

Telecom:

Saviour during
Pandemic



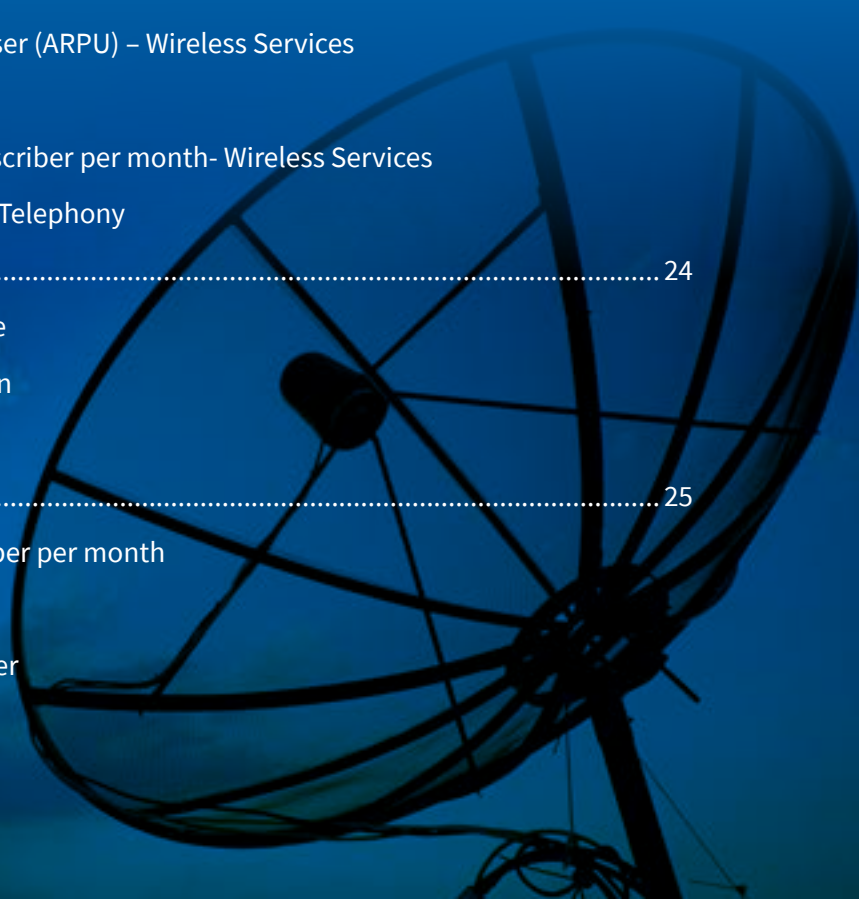
Annual Report
2020-21

COAI



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डा० पी. डी. वाघेला
Dr. P. D. Vaghela



अध्यक्ष
भारतीय दूरसंचार विनियामक प्राधिकरण
Chairman
TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA

19.5.2021

Message



During these difficult times of COVID Pandemic, telecom sector has taken timely measures to facilitate seamless connectivity through mobile and internet. Telecom Sector is playing a crucial role in keeping us connected. In these difficult moments, the telecom sector has also played a big role in keeping people safe and healthy by assisting the government and businesses in disseminating accurate information to citizens. The sector has also played a vital role in enabling remote working for scores of employees.

In these times of the pandemic, the telecom industry's field force has been working relentlessly to ensure uninterrupted access to service for all. They have kept us connected during isolation. The telecom workforce - representing customer care, network operations centers and critical functions - have enabled service provisioning and speedy fault resolution.

Today, the internet is a key aspect of people's lives with the increasing relevance of digital infrastructure. This digital infrastructure forms the bedrock of the digital economy. As per estimates, India's digital economy has the potential to become a USD 1 trillion ecosystem by 2025. MeitY estimates that India's digital economy will contribute 18-23% to India's overall economic activity by 2025. This will require updated infrastructure and telecom companies have been persistently enhancing infrastructure to provide seamless connectivity. The sector today is not only empowering people but is also powering start-ups, SMEs and enterprises as they look to replace physical infrastructure with digital infrastructure.

To support exponential growth in digital infrastructure, we need to substantially invest in creating digital communications infrastructure which includes internet backbone, fixed broadband, mobile communications, cloud computing and data centers. The government has already taken steps for the betterment of the sector and has developed a comprehensive forward-looking telecom policy, the NDCP 2018, which clearly outlines the urgent need to recognize telecom infrastructure as "critical and essential". Telecom companies are digital innovators and need the support of a healthy investment environment where good margins support large scale CAPEX investments. Improved investments in the sector and ensuring ease of doing business will further help in bringing digital transformation in the country.

TRAI has been working with Government bodies and has extended support to the sector to ensure connectivity and ensured functioning of online services. TRAI has also taken several steps for the orderly growth of the sector and protection of consumer interests. TRAI has actively engaged with various stakeholders and has come out with innovative and suitable policy initiatives for the holistic growth of the sector.

I appreciate the role played by COAI in highlighting the key Policy issues and providing a platform for exchange of ideas between the government, the regulator, and the industry. I wish COAI all success in future endeavours.

(P.D. Vaghela)

अंशु प्रकाश, आई.ए.एस.

सचिव

Anshu Prakash, I.A.S
Secretary



सत्यमेव जयते

भारत सरकार
संचार मंत्रालय
दूरसंचार विभाग
Government of India
Ministry of Communications
Department of Telecommunications



MESSAGE

I am happy to learn that Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) is holding its Annual General Meeting on 10th June, 2021 and on this occasion the Annual Report 2020-21 is being unveiled with the theme "Telecom: Saviour During Pandemic". It is only appropriate that in the current times when we are actively engaged in the fight against COVID-19, the COAI Annual Report has chosen to highlight the role of Telecommunications in this endeavour.

2. One of the main thrusts of the war against the pandemic has been lockdown, restrictions on movement of people and on interpersonal physical interface. In a situation where road, rail, air, sea modes of transport were required to be stopped and citizens had to stay within the four walls of their homes, it is the Telecommunications Networks which provided connectivity. In fact, work by frontline health workers, doctors, nurses, Government authorities and provision of essential services was not possible without the connectivity of voice and broadband. Virtual meetings and conferences, where decisions critical for fighting the pandemic were to be taken, were enabled by Telecommunications connectivity. Without doubt, Telecommunications emerged as one of our main saviours during the pandemic.

3. The pandemic has impacted, inter-alia, how we think, communicate, work, shop, learn and educate, entertain and socially interact. It has touched all aspects of our life. Interestingly, these changes in behavior and in the way of doing things, are inextricably linked with the connectivity given by Telecommunications Networks. E-commerce, e-education, tele-consultations for health, work-from-home, or work-from-anywhere became possible because of Telecommunications connectivity. Another aspect of Telecommunications which should also be highlighted, is leveraging technology for containing and fighting the pandemic. Telecommunication technology has been used for contact tracing, sending bulk messages, quarantine alert systems, using caller tunes to reach out to the citizens for messages on Public Health and even for applications such as 'Aarogya Setu' and 'CoWIN'.

4. I am happy that despite the huge surge in data usage, our Networks remained robust and functioned in a top-class manner. I congratulate all Telecom stakeholders, including the Telecom Service Providers, Internet Service Providers, Telecom Infrastructure providers, Telecom equipment manufacturers, mobile phone manufacturers, all those engaged in maintaining our Networks and phones/computers and the entire workforce in this critical sector.

5. The performance and resilience of the Telecommunications Sector in the present crisis should propel us for further proliferation, deepening and strengthening of Telecommunications Networks. As eloquently articulated in the National Digital Communications Policy, 2018 (NDCP), Mission 'Connect India' envisages the goals of universal broadband connectivity, including at the Gram Panchayat level and connectivity in all hitherto uncovered areas. The bulk of traffic in India – both voice and data – runs on wireless Networks and ways must be found of augmenting wireless Network capacity. With increase in uses of broadband, we must focus on giving a fillip to rapid fiberization and making available larger quantities and new bands of backhaul spectrum. The successful auction held in March, 2021 has allowed incumbent Telecom Service Providers to augment their spectrum resources. Permissions to conduct 5G trials have been given, and this is expected to give a fillip to launching of commercial 5G services. Government has also removed bottlenecks in the availability of spectrum for 5G, so that adequate spectrum will be available for the successful proliferation of 5G services in India. We must also focus on wireline broadband in both urban and rural areas. Expansions and enhanced utilization of BharatNet will go hand in hand with the increasing broadband appetite in the rural areas. The recently announced Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the Telecom Sector, with an outlay of Rs. 12,195 crore, is also expected to boost indigenous production of Telecom equipment, which is a step in the direction of **AtmaNirbhar Bharat**.

6. There is a learning from every challenge and every crisis. The current pandemic has reinforced the realization of criticality of Telecommunications in the modern world. Telecommunications Sector rose to the occasion and in the process propelled growth, innovation and development that are transforming the way we live and work. COAI has also played a very constructive and progressive role during the pandemic time which has facilitated in bringing out the best in this sector.

7. On the occasion of the AGM, I convey my best wishes to COAI and to all stakeholders of the Telecommunications Sector.


(Anshu Prakash)

Chairperson's Message



These are unprecedented times as the nation battles the second wave of COVID-19. In these difficult times, over the past one year, the telecom industry has served the nation as an essential service and provided a reliable digital backbone to keep a billion Indians connected and safe. Frontline telecom workers including service, sales and network teams have braved the odds to work 24x7 to ensure that telecom networks and its services are available 24x7 when people need it the most.

In this backdrop, as we reflect on the year gone by, one can say with pride that telecom is without doubt the oxygen for Digital India. The massive investments by the telecom industry to take affordable services to every corner of India have played a seminal role during the last year. Work from Home, Online Classes, E-Commerce and online medical consultations would not have been possible in the absence of these networks. And here, I must thank the government and the DoT for being extremely supportive to the needs of the industry and enabling them to do their jobs.

The industry continues to emerge from the woods as the regulatory headwinds such as the AGR matter are now behind us. The three plus one operator structure is fairly settled and we must look at the opportunities that lie ahead of us as a digitally connected India takes shape and the 5G era awaits us.

The DoT has now allotted spectrum to top multiple entities for 5G trials paving way for validation of technologies and use cases. The industry remains supportive of government's 'Make in India' vision and believes that India has the potential to become a global hub for 5G. For this, the Government must continue to take progressive policy steps.

AI, AR and VR, all emerging technologies, will make faster inroads once 5G and 5G enabled technologies come to the forefront. It is estimated that 5G's collective impact on India's economy will be USD 1 trillion by 2035. 5G is expected to have a deep and lasting impact on India as new opportunities

open in IoT, transport, logistics, healthcare, smart manufacturing and smart cities. But perhaps the biggest dividend of 5G will be applications such as Fixed Wireless Access that will take gigabit speed connectivity to small towns and villages and truly bridge the digital divide.

For this to happen, the industry will need the steadfast support of the government. We must ensure that the industry is financially healthy and is able to make the large investments required for 5G, which will require the setting up of lakhs of new sites and lots of fiber. We must begin by revisiting the reserve price of 5G spectrum and ensure that the spectrum is affordable so that the industry can deliver the benefits of 5G to every Indian. As a nation we need to reimagine the Right of Way policies and guidelines for 5G site and fiber rollouts and have a uniform framework for the entire country. The government can also consider providing power supply to telecom sites at industrial tariffs vs commercial tariffs given that the industry provides an essential service.

