



**COAI**

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# I-DIGEST

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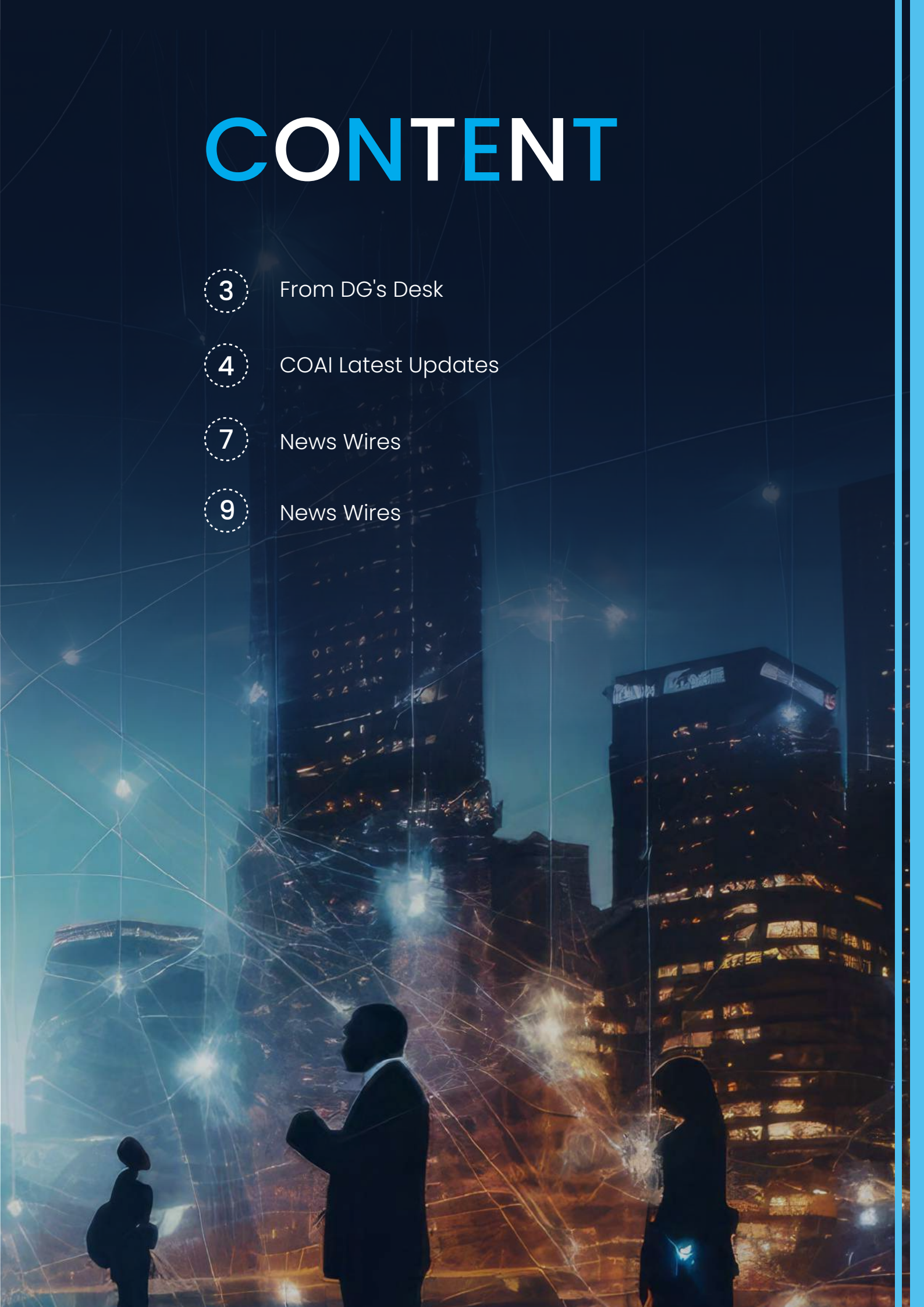
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## LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)

### Director General, COAI

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#### From DG's Desk

5G technology holds the promise to revolutionize the socio-economic fabric of India by spawning new use cases and revenue streams through innovative business models. It will boost the start-up ecosystem and enable India to be an R&D hub for 5G technology. However, to achieve this, a faster rollout of 5G in key cities and across the length and breadth of the nation is important.

An important reason why the 5G experience in India is not as desired is the strict EMF radiation limits. We have repeatedly stressed on the fact that current exposure limits in India are significantly stricter than the ICNIRP global norms. And this has been a bane for 5G growth leading to slower internet speed, lower network quality and inferior signal strength. It has also forced telecom operators to increase mobile towers to cover up for the slack in network performance, thus increasing their capital expenditure too. We hope that the Indian government will revisit and relax the current EMF norms to improve the 5G experience and enable better monetization of 5G.

