



Telecommunications (Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure) Rules, 2024

Source: [HT](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Telecommunications (Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure) Rules, 2024**, were released under the [Telecommunications Act, 2023](#).

- It aims to regulate telecom networks designated as [Critical Telecommunication Infrastructure \(CTI\)](#) based on their potential impact on **national security, economy, public health, or safety**.
- In another development, **Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024** came into effect replacing the [Telecom Suspension Rules, 2017](#).

What are the Provisions of the Telecommunications (CTI) Rules, 2024?

- **Data and Network Access:** Telecom entities whose networks are designated as CTI must give access to government-authorised personnel to **inspect hardware, software and data** of certified CTI parts.
- **Oversight and Reporting:** The rules require appointment of a **chief telecom security officer (CTSO)** to oversee implementation.
 - Entities must report **cyber security incidents** within **6 hours**.
- **Required Documentation:** The telecom entity must provide the government with CTI **network details, authorized personnel, hardware/software inventory, vulnerabilities**, crisis management plans, security audits, compliance reports, and service level agreements (SLAs).
- **Repair and Upgradation:** Remote repair or maintenance of CTI from outside India requires **prior written government approval**.
 - For upgrades to **software or hardware**, entities must submit **test reports** for government review.
- **Government Standards:** All CTI hardware, software, and spares must comply with government standards, including **Essential, Interface, and Security Assurance Requirements**, and other notified standards.

What are Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024?

- **Mandatory Publication:** All orders suspending telecom services, including internet shutdowns, must be published with **specific reasons, geographical area, and duration**.
 - The suspension duration cannot exceed **15 days**.
- **Competent Authority:** The suspension order can only be issued by the "competent authority," which is the **union [home secretary](#)** for the **central government and the state home secretary for states**.
- **Review Mechanism:** A **review committee** is required to meet within **5 days** of an order's issuance to review its validity.
 - The central review committee is chaired by **the [cabinet secretary](#)** while the state committee is chaired by the **[chief secretary](#)**.

- **Nodal Officers:** Licensed service providers must appoint a **nodal officer** per service area **to receive and implement suspension orders**.
- **Secure Communication:** Only officers ranked **superintendent of police** or higher can communicate these orders, in **writing or via secure electronic means**.

Note: In the *Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India, Case 2020*, the **Supreme Court** emphasized that government-imposed **restrictions on Internet** access must be **temporary, limited, lawful, necessary, and proportionate**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. In India, the term “Public Key Infrastructure” is used in the context of (2020)

- (a) Digital security infrastructure
- (b) Food security infrastructure
- (c) Health care and education infrastructure
- (d) Telecommunication and transportation infrastructure

Ans: (a)

Q. In India, which of the following review the Independent regulators in sectors like telecommunications, insurance, electricity, etc.? (2019)

1. Ad Hoc Committees set up by the Parliament
2. Parliamentary Department Related Standing Committees
3. Finance Commission
4. Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission
5. NITI Aayog

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2
- (b) 1, 3 and 4
- (c) 3, 4 and 5
- (d) 2 and 5

Ans: (a)

