

Department of Telecom conducts drive against Illegal Mobile Signal Boosters in Mumbai

Illegal Repeaters causes increased incidence of call drops, lower data speeds and such installation is a punishable offence

Mumbai, December 23, 2020: To curb the use of mobile boosters that wreak havoc on mobile networks and impact the experience for customers, Wireless Monitoring Organization, Department of Telecom (DoT), with the support of relevant authorities and mobile operators conducted inspection drives in South Mumbai. The usage of illegal signal boosters been rampant in the city leading to network issues and customer complaints. Over the coming days, the authorities plan to extend the drive to other locations in the city.

The drive was conducted on 22nd & 23rd December across residential and commercial establishments in LT Marg, Masjid Bunder, Bhoiwada, Zaveri Bazar, Kolsa Street, Nagdevi Street, Abdul Rahman Steet, Narayan Dhuru Street& Sarang Street. 68 illegal repeaters were removed, wire joints were cut down giving feed to 50 illegal antennas and 29 notices were given to remove the identified ones with immediate effect. Similar raids have been conducted in different cities covering multiple places like Delhi, Agra, Mathura, etc across residential and commercial establishments.

Speaking on the inspection **IES Amit Gautam, Wireless Monitoring Organization, DoT**, said "Our department has taken a very serious view on installation of Illegal repeaters as it has become a major obstruction in providing quality telecom services & clean spectrum. The practice of using mobile signal boosters is same as to having illegal water connection from the main supply line, leading to shortage for all others. This drive against illegal repeaters is an ongoing exercise and will only intensify in future to address this growing menace. We along with operators are committed to resolve connectivity issues and seek support of the people by not using these boosters. Being spectrum managers the IRRS cadre is very seriously taking the unauthorized usage of spectrum and I think TSP's should come with a legal solution to cater the need of connectivity to the public and proper awareness should be imparted among the public"

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IES Amit Gautam further adds that online platforms have also been issued notices to remove listing of such illegal repeaters from their website and such companies have responded positively.

According to Wireless Monitoring Organisation (WMO) of DoT, installation, possession or selling of illegal repeater is punishable offence as per Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1933 and Indian Telegraph Act, 1885. Heavy fines may be imposed on owners of several premises who have installed these illegal repeaters.

Illegal Repeaters have become a major nuisance and are one of the biggest reasons for customers facing network issues like call drops and low data speeds. These illegal repeaters are installed by individuals/establishments at homes/offices/PG/Guest houses to boost mobile signals. These illegal equipment interfere with all mobile networks, impacts signal quality, and degrades network experience in the entire area. Mobile operator invests heavily in acquisition of spectrum & network rollout to enhance customer experience however the illegal booster cause interference with the mobile network. Authorities were called to crack down on these installations and take strict action.

Source:

<https://dot.gov.in/sites/default/files/WMO%20public%20notice%20for%20boosters.pdf>

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