The Government must ensure that an essential service like telecom does not get taxed like a sin industry. Rationalization of taxes, currently the highest for the telecom sector amongst Asian countries and enhancing of ease of business by lowering compliances burdens will greatly benefit the sector. Only if the industry is able to get returns on its investments will it attract domestic and foreign investors.

Given the government's thrust towards building a digitally empowered nation through the ambitious Digital India program, we hope that the government-industry partnership will play a vital role for the future growth of the telecom sector.

In the end, on behalf of the industry, I would like to salute our Covid warriors – the doctors, nurses and medical staff, police and government servants who are helping the nation in this hour of crisis.

Mr. Ajai Puri
Chairperson, COAI

Vice Chairperson's Message



The Indian telecom sector has shown progressive signs of recovery in the last few quarters. Rising ARPU, healthy growth in subscriber base, potential surge in data usage and enterprise business activity, and a conducive regulatory environment is expected to boost telco revenues and set the sector on the path to recovery in FY 2021-22. This in turn will provide Telecom Service Providers (TSP) ample opportunity to focus on digital transformation of their businesses.

The sector has also emerged as a critical lifeline for the nation in times of COVID-19. TSPs moved swiftly to augment their network capacity as the demand for data rose to unprecedented levels with public and private companies migrating to a remote work culture. The sector added as many as 49,600 new mobile towers in FY 2020-21 and acquired 848 MHz of spectrum in the recently concluded auctions, which is expected to be used for enhancing network coverage and capacity.

Furthermore, in order to enable users cope with the pandemic, TSPs have launched multiple initiatives across Healthcare, Life-sciences, Connectivity and Retail. On the healthcare front, there are initiatives that enable users to monitor their health from their homes and stay abreast with the evolving coronavirus situation through real time updates. These initiatives have helped lighten the burden on the country's medical infrastructure.

Moving ahead, we also expect TSPs to progressively deploy several Internet of Things (IoT) applications, as adoption of IoT services and allied technologies is set to grow manifold in the next few years. TSPs are deploying state-of-the-art technology solutions for better indoor coverage and network optimization, overhauling legacy networks with new equipment and making investments in additional spectrum and fiber. These efforts will help bridge the digital divide in the country, boost the adoption of digital services and strengthen the digital backbone of the nation.

COAI, being representative of major service providers of India can take a lead to boost investor confidence in the sector by working with the government to promote ease of doing business, adopting liberal regulatory practices, maintaining consistency in basic policies to ensure a level playing field and aligning with the vision of Digital India.

I extend my best wishes to COAI and its team and look forward to working with the Industry Association and Government bodies to secure a stronger and brighter digital future for the nation.

Mr. Pramod K Mittal
Vice Chairperson, COAI

From The Director General's Desk

The telecom industry has truly worked far more than what has been envisioned in this quote by not only becoming better but proving to be a survivor for many during the pandemic. It aided all kinds of digital tools including video-conferencing, cloud computing, electronic payments, e-learning, tele-medicine, online shopping, entertainment, etc.

The industry assured the citizens, customers and the Government that despite the precarious financial health it were ready to do everything in its power to ensure that the networks continued to function as a vibrant, essential component of the economy and its health and well-being during the nationwide lockdown.

Telecom infrastructure helped sustain businesses, provide information, connect people and allay fears. If there was no virtual connectivity providing real-time information, citizens would suffer from anxiety and fear. Telecom helps people combat the disease at a social level through enhanced awareness. All the communication on social media is, virtually, real-time, which is possible only because of this telecom infrastructure. It also helps deal with boredom. For millions who are not used to staying at home, it makes the confinement a lot more easier. And businesses benefit the most, for it helps them continue their operations, both domestically and internationally, even when physical interactions are not possible. Since the unavoidable lockdown due to covid-19 pandemic, it is only telecom which is keeping the economic engines on. Not just economy, but even the social sectors like health and education are alive by leveraging the power of the enabling nature of telecommunications.

Last year was also a landmark year as it marked twenty five years of mobility in India. It is also noteworthy that the same year once again established the importance and relevance of the sector in our lives. It is the only sector which kept people active socially, economically and politically



"In the face of adversity, we have a choice. We can be bitter, or we can be better."

Caryn Sullivan

and kept us all going through the adversity. The sector proved that it is the key enabler of not only connectivity but also productivity to keep the country progressing due to the disruption caused by the pandemic. It is important to appreciate the efforts of all involved in the sector, especially the front line workers/ telecom warriors who have made this possible.

The sector, despite the challenges of limited resources, paucity of fiber and backhaul, made all efforts to offer the best possible quality of service to their customers through use of prudent traffic management techniques. Our members initiated variety of measures to improve the customer experiences by offering them cost effective tools to attract the customers who are working from home. As a result, now several IT companies in India are anticipating having work from home policy for their employees even post lockdown, which will change the entire perspective of companies and their preferences from telecom sector.

It is important to appreciate the help that the sector has been receiving from the Government Departments, especially which enabled the sector to successfully manage to provide service to the users, in such a difficult phase. Whether it was allowing movement to telecom personnel or recognizing them as telecom warriors and prioritizing vaccine for them, the Government has shown their full support. Telecom service providers have invested and will continue to invest significantly in the telecom infrastructure (capex and opex) and with enabling policies from the Government, the sector will prove to be the health and wealth of the nation.

STATUS ON POLICY AND REGULATORY ISSUES

The industry witnessed the biggest 4G spectrum auction in March 2021. This will enable the industry to cater to the exponential increase in data usage and continue supporting the Digital India vision. This year, the immediate goal is to strengthen the telecom infrastructure further to help people continue getting digital access. To create such infrastructure, huge investments are required by the TSPs. For the TSPs to generate capital expenditure it either needs to generate sufficient profits which can be ploughed back to the business or it needs to be attractive enough to attract funds, be it in form of equity or debt. Hence, it is vital to ensure that the telecom industry remains financially strong. We hope the Government will take additional measures to boost the financial health of the industry, which is the backbone of a digitally connected India.

The year witnessed Government taking actions on many aspects of the National Digital Communications Policy 2018, especially on the aspects of ease of doing business and digitization of processes. The focus of the Government as well as the Regulator was more on providing ease to the customers, which was clearly reflective in the way issues like digital KYC and non-payment disconnections were handled. The focus of the Regulator is also on meeting the targets on NDCP-2018 and various consultations including enhancing Broadband and consumer centric issues were held this year and very positive recommendations have been submitted to the Government for acceptance.

The Right of Way Rules, 2016, are certainly a progressive and forward-looking step to achieve the Digital India vision. RoW Policies of 14 additional States/UTs were notified in alignment with RoW Rules, 2016 during 2020-2021. Till date, 29 States/UTs have aligned their Telecom Infrastructure policy with RoW Rules, 2016 that has streamlined hassle-free Right of Way processes. 5 States/UTs made their Single Window Online Portal operational during 2020-2021 namely Assam, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Punjab and West Bengal. Till date 11 States/UTs have made their Online Single Window Portal Operational that is facilitating speedy roll-out of the Telecom Infrastructure. On request of COAI, DoT issued letter to all LSAs to organize EMF Awareness Sessions with support of COAI (Eminent Doctor and Lawyer). 21 EMF Awareness Sessions/Webinars held, EMF Awareness Radio Show organized on AIR FM and 2 EMF Awareness TV shows organized on

Doordarshan. The DoT and the State Governments have also extended a helping hand to the industry by allowing free movement of telecom staff during the lockdowns and also prioritizing vaccines for them.

There was also some misinformation being spread linking 5G testing with the COVID. COAI led a campaign to demystify this misinformation. On COAI's submission to Secy.(T), DoT; LSA Heads & Ministry of Health; DoT Secretary wrote to Chief Secretaries of the States/UTs to actively communicate/informative video circulation to the public debunking the myth, which received support from the State Governments. UP Police & Gujarat Police heads had also issued orders in the support of the telecom industry for action to be taken against miscreants spreading myths.

Going forward, apart from network expansion, the focus will also be on 5G. 5G will transform the network experience of consumers by delivering ultrafast speed and ultralow latency. At the same time, 5G will also boost Internet of Things (IoT) by facilitating massive machine-type communication. The Government has announced that the next round of auction will include 5G spectrum. We are thankful to the Government for clearing 5G trials applications of our member operators.

It is important that adequate spectrum is made available for 5G. There are various other stakeholders demanding spectrum in these bands. It is essential that complete 5G spectrum is made available at the earliest so that real benefits of 5G are realized once the spectrum is auctioned and commercial deployments take place. It is also important to adopt a long term perspective w.r.t spectrum pricing i.e. have long term benefits in mind rather than short term benefits in terms of generating revenue from auction. Set modest reserve prices (Current reserve price of spectrum is one of the highest compared to the auction price of the other countries) and needs to be rationalized taking into account per capita income and reserve price benchmarks of other countries.

While India is consuming very large amount of data per capita in various industry verticals, there is a need to convert the data produced into useful services through the development of use cases. The Digital Readiness Index of various sectors can be monitored by a cross sectoral entity for eg: NITI Ayog. This will facilitate the monitoring of digital transformation in various sectors and thereby facilitate the development of use cases for development of digital services in the more digitized sectors. The

combination of this with the India's IT stack will help 5G based technologies build efficiencies in the various sectors and benefit the country.

Another important pre-requisite for wide spread of 5G is fiberization. Growth of fibre is the foremost priority for the ongoing exponential increase in data demand and improved quality of services. Fiberization will surely meet the present requirement of bandwidth and future technologies such as 5G, emerging technologies etc. For 5G, it is important to make existing and new municipal infrastructure (for e.g. street furniture/ open spaces etc.) available for site densification (small cell deployments/ telecom infrastructure installation).

Apart from this, early allocation of E & V bands to meet the backhaul requirements is also a pending request of the industry which is being considered by the Government. The V-band and E-band are extremely valuable resources for India for 5G as well as backhaul for mobile broadband, which will enable millions of homes to access high speed broadband for entertainment, education and work. As India aspires to take a leadership position in 5G, the existing and long term availability of spectrum that can be used for carrier grade services for 1.3 billion Indians will be crucial.

We expect that in the coming year, the focus will be on advancements in telecom to enhance customer experience. Propelled by the disruptions created by the pandemic as well as disruptive digital technologies, the telecom industry is all geared up for innovations and experiments in the coming year. From Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to 5G, cloud computing, and IoT, adoption of cutting-edge solutions to improve operations as well as enhancement of the customer experience will be on the forefront. The coming year indicates new challenges, but also paves the way for new solutions.

Adoption of new technologies will also require re-skilling of the current workforce for integration with relevant existing skilling initiatives, building of new platforms that can enable improved learning, and novel methods of allowing large scale employment generation through promotion of AI. The future of work will require two types of changes across the workforce: upskilling, in which staff gain new skills to help in their current roles, and reskilling, in which staff need the capabilities to take on different or entirely new roles. Machine learning technologies can help training and collaboration systems evolve to match the changing needs of workers. Artificial

intelligence and machine learning technologies offer the promise of game-changing talent strategies that meet the needs of businesses and their people today and also prepare them for tomorrow. By adopting new skilling approaches, leading organizations can support today's workforce needs, while evolving to meet the new opportunities ahead.

