

# Private telcos not improving services, stern steps on calldrop: Government

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NEW DELHI: Private telecom companies are increasing their customers but not improving services which are "very bad", [government](#) said in Rajya Sabha today and while asserting that it will take "stern" steps to address the menace of mobile call dropping.

Communications Minister [Ravi Shankar Prasad](#) said the private telecom companies have been asked to improve the [infrastructure](#) and the government is monitoring it.

After the issue was raised by Naresh Agrawal (SP) during Zero Hour, Prasad said he shared the concern of the member and the [Parliament](#) over the problem.

"I understand the concern raised by the member on the issue and Parliament's concern. I and my government have taken this issue very seriously...I am concerned over the issue and we are rectifying it. For last two-three years, the issue was not taken seriously. I want to assure you that the effective steps taken now by me have never been taken earlier," he said.

"I am a strong minister and will take more stern steps to improve the services," he said.

Prasad said private telecom companies are increasing their customers but not improving services which are "very bad". He added that be it the chief of Vodafone or Airtel, both have admitted to the problems and said they will improve.

Of the total 18 lakh mobile towers of private companies across the country, a survey has found 35,000 towers to be faulty, the Minister said.

"While 20,000 such towers have been rectified, still 15,000 faulty towers are to be set right. My department is monitoring it and have been asking private companies for investing and improving the infrastructure," he said

He said due to government's efforts and pressure in the last three months, private mobile companies have installed 14,000 new towers and in Delhi alone 700 new mobile towers have come up. A new tower is being installed in the Parliament annexe and library building, he said, adding that his department is monitoring it.

Agrawal also sought a thorough discussion on the issue to end "consumer exploitation", to which the Minister responded positively saying he was ready for one.

Responding to the question of TRAI's decision to impose penalty on private companies for call dropping, the Minister said "As far as TRAI's decision is concerned, it will be implemented from January."

Prasad further claimed that BSNL, which is in operating profit for the first time in the last five years, is installing 25,000 more towers across the country in the last one month.

"I will also bring [BSNL](#) in profit...I would not talk about my efficiency. BSNL was in 10,000 profit in 2004 and was in loss thereafter. BSNL is in operating profit, for the first time in five years. It was in losses earlier," he said.



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