Further, as per DOT rules, states have to mandatorily follow the RoW rules notified recently under the Telecommunications Act. This is an important directive which needs to be expedited by states if they want to attract investments in ICTEC. If we look at Bengaluru, the city has 800+ GCCs with a market cap of \$22.2 billion. With the State having launched its GCC policy at the Bengaluru Tech Summit 2024, an additional 500 GCCs are in the pipeline.

To accommodate this growth, Bengaluru must streamline its RoW policies and ramp up its network infra to cater to the growing demand for data. A transparent, streamlined RoW framework will further cement Bengaluru's status as a technology hub.

One of the most important developments that happened in the telecom industry recently is the Cabinet's nod for bank guarantee waiver for past spectrum purchases. This decision is a landmark one and will provide much-needed financial succor for key telecom operators by improving cash flow, freeing up capital and enabling investments in networks. This positive development will ensure a stronger and robust rollout of telecom networks in the future and will help the telecom operators navigate complex financial challenges.

As India transitions into a digitally advanced society powered by 5G, a collaborative approach among the government, state authorities and telecom stakeholders is essential. Together, these efforts will drive high-quality network development and sustainable growth for India's burgeoning digital ecosystem.

– LT. GEN DR. SP KOCHHAR (RETD.)  
Director General, COAI



# COAI

## Latest Updates:



### **Letter to DoT seeking extension of timeline for Registration of M2M Service Providers**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 08.11.2024, to extend the registration deadline. While most M2MSPs have completed registration, some entities, including government agencies, are still to register. Disconnecting unregistered M2MSPs after 15.11.2024, may impact essential services. Subsequently, DoT extended the registration deadline for M2MSPs to 15.01.2025.

### **Letter to MoF and DoT regarding abolition of USOF levy**

We submitted separate letters to MoF and DoT on 18.11.2024. We highlighted that rural tele-density has surpassed targets set in telecom policies, yet TSPs continue paying high USO fund contributions based on the same percentage of Adjusted Gross Revenues. We emphasized that TSPs' upgraded rural networks would generate better revenue and contribution to the exchequer. We have further highlighted the Global best practices. We have requested abolition of the USO levy, till the time existing corpus is completely utilized.

### **Letter to MoF regarding Reduction in Regulatory Levies-License Fee Contribution by Licensed Telecom Service Providers**

COAI submitted a letter to the Ministry of Finance on 18.11.2024, requesting for reducing the License Fee from 3% to 1% of AGR to cover only administrative costs, while also highlighting the Global best practices.

### **TRAI Consultation Paper on "The Terms and Conditions of Network Authorisations to be Granted Under the Telecommunications Act, 2023"**

COAI submitted its response to the Consultation Paper on 01.11.2024, whereby it recommended:

- i. Maintaining the current licensing/authorization regime without major changes
- ii. Preserving the existing contractual nature of the authorization process

- iii. Suggesting a separate consultation paper to thoroughly examine critical areas like licensing administration, infrastructure provisions, policy enforcement and dispute resolution
- iv. Opposing separate authorization for cloud-hosted telecom networks
- v. Supporting voluntary migration to new authorization regime for telecom operators
- vi. Maintaining the "no worse off" principle to protect operators from stricter conditions
- vii. Network operators and service providers should negotiate agreements based on mutual terms, without mandated reference agreements.

### **Request for extension in timeline for submission of EMF Triennial Self-Certificate by the Telecom Industry**

The timeline for submitting triennial Self-Certificates (i.e., after every three years), was extended until 31.03.2022. Subsequently, the current triennial cycle ends on 31.03.2025. COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 29.10.2024, requesting an extension in the timeline.

### **Request for urgent consideration of EMF threshold alignment with ICNIRP 2020 guidelines**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT on 06.11.2024, urging for the alignment of the EMF threshold with ICNIRP, which is an imperative requirement for maintaining the quality of service and continuity of the network coverage.

### **Support for acceptance of Evidence of Nodal Officer of Telecom Companies through Video Conference (VC) under Section 65 B of the Indian Evidence Act**

COAI submitted a letter to Calcutta High Court on 12.11.2024, requesting support to enable/allow Nodal Officers of TSPs to provide evidence in Court Cases through VC (Video Conference) and excuse the requirement of their personal appearances for the same.

### **COAI letter on Adoption of Draft Guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Unsolicited and**



### **Unwarranted Business Communication, 2024**

COAI submitted a letter on 26.11.2024, requesting the Department to notify the Guidelines at the earliest in the interest of consumers, to enable them to act directly against all individuals and entities who initiate such UBC.