COAI and its member operators will continue their focus on building the new age digital infrastructure to support the nation and providing value to their customers, advocating for a stable, long term, sustainable, policy and regulatory environment which will promote innovation and orderly growth for a fully connected and digitally empowered India delivered through a financially strong and viable industry. We also look forward to continuing our partnership with the Government and Regulator to achieve the above vision.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION

COAI along with DoT organized the fourth edition – India Mobile Congress 2020. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, this edition of India Mobile Congress was an entirely virtual event, scheduled from 08th December through 10th December 2020, with the theme “Inclusive Innovation - Smart, Secure, Sustainable”. It was the largest such event in the country.

The event was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi and attended by various esteemed Government and industry leaders. The event took place under the active support, guidance, and leadership of Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Hon'ble Minister of Communications, Law and Justice and Electronics and Information Technology and actively supported by Shri Anshu Prakash, Secretary, DoT and Chairperson of the Digital Communication Commission as well as with the support of several other Government Ministries.

IMC 2020 saw the participation of telecom giants, OEMs, system integrators, technology experts, industry analysts, Government officials, young professionals, start-ups, and students. The focus area for IMC 2020 was 5G and emerging technologies with more than 72 hours of pseudo-live content streamed over three days.

COAI and India Mobile Congress with DoT also commemorated a memorable milestone of 25 Years of Mobile Telephony in India with a special webinar

series “Desh Ki Digital Udaan”. The event witnessed key messages from the Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, and the Hon’ble Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Law & Justice, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad. The webinar series hosted five episodes with different themes, which saw participation from various industry stalwarts.

To keep pace with the current situation of the Covid-19 pandemic and following the social distancing norms, COAI organized various webinars to discuss the changing world of telecom during these critical times and on upcoming technologies.

To keep pace with the growing ecosystem and to represent the whole gamut of the communications industry, COAI continued to expand its Associate Membership by inducting new members such as Quadrant Televentures Ltd., Red Hat India Pvt. Ltd., Tata Teleservices Ltd. and UTStarcom India Telecom Pvt. Ltd.

The COAI Executive Council headed by Chairman, Mr. Ajai Puri, Vice Chairman, Mr. P.K. Mittal and comprising senior representatives from all member operators, met several times over the last year to deliberate on a variety of issues impacting the telecom industry. They were ably assisted by proficient advice from the various Working Committees that have been set up in COAI.

I also want to express my deep appreciation to all the Committees and Working Groups and their Chairmen and Vice Chairmen for their unstinted support and cooperation. We are grateful to you all for taking time out of your busy schedules to contribute towards various industry issues and helping the Association in representing them in a proficient and timely manner.

I would like to thank the Chairman, Mr. Ajai Puri, and the Vice Chairman, Mr. P.K. Mittal, for their personal involvement and support in all the activities and initiatives of the Association for the last year, especially in the face of the many challenges faced by the entire industry during the year. Their vigor and contribution has helped us in taking the Association to the next level and I would like to personally thank them for their time and resources to provide personal support and guidance to the Association. We request their continued support and guidance in future as well.

Last but not the least, I would like to record my deep gratitude to the COAI Secretariat team which has always provided excellent support and assistance in all our endeavours. I appreciate their willingness and dedication in taking up new projects and contributing successfully towards it. I deeply appreciate all of their efforts in contributing significantly to all the achievements of COAI during these tough times.

Lt. Gen Dr. S P Kochhar
Director General, COAI





Telecom: Saviour during Pandemic



When mobile telephony services were first introduced in India over 25 years back, owning a mobile phone was viewed as a style statement. Today, the mobile phone is a necessity. Moreover, the telecommunications industry has transformed into a key enabler for higher GDP growth and for India's socio-economic development. As the country battles the global Covid-19 pandemic, the telecom sector's critical role in keeping India operational has become even more distinct.

Social distancing, self-isolation and lockdowns are the most effective weapons to contain the pandemic, and it has led to a surge in demand for digital services. Indian citizens are looking for authentic information on the disease. Families and friends spread across the country and the world are connecting for comfort and to console. Healthcare workers, government authorities, frontline warriors, common citizens are connecting for necessities and for services. The economy, education, entertainment – all are functional because of India's robust telecom infrastructure.

As a result of the pandemic, people are making new choices. From the way students learn to the way shoppers shop, the migration to the virtual world from the physical has picked up pace. India's digital adoption has found sudden acceleration and India's telecom infrastructure emerged as the required catalyst. Since the fight against the pandemic requires people to stay indoors, the use of online streaming applications has also increased by manifold. It is the primary method for people to keep themselves engaged at home. Additionally, the use of video conferencing applications has surged due to the growing number of virtual family gatherings, business meetings, and by becoming the only medium to impart education across the nation.

With communication as the backbone for the economy, every industry is dependent on telecommunications – from manufacturing to services to the entertainment industry. The robust telecommunications infrastructure makes the economy vibrant. A lot of critical industries also rely on telecommunications. This includes indispensable sectors like pharmaceuticals, medicines, vaccines,

masks, hand sanitizers etc. E-commerce, a relatively new industry, has proven to be a boon in this new normal. Essential and daily life necessities delivered at home while maintaining the requisite social distancing and isolation guidelines. When physically travelling to shops to get your monthly groceries is not an option, the smartphone and Internet connection are helping people make purchases virtually.

Telecom has also benefited smaller business. Logistics companies, supported by digital telecommunication, has played a significant role in providing social media sellers as well as small businesses deliver their products to customers by providing a wide range of services. Small businesses are provided with on-demand pickups of parcels to ship. Such complex supply chain management fundamentally requires connectivity, software usage, storage capacities of on-cloud services in order to successfully deliver end-to-end services.

If data is the new oil, telecom is the sophisticated pipeline network that can deliver it to every citizen of the country. Efforts are already underway to spread the broadband network. The industry and the Central and State Government needs to work together to provide broadband connectivity to every house. A growing optical fibre network is critical for meeting these broadband demands.

The seamless delivery of digital data is a result of existing technologies that use the high-speed fiber and other capacity network solutions. The constant efforts by telecom providers and related bodies have ensured infrastructure integrity that facilitate smooth communication in the current times.

Another priority is to create a robust infrastructure in rural and semi-urban areas. A lot of work has been done by the various Indian telecommunications players. They have worked to continuously keep the networks running and meeting the capacity requirements during these challenging times.

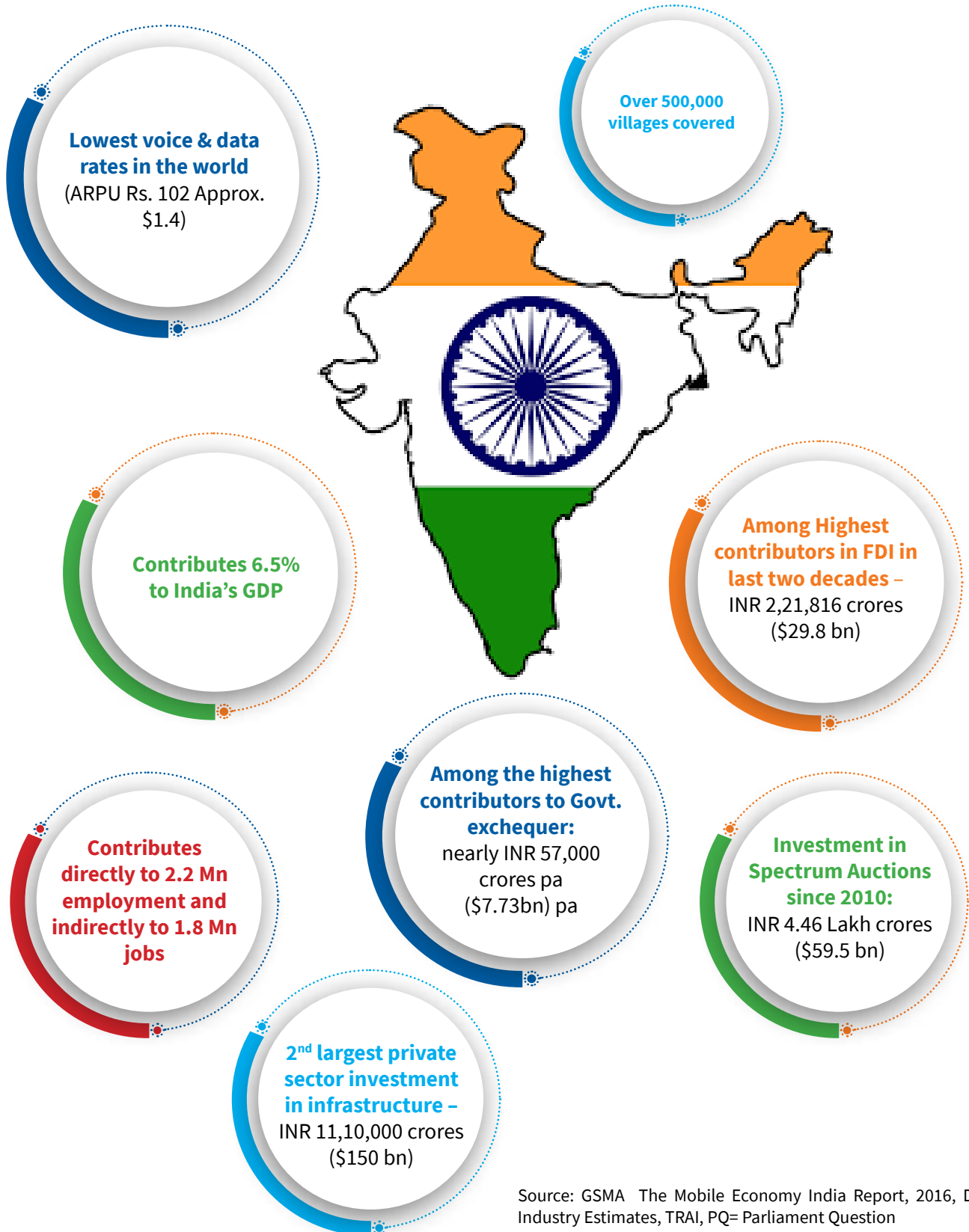
India is a significant player in the world economy and has come of aid at several instances in the recent past to several nations. These are unprecedented times but what is also clear is that communication is the key and telecommunications is the vital network that is keeping Indian citizens together as a nation even when we are required stay apart.

The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the critical importance that telecommunications infrastructure has played and continues to play in keeping businesses, governments, and societies connected and running.



