

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3429
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25TH MARCH, 2021**

INTERNET SHUTDOWNS

3429 SHRI BINOY VISWAM:

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state:

- (a) total number of times that the internet has been suspended in any area of the country since 2018, the details of area and duration of such shutdown;
- (b) whether internet shutdown orders across various parts of India have been reviewed by review committee under the Telecom Suspension Rules;
- (c) if so, all the orders and/or reports of review committee;
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether any appropriate authority has been established to publish all the internet shutdown orders in the light of the Supreme Court's judgment in Anuradha Bhasin v/s Union of India; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION AND
ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE)**

(a) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) notified "Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017" on 07.08.2017 under the Indian Telegraph Act 1885 under which, the directions to suspend the telecom services, including internet in an area, can either be issued by the Union Home Secretary or Home Secretary of State Government concerned as the case maybe. DoT does not maintain any records regarding internet shutdowns ordered by the States/UTs.

(b) to (d) As per the provisions of Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017 the review committee shall meet within five working days of issue of directions for suspension of telecom services due to public emergency or public safety and record its findings. DoT does not maintain any records related to the review meetings conducted by States/UTs.

(e) & (f) In light of the Hon'ble Supreme Court judgment dated 10.01.2020 in W.P.(C) no. 1031/2019 and 1164/2019, Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency & Public Safety) Rules, 2017 has been amended vide Gazette Notification dated 10.11.2020. The said amendment has been forwarded to all Chief Secretaries/Administrators of States/UTs emphasizing that Hon'ble Supreme Court has mandated the publication of suspension orders, of telecom services, under the said rules.