### **COAI letter on Certification of KYC Verification and Compliance of Bulk Callers/SMS Senders under TCCCPR 2018**

COAI submitted a letter to TRAI on 26.11.2024, requesting the Authority to kindly absolve from mandating TSPs to provide certificates of KYC verification and compliance for bulk callers and SMS senders under the TCCCPR Regulations, 2018.

### **Letters to Chairpersons of various Electricity Regulatory Commissions**

COAI made a submission to Chairpersons of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, J&K, Karnataka, Kerala, Ladakh, Punjab, Puducherry, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Union Territories during the month, requesting electricity to be provided under Industrial Tariff to Telecom industry. It was highlighted that the State Commissions have been given the power to frame regulations including those for determination of tariff by classification of consumers under different categories on the basis of the purpose for which electricity supply is provided.

### **Letter written to Additional Chief Secretary, Information Technology & Digital Services Department, Government of Tamil Nadu**

A submission was made to Additional Chief Secretary, Information Technology & Digital Services Department, Government of Tamil Nadu on 12.11.2024, regarding fibre cuts in Chennai, by various agencies due to digging being done for development activities. COAI requested that instruction be provided to concerned government stakeholders - like TNEB, GCC, CMRL, PWD, etc. to provide advance notice before conducting any underground excavation work and use CBuD App.

### **Letter written to Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Indore**

Letter written to Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Indore on 08.11.2024, submitting industry's views and objection on public notice for removal of Cables from Poles/Electric Poles in Indore. An industry meeting was sought on an urgent basis.

### **Post 7th SBC submission to Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala**

Submission was made on 07.11.2024, to Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala, requesting for support on the issues raised during the SBC. Industry issues like amending the Green Energy Open Access rules, High rentals being charged by various Municipalities for using Poles, Electricity supply under Industrial tariffs category, provision for Right of Way (RoW) permission of roads under Defect Liability Period (DLP), functionality of Edit/Modify in the online SUGAMA Portal, etc.

### **Letter written to Member, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board**

A letter was written to Member, Maharashtra Pollution Control Board on 05.11.2024, requesting that telecom being an essential services industry, may be exempted from retrofitting of Emission Control Devices on DG Sets of capacities up to 800 kW (1000KVA). It was also requested that a meeting be held with the industry (Telecom Service Providers, tower companies, etc.) to discuss the above highlighted constraints in greater detail. An industry meeting was held with the Member on 21.11.2024.

### **Letter written to Chief Commissioner, BBMP, Govt of Karnataka**

Letter written to Chief Commissioner, BBMP, Govt of Karnataka on 27.11.2024 Seeking time extension in the matter of Property Tax on Telecommunication Infrastructure as the time given by BBMP is 30th Nov 2024 under One Time Settlement Scheme else TSPs are liable to pay arrears with penalty. It was informed to BBMP that the case is already in Hon'ble High Court on a petition filed by Indus Towers Limited.

### **Letter written to Additional Chief Secretary, Govt of Karnataka**

Letter written to Additional Chief Secretary, UDD, Govt of Karnataka on 29.11.2024 on Property Tax being levied by BBMP on Mobile Towers. It was requested that keeping in view compiling of accurate information, including the period of installation, time of sharing, etc, the industry be granted 90 to 120 days extension for availing the one-time settlement scheme (OTS).

### **EMF Awareness activity**

COAI supported the DoT Delhi LSA for an EMF Awareness program which was telecast on Doordarshan on 12.11.2024. The program focussed on highlighting the myths about EMF in general public and the checks and balances put forth by the Government of India.

### **Letter submitted to Chairperson Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission on Delhi Draft Green Energy Open Access (GEOA) Regulation**

A Letter was submitted to Chairperson DERC on 04.11.2024 requesting the Commission to remove the voltage restriction in the recently notified amendments, so that the industry can avail the GEOA in the State.

### **Uttar Pradesh SBC Meeting**

Uttar Pradesh SBC meeting was held on 10.11.2024 under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary, UP state Policy implementation issues by local authorities/bodies, high restoration charges, industrial tariff to telecom towers were highlighted. Subsequently a formal submission was made on 21.11.2024.

### **Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity Regulations, 2024**

TRAI notified regulations namely "Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity Regulations, 2024" on 25.10.2024. A Rating platform shall be set up or authorized by TRAI for the purpose of managing rating of properties for digital connectivity as per provisions of the regulations.

### **Webinar on RoW Rules 2024 implementation aspects**

DoT and National Communication Academy (NCA) Ghaziabad, organised an online webinar on 13.11.2024 to discuss about the policy perspective and implementation aspects of Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules, 2024

### **Letter to DGF&SS (MoEFCC) on Simplification of RoW proposals for OFC laying**

A reminder letter was submitted to DGF&SS on Simplification of RoW proposals for OFC laying in Forests areas.