Indian Telecom Industry - An Overview

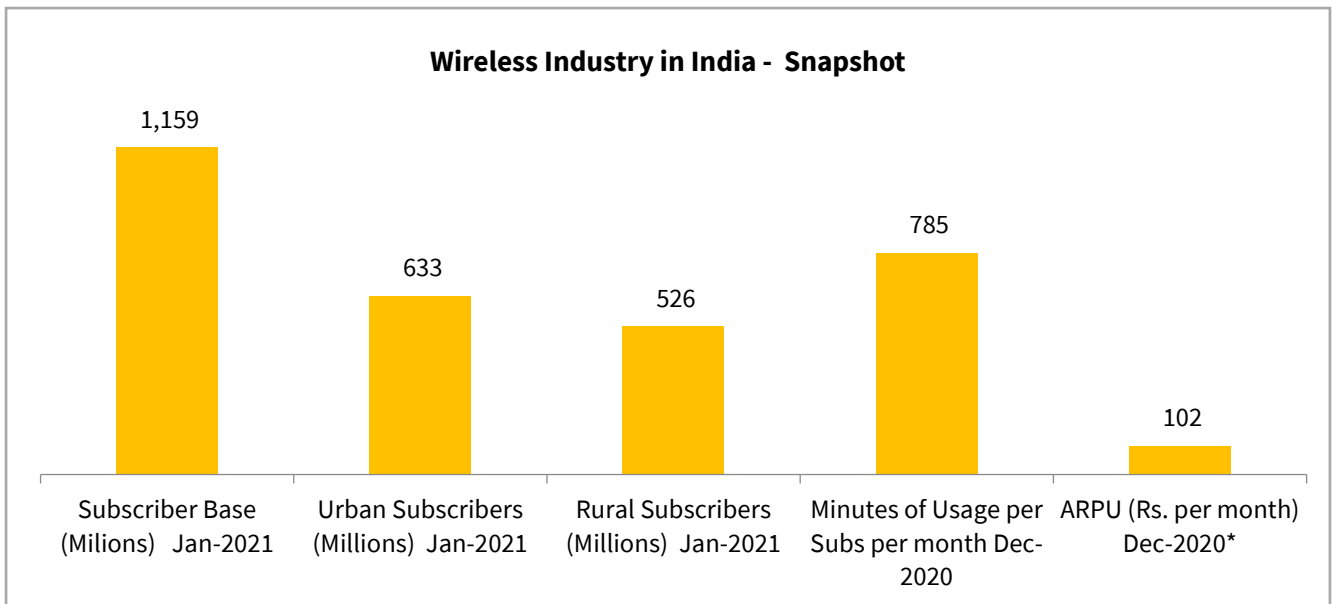
I. Telecom Industry – Contribution to India



Source: GSMA The Mobile Economy India Report, 2016, DoT, Industry Estimates, TRAI, PQ= Parliament Question

Note: 1) Contribution to Government includes L.F, SUC and GST

II. Key Statistics of the Wireless Industry in India

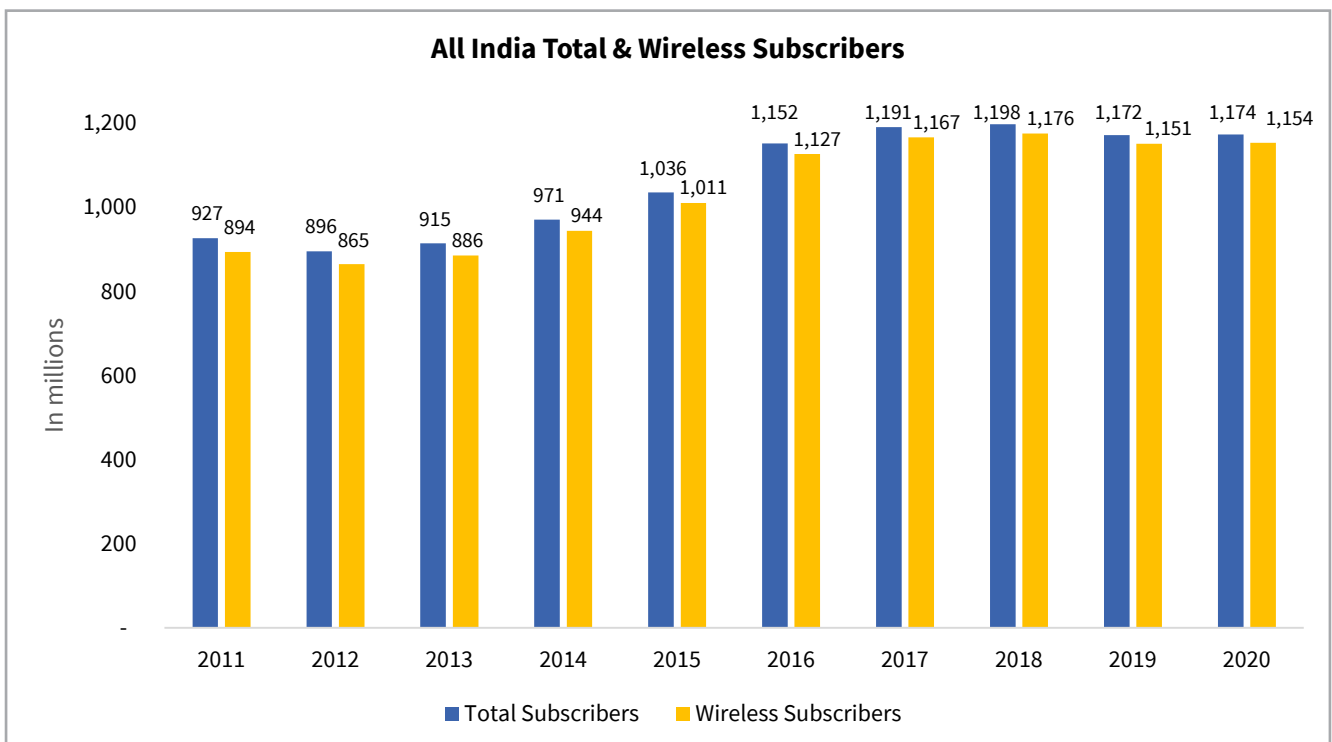


Source: TRAI

Note: * TRAI Excludes the IUC and Roaming Settlement Charges while calculating the ARPU

III. Industry Subscriber Figures

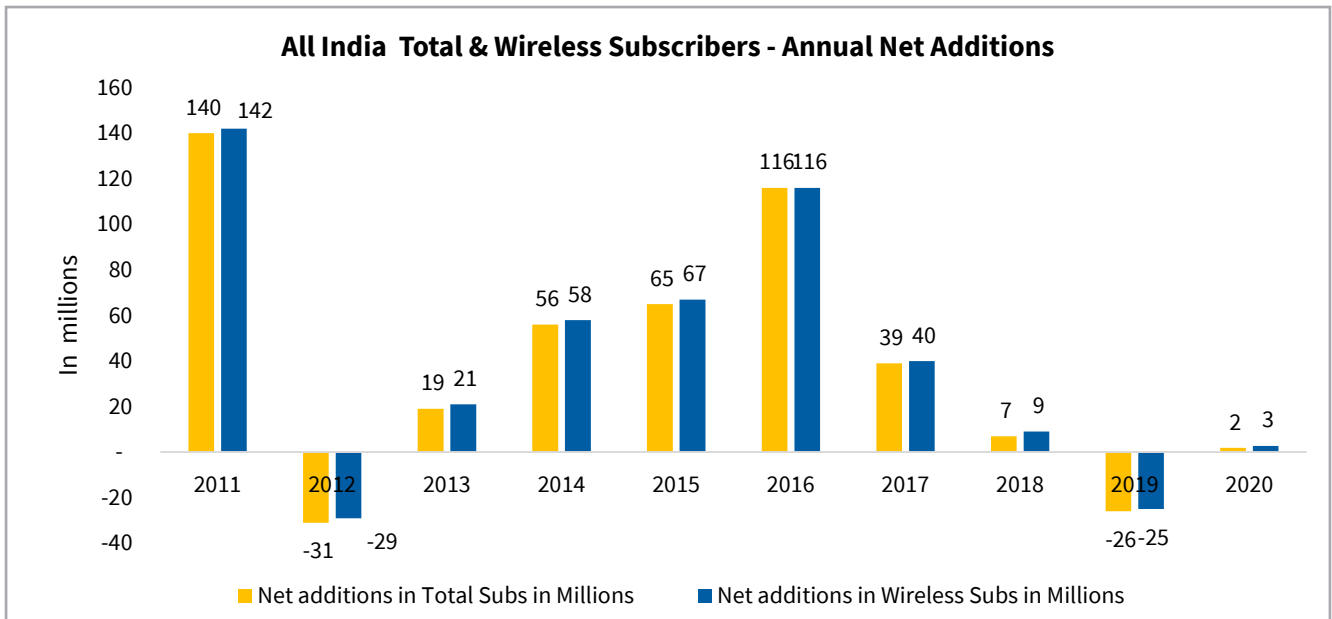
A. PAN India Total and Wireless Subscribers



Source: TRAI Subscription Data

Note: All the data is as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

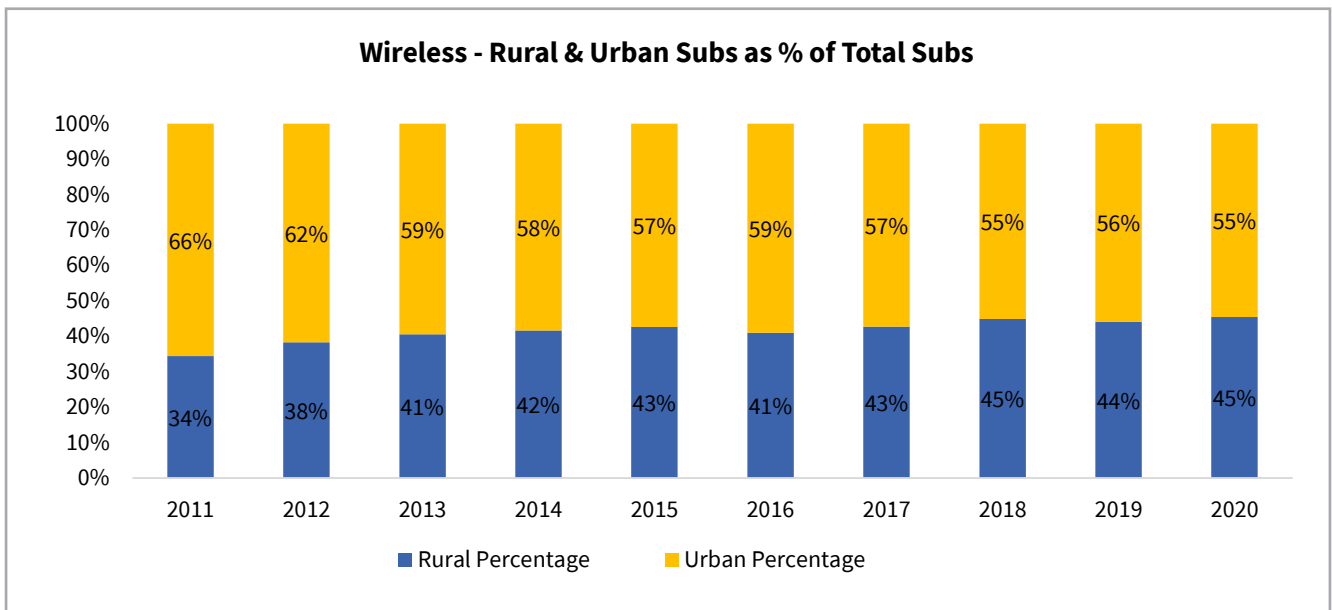
B. PAN India Total & Wireless Subscribers - Annual Net Additions



