

Telecom panel okays post of ombudsman

Aruna Sundararajan

In a major relief to consumers, the Telecom Commission on Tuesday gave its nod to a proposal for setting up an ombudsman for resolution of grievances of telecom consumers.

“... this has been a long-pending demand. There are about 10 million grievance and complaints per quarter from telecom consumers. The proposal was cleared today[Tuesday],” Telecom Secretary Arun Sundararajan said. “This will bring in a much better and more satisfactory grievance redressal system in the telecom sector,” she added.

Asked if the Ombudsman would have the power to levy penalty, she said: “This will have to be worked out by TRAI but obviously it will have to be an effective ombudsman.” As per TRAI’s recommendations, to function as an effective body, the ombudsman should have the power to levy penalties on telcos.

Under the new mechanism, consumers can first approach the operator. If dissatisfied, they can then approach the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum. Final appeals can be taken to the Ombudsman.

END

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