

Date: 25-12-2014

To,

The Honorable Minister,  
Department of Telecommunications.  
Room No. 105, 1st Floor,  
Sanchar Bhawan,  
Ashok Road, New Delhi.  
PIN- 110001

Subject: Gross Violation of Net Neutrality and Restrictive Business Malpractice by Airtel India.

Dear Sir,

It has come to our attention today that Airtel has decided to start charging for VOIP data traffic on all Subscribed Internet Plans. **We have also a fear that if these companies are left like this without any action this type of rule could be forced on to Wired Broadband user.**

Quoting it, from their terms and conditions page:

“All Internet/data packs or plans (through which customer can avail discounted rate) shall only be valid for Internet browsing and will exclude VoIP (Both incoming/ Outgoing). VoIP over data connectivity would be charged at standard data rates of 4p / 10 KB (3G service) and 10p / 10 KB (2G service). “

This is a gross violation of the principles of **Net Neutrality**. As the Internet is essentially seen as a utility, promoting such a misstep is only going to further impede the government's vision of providing cheap and affordable Internet to all its citizens.

Being providers of utility services, an ISP should not be able to control or alter the terms of access to such services according to their whims and fantasies. This is going to set a dangerous precedent where ISP's will have the ability to dictate the terms for all internet companies, unless they are paid first.

This is similar to how monopolies act, and the government should be more proactive in trying to discourage such business practices.

We would also like to bring to your notice that failing to prevent such malpractices will lead to further collusion and cartel-like behavior among the Indian ISPs.

We have already seen enough instances of such behavior, where some of these same ISP's have colluded against the interests of the consumer and the exchequer. Therefore, we believe that it is time the government took notice of this issue.

India is a growing economy with a nascent Internet Industry. Failure to prevent the spread of such practices will further discourage Internet startups from working and/or coming to India, leading to fewer businesses and reduced employments in the future.

We ask for your help, in keeping the Internet open and available to all the citizens of India. We sincerely believe it is the most powerful medium of communication that humanity has ever created, and a failure to act today, might endanger this nascent tool from achieving its

greatness.

A concerned Netizen.