Source: TRAI Subscription Data

Note: Subscriber Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

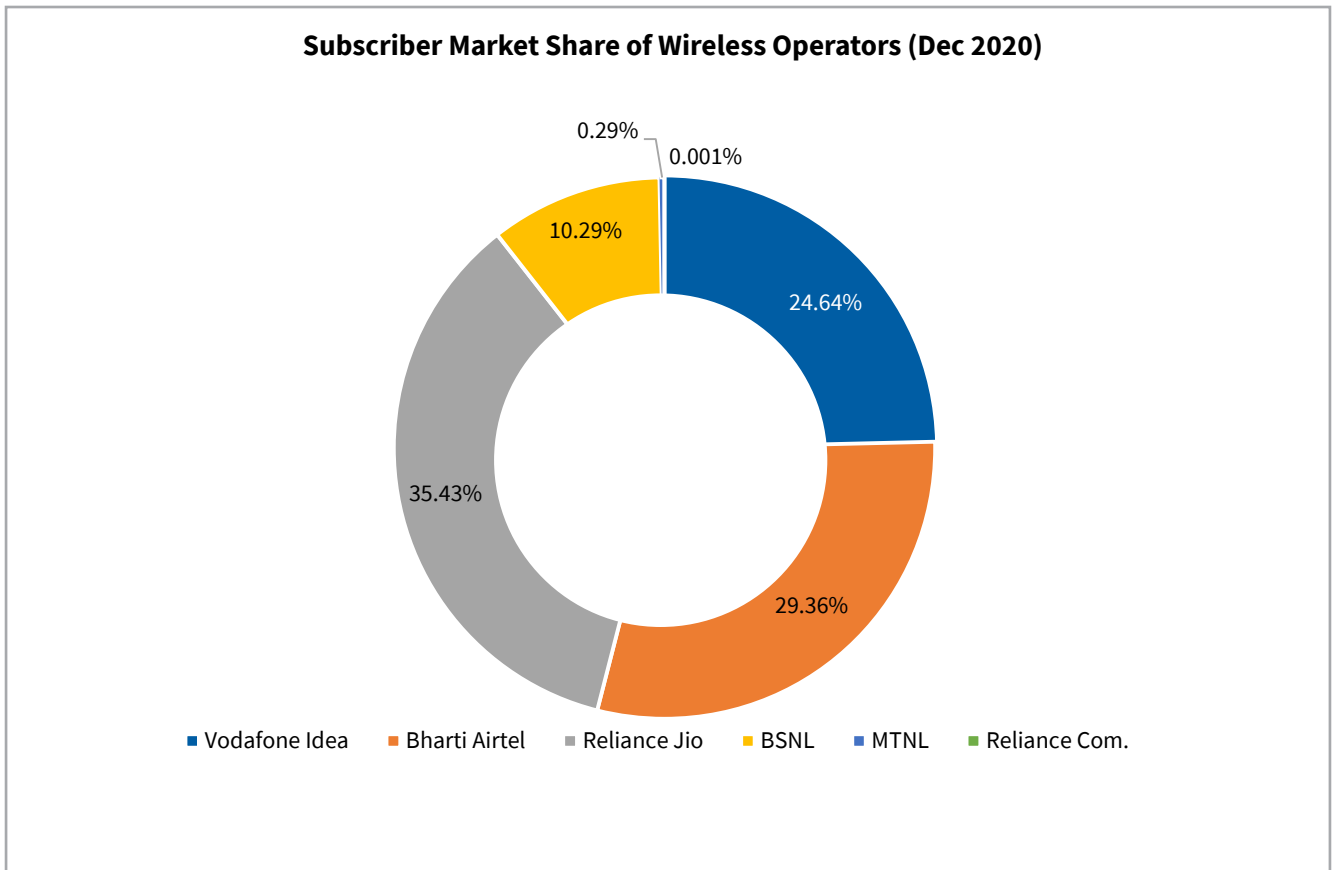
C. Wireless Rural & Urban Subscribers as % of Total Wireless Subscribers



Source: TRAI Subscription Data

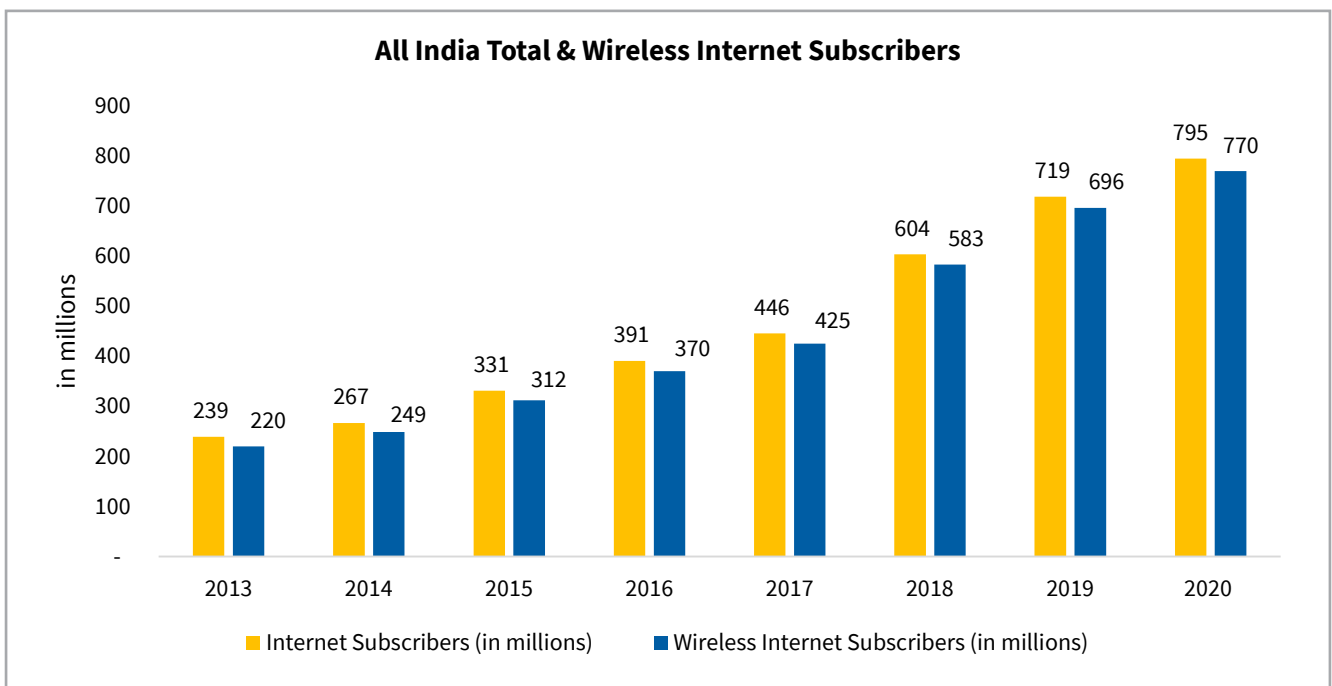
Note: Subscriber Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

D. Subscriber Market Share of Wireless Operators Dec 2020



Source: TRAI Subscription Data

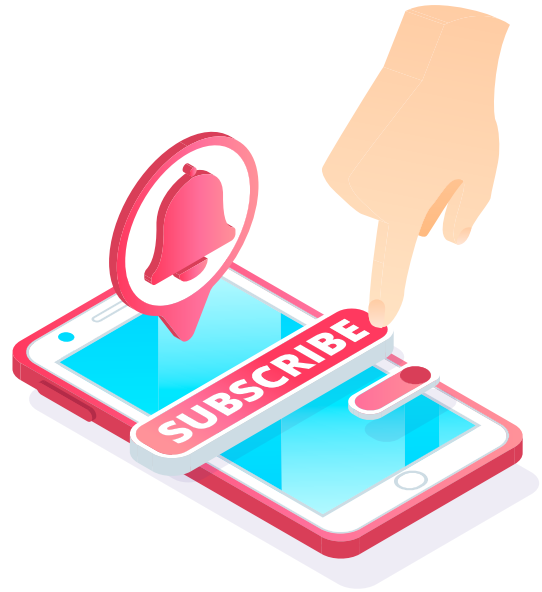
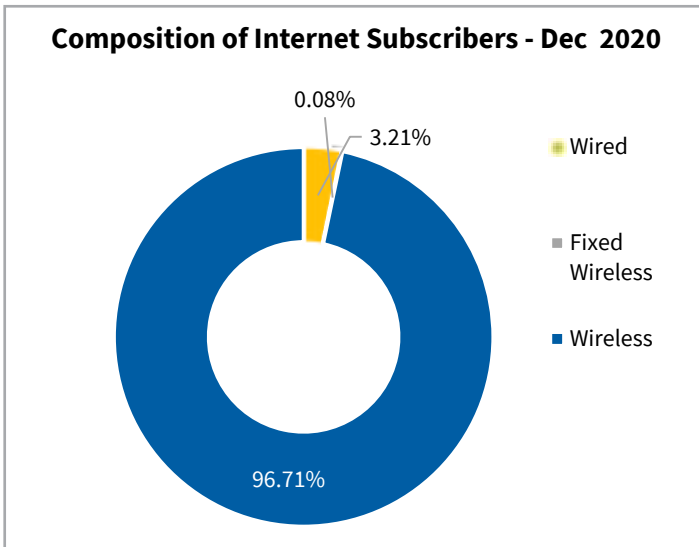
E. PAN India Total and Wireless Internet Subscribers



Source: TRAI

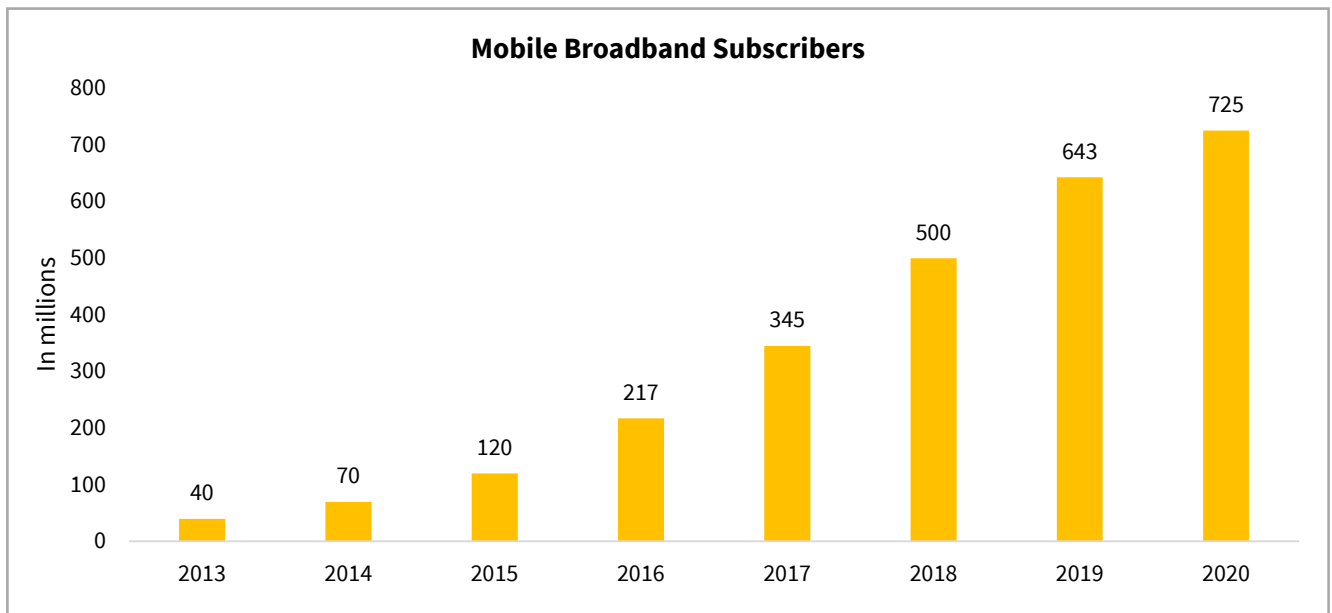
Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

