

## Chennai floods: Users ask telecom companies to compensate, apologise for stalled services

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NEW DELHI: An online petition on website change.org has urged telecom services providers such as Bharti Airtel, Aircel, Reliance Communications and Vodafone to compensate subscribers for failing to provide services when most needed - during the recent unprecedented rains which flooded the metropolis and brought life to a standstill.

In the online petition created by [Rohit TK](#), telcos were asked to compensate users as their networks went down and couldn't turn up even after almost five days after rains had halted, and demanded a public apology.

"All your phone networks went down during the crucial hours when people were desperately looking for help. Your phone networks did not work for almost 5 days after the rains," the petition read.

"The fact is, Sirs, you failed the citizens of the city when it was drowning," it added.

Online platform Change.Org, had in past, run many petitions that recently included 'Save Net Neutrality' campaign that attracted many eyeballs. Nearly 1,000 readers have signed the petition, as per data on the website Tuesday.



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Normal life had gone out of gear in Chennai since November end due to heavy downpours in the region which had disrupted telecom services. While telecom operators launched offers of free minutes and complimentary data during the affected period, basic services had remained affected.

"We also demand that you ensure that you find ways and means to make your networks in the future should such a crisis arise. We, the people of Chennai, also demand that all of you issue a public apology, for you failed us at the most important time when our lives were in grave danger," the petition read.

Telecom operators say they had suffered an estimated loss of Rs 300 crore that include Rs 200 crore on account of revenue loss and another Rs 100 crore spent on network restoration initiatives.

Telecom lobby group Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) added that unavailability of grid power and diesel, water-logging resulting in submerged sites as well as halt to transportation were among severe roadblocks towards restoring network operations in the affected areas.

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