



SRI DHARANI VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

Regd. No : 78/1995

Cell: 9505431916, 8639245704

Administrative Office: H.No: 1358, Indhiramma Colony, Gundlasingaram, Hanmakonda, Warangal Dist, Pin: 506 009, Telangana State, Email: sridaranisss@gmail.com

Subject: Counter-comments on the Draft Telecom Consumers Protection (Thirteenth Amendment) Regulations, 2026.

Reference: TRAI Draft Notification No. RG-8/(2)/2025-ADV_FEA-I dated 7th April 2026.

1. Digital Inclusion Should Be a Choice, Not Forced

TSPs say data packs are needed for Digital India and to encourage digital usage.

Our view: People should not be forced to pay for data if they don't need it. Low-income users should have the option to use only voice and SMS at affordable prices. Otherwise, they are unfairly burdened.

2. Spam and Security Should Be Managed by TSPs

TSPs say cheaper packs may increase spam.

Our view: Controlling spam is the responsibility of telecom companies using proper technology and regulations. Genuine users should not be punished by removing affordable options.

3. Price Should Reduce if Data is Removed

TSPs say costs are fixed, so prices cannot change much.

Our view: This is not correct. Data is a major part of the package. If data is removed, the price should reduce accordingly. Charging high prices for voice-only plans is unfair.

4. Equal Validity Options for Everyone

TSPs say current long-validity plans are enough.

Our view: This is not fair to low-income users. Data users get many recharge options (28, 56, 84 days), but voice-only users do not. The same validity options should be available for voice-only plans.

5. Data Should Not Be Forced in the Name of Safety

TSPs say data helps in emergencies.

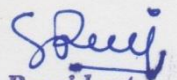
Our view: Many users have basic phones and do not use such features. For smartphone users, companies can provide a "data lock" option instead of forcing paid data packs. Safety should not be used as an excuse to increase costs.

6. Information Should Reach All Consumers

TSPs say information is available on websites and apps.

Our view: Many people do not use apps or websites. These plans should also be clearly shown at shops and informed through SMS in local languages so that everyone is aware.

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President
SDVO
SRI DHARANI VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION
HANUMAKONDA - 506 009,
WARANGAL Dist., (T.S.)