F. Composition of Internet Subscribers - Dec 2020



Source: TRAI

G. Mobile Broadband Subscribers

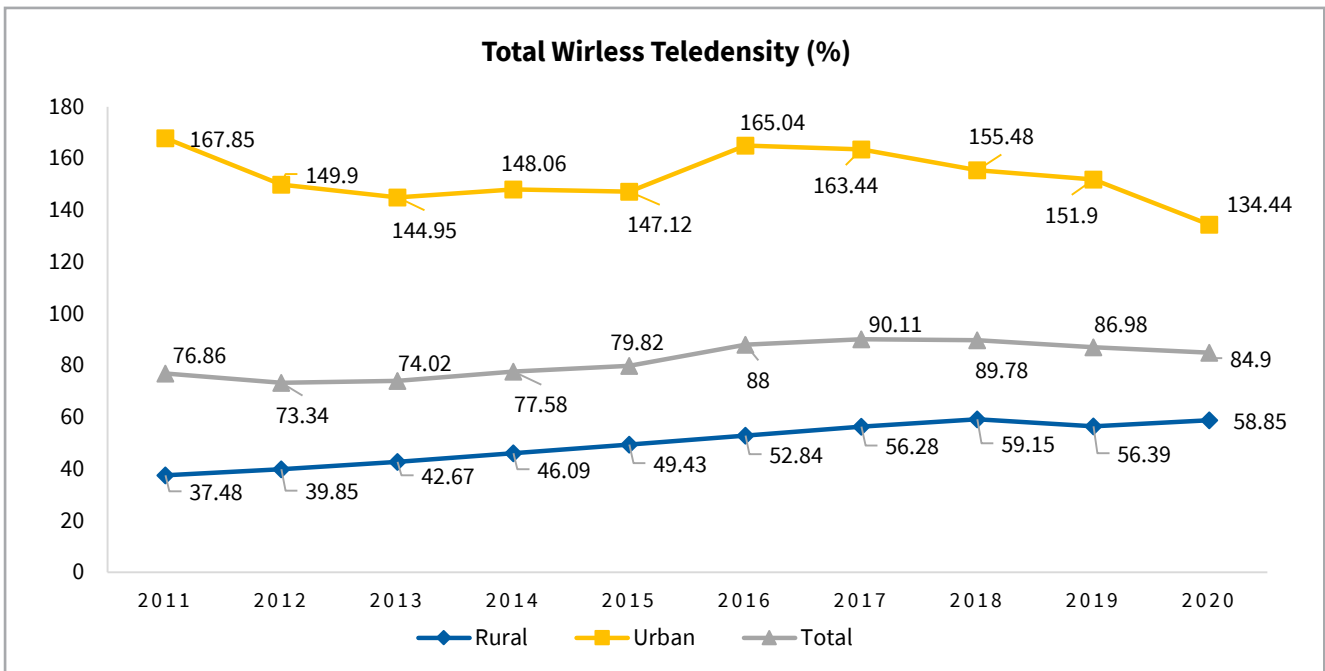


Source: TRAI Subscription data

Note: All the data is as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports



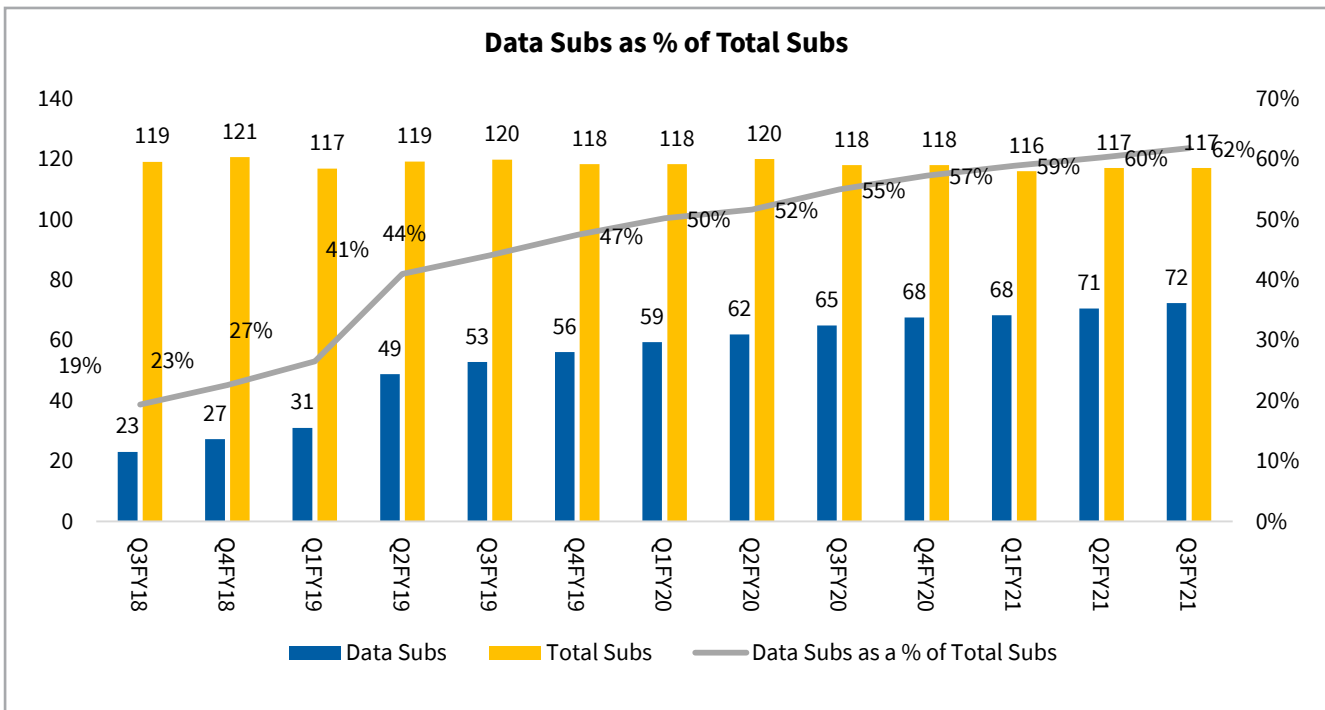
H. Total Wireless Tele-density (%)



