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# PH still lags in internet service

75th out of 88 countries in 4G availability; 85th out of 88 countries in 4G speed

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The Philippines saw improvements for both 4G availability and speed although most of its neighbors in the region remained ahead by those measures, the latest crowdsourced survey by OpenSignal showed.

OpenSignal's newest State of LTE report, which covered 88 countries in the fourth quarter of 2017, focused on 4G or LTE, which local players PLDT Inc. and Globe Telecom have been rolling out aggressively since 2016.

According to the report, 4G availability in the Philippines stood at 63.7 percent versus 58.8 percent during the previous period covering the third quarter of 2017. In the current edition, the Philippines stood at 75 out of 88 countries.

Availability refers to how consistently a user could access a 4G network during a given period of time.

4G availability in the Philippines was better than Myanmar, but behind close neighbors such as Vietnam (71.3 percent), Indonesia (72.4 percent), Malaysia (74.9 percent) and Thailand (85.6 percent). LTE availability was the best in

South Korea at 97.5 percent.

The report showed that 4G speed in the Philippines went higher to 9.5 megabits per second, versus 8.24 Mbps in the third quarter of 2017. The country ranked No. 85 out of 88 countries in terms of LTE speed.

It was faster than Indonesia (8.9 Mbps) but behind Thailand (9.6 Mbps), Malaysia (14.8 Mbps) and Vietnam (21.5 Mbps). Singapore topped the list with a speed of 44.3 Mbps.

In the Philippines, LTE usage remains relatively small, given that the service is limited by the

handsets that can use 4G frequencies. PLDT's Smart Communications recently estimated that about 40 percent of its customers with access to mobile internet do so on an LTE-capable device.

Overall, OpenSignal concluded that LTE speeds around the world have hit a "plateau" of 45 Mbps.

"The industry is still waiting on that spark that will push speeds beyond 50 Mbps on a national level," OpenSignal noted. "That spark will come, and it will likely come sooner rather than later as operators embrace the latest iterations of LTE-Advanced technology." INQ

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