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Letter No. ___/TRAI/12/2014

Dated 8th Dec, 2014

Date: 8/12/14

To

The Chairman,

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India,

Government of India,

New Delhi - 110002.

Subject: Interconnection Usage Charges (IUC) regime

Dear Sir,

This has reference to your consultation paper seeking the suggestions from wider stake holders. In your consultation paper, it has been mentioned in detail the rate of usage charges, destination network, etc. In order to provide a better service, TRAI from time to time has formulated various policies like Introduction of Calling Party Pays (CPP) in 2003 where you said that in the case of a cellular network, the charges were also based on whether the destination network was in a metro or a non-metro city. The termination charges then varied from Rs.0.15 (15 paise) per minute to Rs.0.50 (50 paise) per minute and carriage charges were from Rs.0.20 (20 paise) per minute to Rs.1.10 per minute depending on the distance. Subsequently, TRAI revised its policies and determined for the application of universal terminal charges at Rs.0.30/- per minute. It was again reviewed in 2005 and carriage charges were also reduced as per the distance. Since its subsequent notification of 2009, the termination charge for local and national long-distance voice calls to fixed line and mobile were uniformly fixed at the rate of Rs. 0.20 paise) per minute and termination charges for incoming international long distance calls were fixed at the rate of Rs. 0.40 (40 paise) per minute. And finally before fixing up the inter termination charges, the matter was referred to the Supreme Court and where Supreme Court ordered that the TRAI should implement Bill & Keep mechanism.

Despite Hon'ble Court's order, it has been three years and no initiative was taken by the TRAI to address this long pending issues. The non-activeness of the TRAI is eating into the profit of the millions' of consumers and simultaneously increasing the revenue profit of the mobile service providers like Vodafone, idea cellular, etc. Though the asymmetries still exists but removal of termination charges would ensure that the aforementioned unfair practices are taken care of, since B&K regime, coupled with the highly successful Mobile Number Portability scheme, would keep the competitive horizon under pressure. Further, adopting the B&K regime would allow operators to have greater retail pricing flexibility which in turn would enable them to offer varied retail packages and tariff structures, ultimately benefitting the consumers.

In this regard, we at _____ want to give our suggestions to your consultation paper. We are sincerely requesting you to implement the orders of the Supreme Court and reduce the ICU charges to Zero or minimal. As we understood from your policy and various trade estimates, this will not eat into the entire profit of the mobile service providers but definitely it will reduce their revenue share. Considering the interconnection charges in the international market and even some countries in South Asia, it will not create any type of discouragement to these service providers. ^{rather} it will give opportunity to the end users to pay the actual cost.

Thanking you.

Warm Regards,

Pradyuman Saha
Secretary
Pankajini Vikash
Social Organisation