Source: TRAI

Note : All the data is as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

I. Data Subs as % of Total Subs

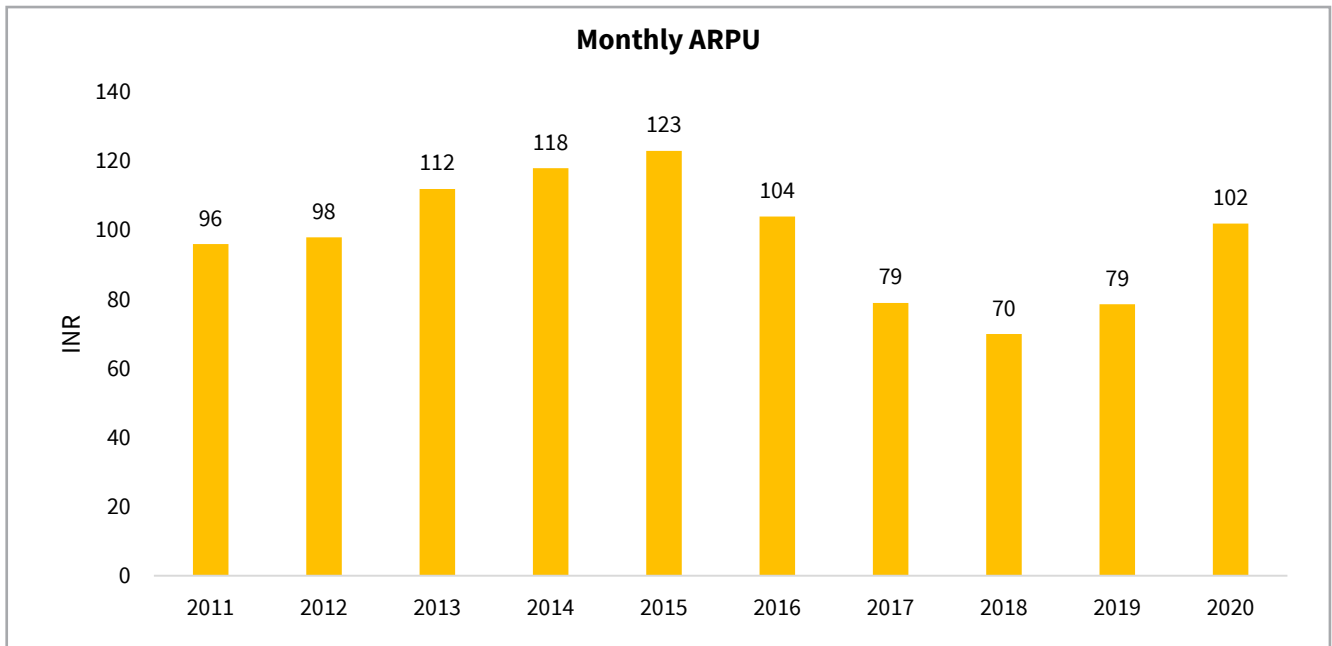


Source: TRAI PIR

Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

IV. Revenue and Usage Parameters

A. Monthly Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) – Wireless Services



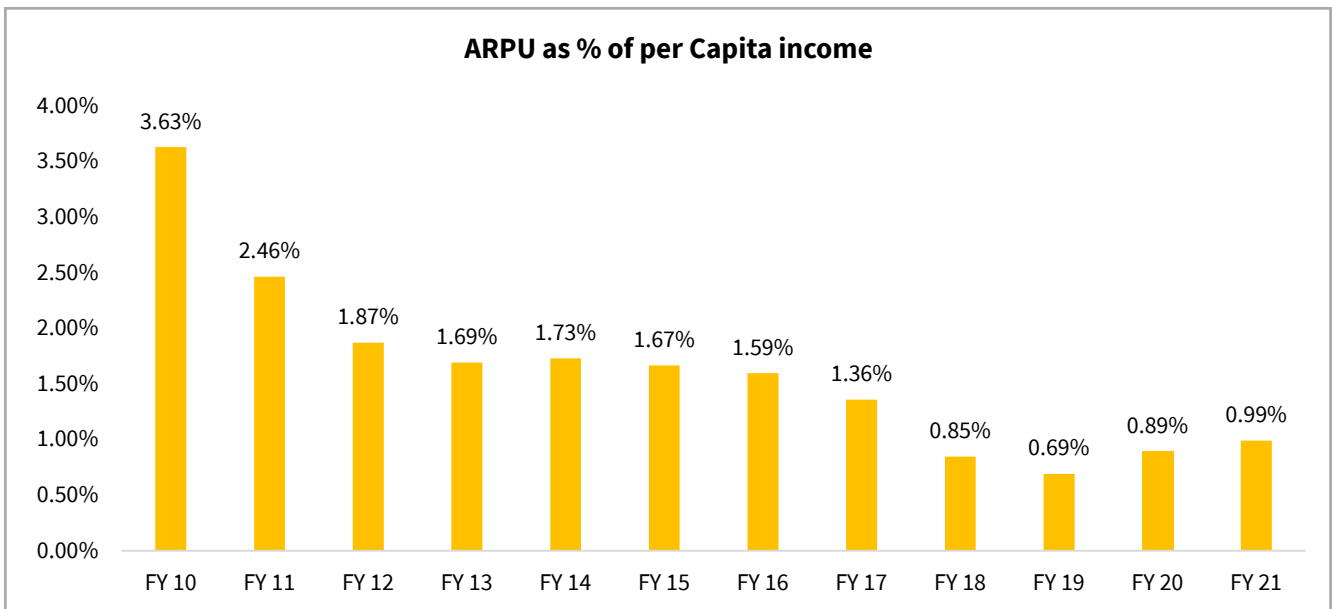
Source: TRAI

Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

TRAI Excludes the IUC and Roaming Settlement Charges while calculating the ARPU

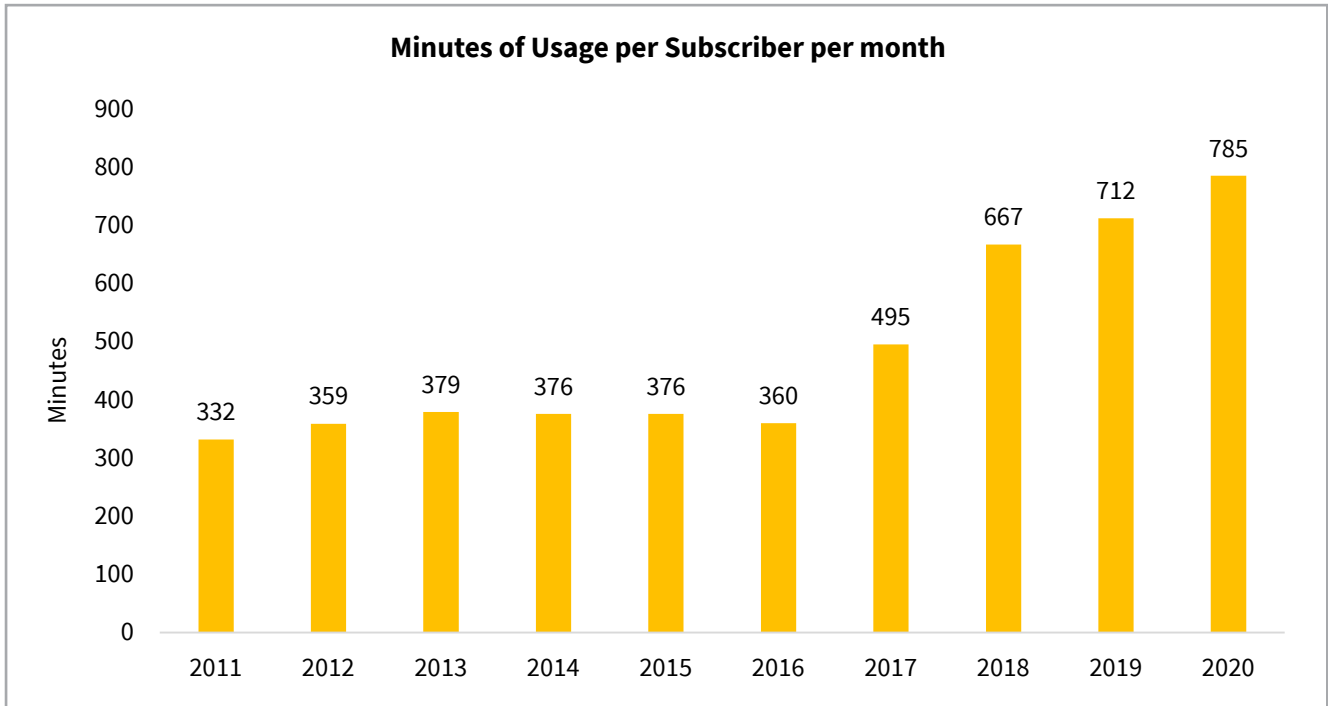
Wireless ARPU

B. ARPU as % of per Capita income



Source: COAI analysis

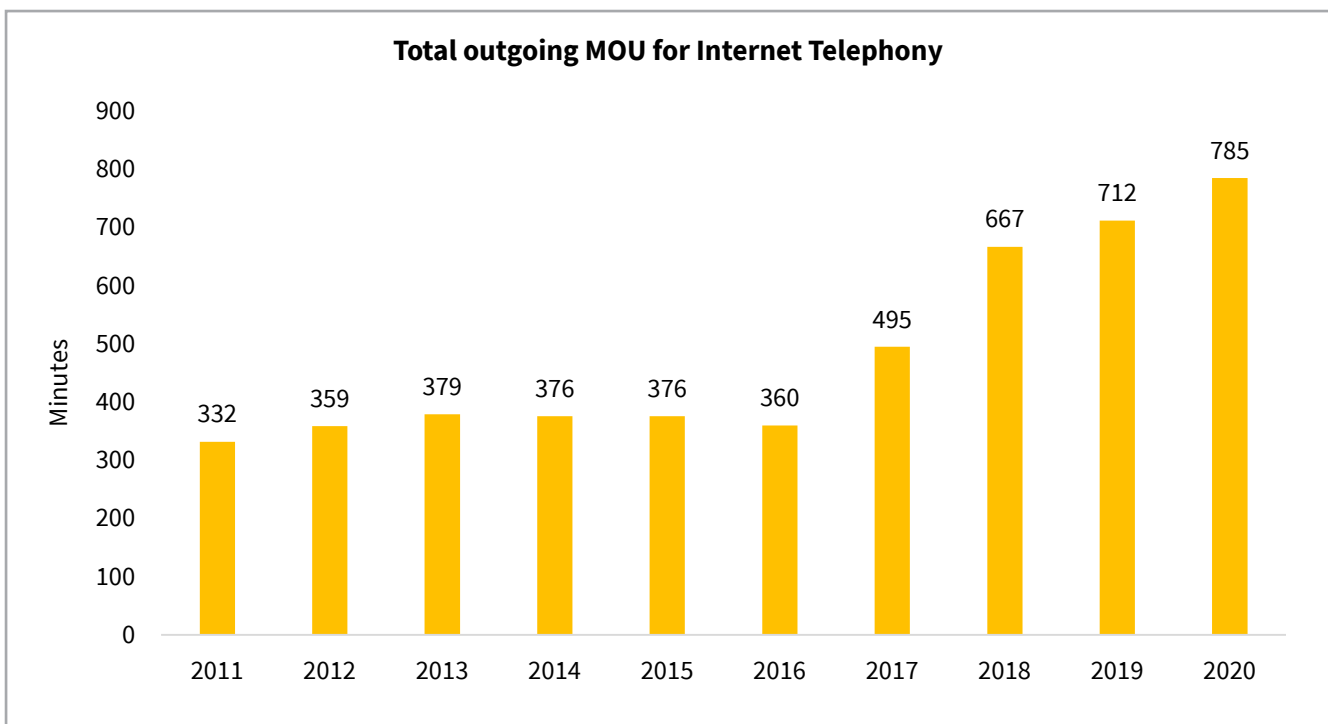
C. Minutes of Usage (MOU) per subscriber per month - Wireless Service



