting drive test on selected routes

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The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997 empowers the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to notify the rates of telecommunication services. As per the existing tariff framework, tariff for mobile and data services is under forbearance, except for services such as national roaming, rural fixed line services, mobile number portability and leased circuits. Subject to compliance with extant regulatory provisions, service providers are free to design and offer tariffs based on their understanding of the market situation and other commercial considerations. Competition exists in the market and the policies of the government and regulatory framework notified by TRAI has resulted in India having one of the lowest tariffs for subscribers of mobile services.

Sub-clause (v) of clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 11 of the TRAI Act, 1997 entrusts TRAI the function of laying down the standards of quality of service to be provided by the service providers and ensure the quality of service so as to protect the interest of the consumers of telecommunication services.

The following steps have been taken to monitor the quality of service of mobile services:

- i. The performance of service providers is regularly monitored by TRAI against the benchmark for various quality of service parameters laid down by TRAI, through collection of periodic performance monitoring reports from service providers.
- ii. The said reports are submitted to TRAI on quarterly basis for each Licensed Service Area (LSA). However, the reports for mobile services are submitted on a monthly basis.
- iii. Wherever the quality-of-service benchmarks are not met, TRAI calls for the explanation of the service provider concerned and after considering the response of the service providers, imposes financial disincentive as per the provision of regulations made by it.
- iv. TRAI also carries out an audit of the said reports through its own officers or independent agencies.
- v. In addition, TRAI undertakes assessment of quality of service by conducting drive test on selected routes through its own officers or independent agencies.

vi. TRAI publishes the results of the audit and assessment of quality of service and drive tests on its website for information of stakeholders.

TRAI's Standards of Quality of Service of Access (Wireline and Wireless) and Broadband (Wireline And Wireless) Service Regulations, 2024 dated 02.08.2024 has provision for imposition of financial disincentives (FD) in case of non-compliance of prescribed benchmark of any QoS parameter by service providers.

As per the regulations, service provider is liable to pay an amount not exceeding rupees one lakh per benchmark for the first contravention: rupees two lakhs for the second consecutive contravention and rupees three lakhs for each consecutive contravention occurring thereafter.

Accordingly, wherever the Quality-of-Service benchmarks are not met, the explanation of the concerned service provider is called for and after considering the response of the service provider financial disincentive are imposed on service provider for non-complied QoS parameters, as per the provision of the QoS regulations.

This information was given by the Minister of State for Communications and Rural Development Dr Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha today.

NJ/ARJ

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