### **NBM chaired meeting to discuss low usage of CBuD App**

An online meeting was held 05.11.2024 and 13.11.2024, chaired by DoT to discuss low usage of CBuD App by TSP members in all the Circles. MoC has reviewed the usage of the App and has asked DoT to push to usage by States and by Industry. All LSAs are now pursuing the matter with states with target monthly enquiry entries, TSPs are being sensitised to improve the usage, also suggested to consider adding relevant clause in their vendor contracts.

### **Workshop by Delhi LSA on low CBuD usage**

An in-person workshop was held on 20.11.2024, with all stakeholders under the chairmanship of Addl. DGT, Delhi LSA, for action to be taken regarding Enhancement of Usage of CBuD in Delhi.

### **State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting of Karnataka**

6th SBC meeting of Karnataka was convened on 25.11.2024, and chaired by the Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka. Industry issues of property Tax on towers by BBMP, Security Deposits, Permission for Aerial OFC, etc. were raised by COAI.

### **Request extension of MTCTE regime for Base Station and Hypervisor and Issuing of MTCTE Certificate**

COAI submitted letter to TEC requesting for extension on Base Station and Hypervisor, and re-issuing of the MTCTE certificate dated 05.11.2024.

### **Industry submission regarding E-Waste Management**

COAI submitted letter to DoT on 08.11.2024, requesting for a meeting with MoEFCC, DoT and Industry to discuss on the recent issues related to delinking of the EPR with EC and financials.

### **Communication Security Scheme**

COAI submitted letter to DoT dated 22.11.2024, regarding ComSec issues faced by the industry during implementation and proposing revised undertaking to NCCS.

### **PPP - MII Order, 2017**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT dated 20.11.2024, in response to the notification released by DoT on PPP-MII in the month of October 2024, stating the current position of the industry and its ask.

### **Request for transfer of ER on devices to MeitY**

COAI submitted a letter to DoT dated 26.11.2024, requesting for transfer of ER - device to Me



### Bengaluru's 5G Dreams: DoT's RoW rules to clear the path

In a step expected to streamline the deployment of telecom infra, facilitate faster rollout of 5G networks and be a game changer for the industry.

[Read more](#)



### Building smarter highways in telecom's new digital frontier

Autonomous networks enable telcos to streamline operations, enhance services, and reduce costs, driving efficiency in a data-driven, hyperconnected world. [Read more](#)



### Telecom for optimizing digital infrastructure and national security in India

Telecom infrastructure underpins a vast range of digital services that drive economic growth, improve social inclusion and enhance public service delivery. [Read more](#)



### SC rules in favor of telcos, allows Cenvat credits on infrastructure duties

The supreme court gave a favorable decision for telecom companies. The court said that these companies can claim tax credits on telecom infrastructure.

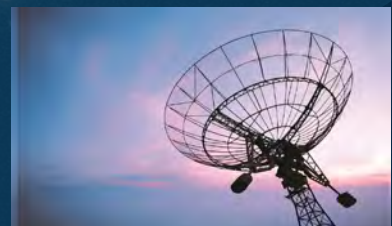
[Read more](#)



### Government's nod for bank guarantee waiver will reduce telcos burden: COAI

Industry body COAI said that the Cabinet nod for bank guarantee waiver for past spectrum purchases is a "landmark decision" that would help reduce financial burden on telecom operators in the country.

[Read more](#)







# COAI

## News Wires:

### Telcos raise their voice again for a fair share of revenues from OTT Players

The telecom industry has reiterated its demand to get a fair share in the revenues from OTT platforms at a meeting of top executives of country's leading telcos with telecom minister. [Read more](#)







# COAI

## Events:

### MediaTek Global Connect

MediaTek Global Connect offered global media an in-depth view of India's technology ecosystem and MediaTek's leadership across smartphones, automotive, IoT, and connectivity solutions. Attendees gained insights into how MediaTek vision is aligned with India's evolving tech landscape, empowering users with incredible technology experiences. The participants witnessed insightful panel discussions on key themes including India's Telecom Landscape, AI and Transformational Technologies, Women Driving the Indian Techade, and Analysts' Perspective on Innovation in India. Lt. Gen Dr. SP Kochhar participated in the panel, "India's Telecom Landscape" highlighting the growing opportunities being offered by India as a leading ICTEC market in the world and the plethora of opportunities being made present in the market to grow into the leading nation in terms of Digital Communications prowess in the world.





## Contact Us

Address : 14, Bhai Veer Singh Marg, New Delhi – 110 001

Phone : +91 - 11- 23349275 | Fax: +91 - 11 - 23349276

Email : [contact@coai.in](mailto:contact@coai.in) | Website: [www.coai.in](http://www.coai.in)

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