

## **Is full mobile number portability (MNP) another big scam? B K Syngal argues that full mobile number portability is a 'con job' by lobbying on behalf Telcordia and Syniverse and will burden consumers with unnecessary costs to benefit the two service providers**

No one has carried out a dip stick study save aside a detailed study on the movement of persons from say, Delhi to Mumbai, or say Amritsar to Amravati. If this study is carried out, it would not surprise anybody that there may not be more than a few dozens or scores of such migration. The intra circle porting which has so far taken place is of those who have moved from the defunct CDMA technology to GSM technology. Then, why for the sake of these few, are the 98% being burdened in the costs involved in the implementation of full MNP at the behest of a few domestic and international lobbyists. The inter-circle porting in the NTP 2012 is nothing but a fashion statement, best left at that

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent dictate to keep lobbyists away from the power of corridors has fallen to deaf ears in the telecom ministry. A powerful lobbyist of UPA era managed to get multi-million dollar orders for which 900 million consumers will bear the cost.

So how is the NDA different from UPA?

The Telecom Commission (TC) recently gave its nod to full mobile number portability (MNP), or the facility that gives the mobile user the option to keep the same mobile number, while moving to another service area.

But, the circumstances under which this policy decision has come about is questionable. All India MNP is a 'con job' by lobbying on behalf of two service providers (Telcordia and Syniverse). It may be noted, that the owners of Telcordia, lobbied hard. Because of their involvement, one of the directors in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) was behind bars. That aside, full MNP, being given the in-principle approval by TC is completely misconceived and out of place.



The circumstances under which the TRAI submitted its recommendations as part of the consultation process, with the constitution of a dodgy Focus Group, which was not representative of the entire gamut of stakeholders having an participatory interest on the issue, was dubious, to say the least.

Prima facie, the Indian market comprises of only about 5-10% post paid subscribers, who are quality savvy and who may have the need to relocate between the top tier cities.

**The question arises, has anybody; ever carried out a dip stick study save aside a detailed study on the movement of persons from say, Delhi to Mumbai, or say Amritsar to Amravati. If this study is carried out, it would not surprise anybody that there may not be more than a few dozens or scores of such migration. The intra circle porting which has so far taken place is of those who have moved from the defunct CDMA technology to GSM technology.**

Then, why for the sake of these few, are the 98% being burdened in the costs involved in the implementation of full MNP at the behest of a few domestic and international lobbyists. The inter-circle porting in the NTP 2012 is nothing but a fashion statement, best left at that.

The Government had recently said that they don't want to be influenced by lobbyists. But, here decision making has taken place at the behest of a few lobbyists.



The entire MNP regime needs to be thoroughly studied, starting from the movement of people from Shimla to Ooty or even, Jaipur to Tiruchapalli.

The same purpose can be achieved far more cost effectively, without any cost implications or fall out implications on majority of low end consumers.

Those must be explored before these blessings turn into reality.

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