Source: TRAI PIR

Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

D. Total Outgoing MoU for Internet Telephony

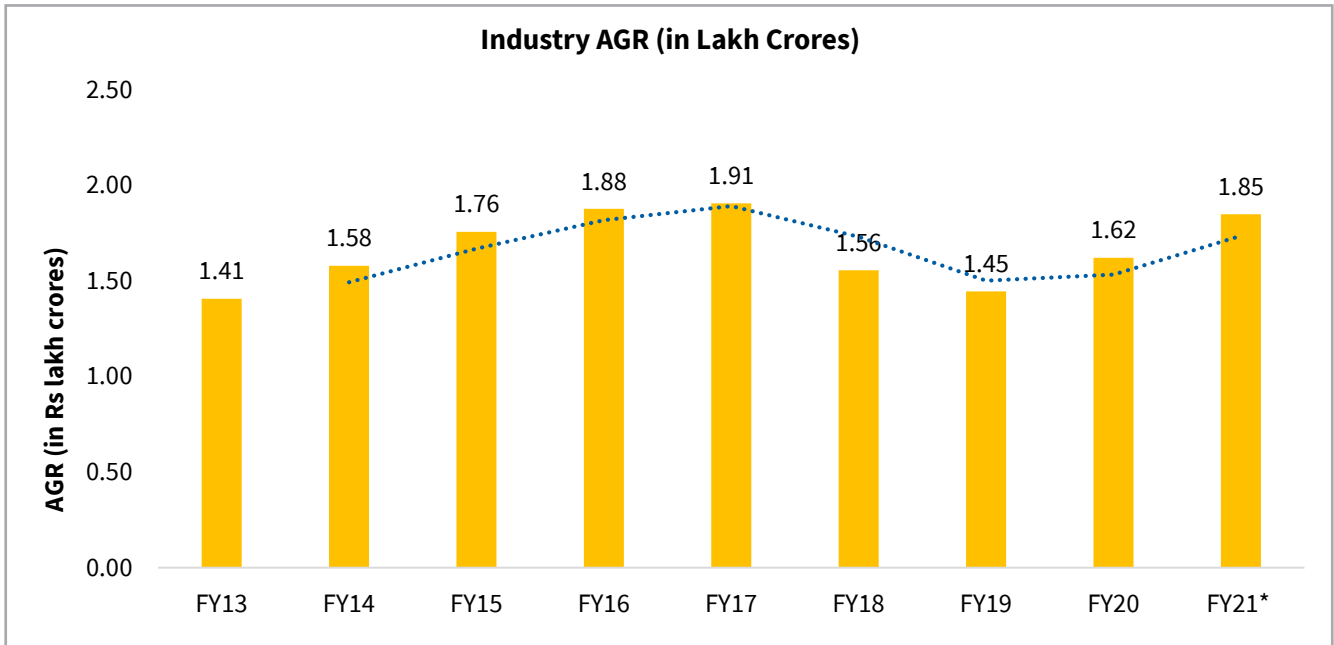


Source: TRAI PIR

Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

V. Telecom Financial Data

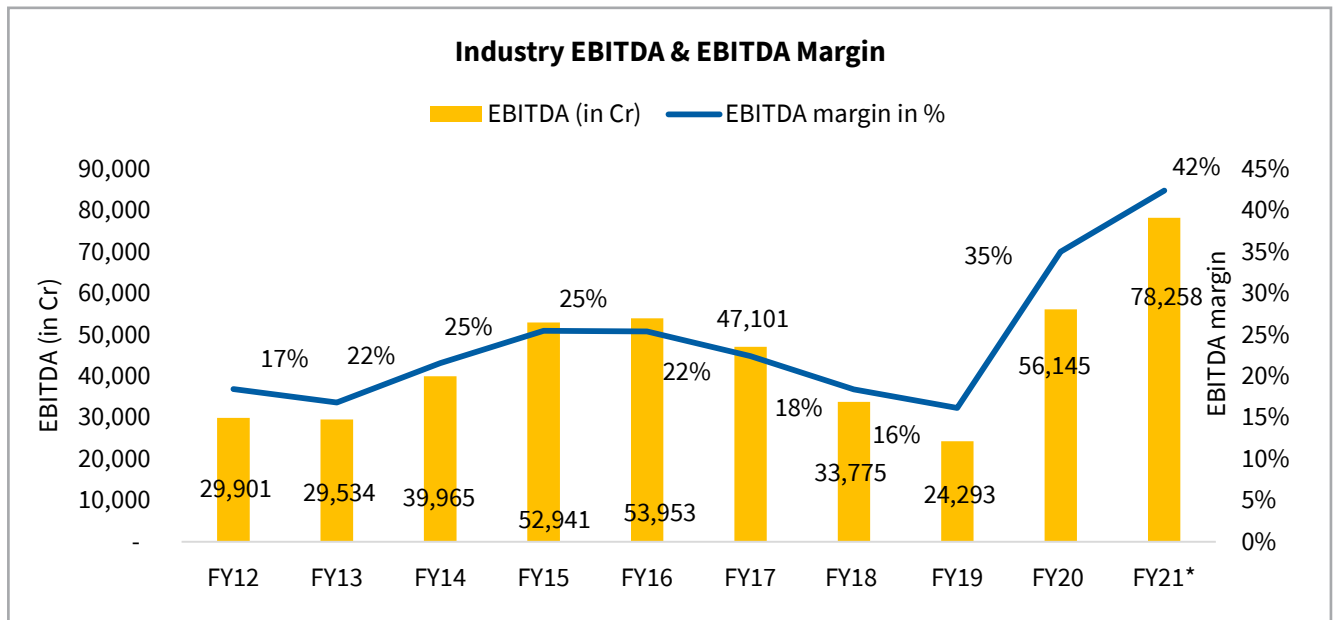
A. Industry Adjusted Gross Revenue



Source: TRAI PIR and COAI Analysis

Note : *COAI estimates

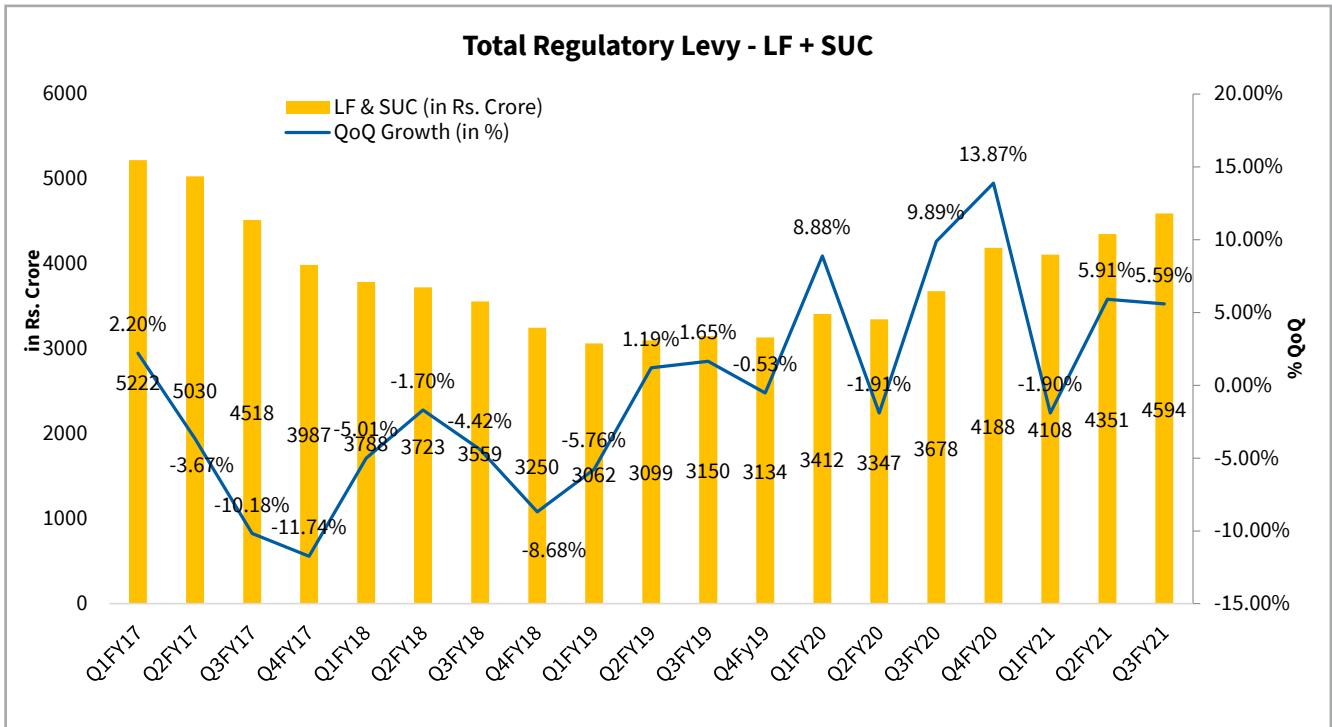
B. Industry EBITDA & EBITDA Margin



Source: TSPs Quarterly results, COAI Estimates

Note : *COAI estimates

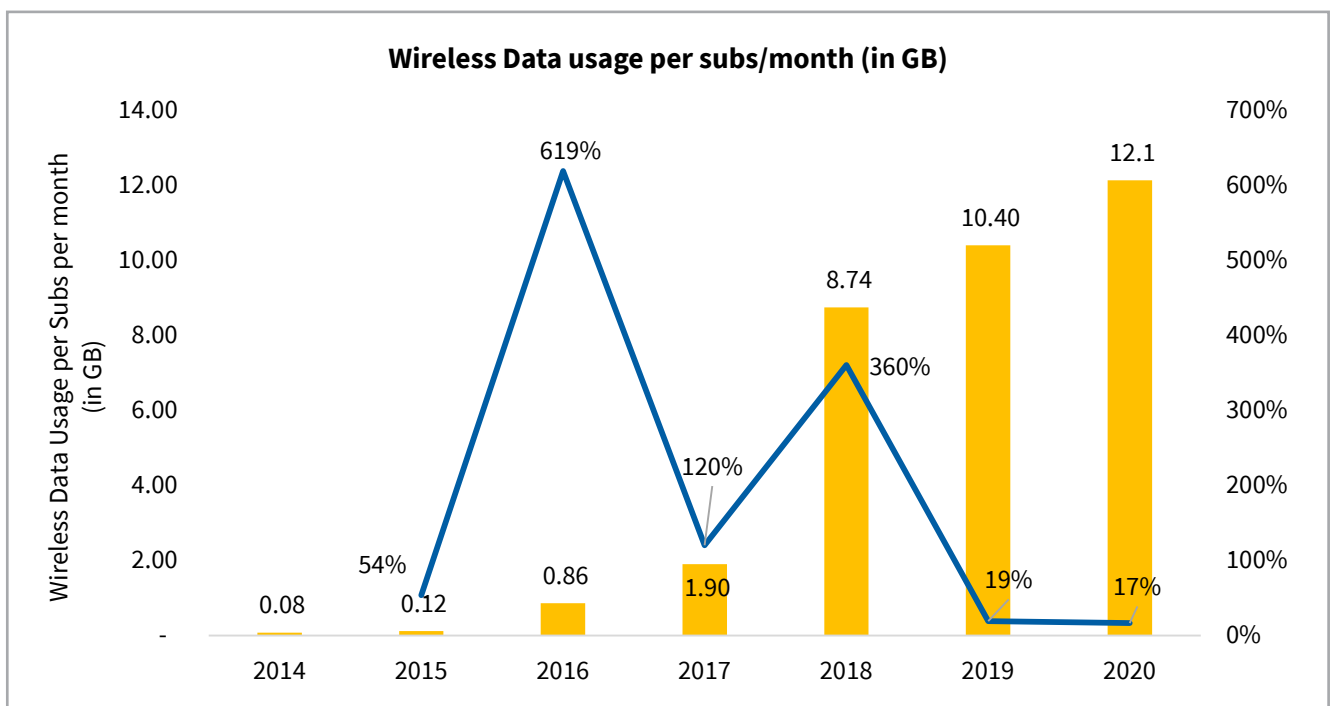
C. Total Regulatory Levy - License Fee + SUC



Source: TRAI Financial Report

VI. Data Usage of Mobile Subscribers

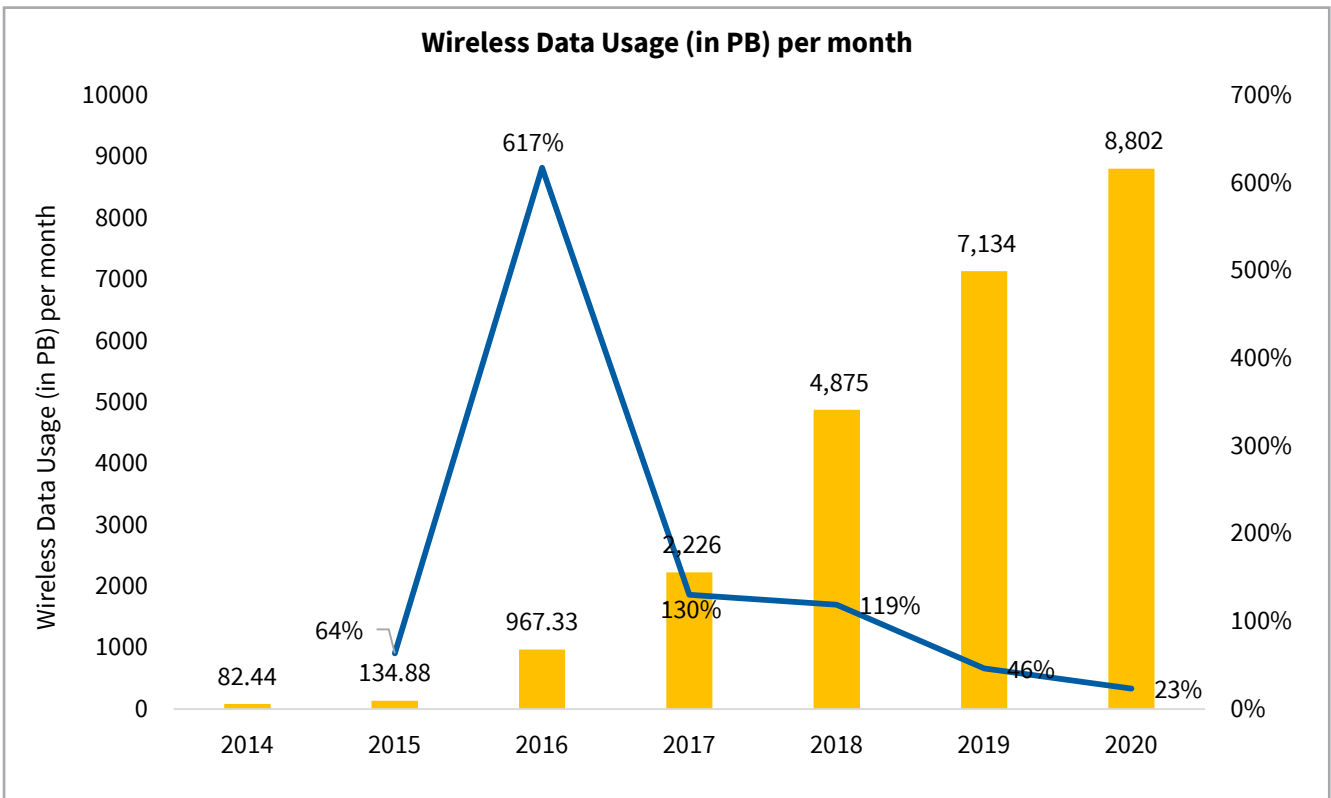
A. Wireless Data Usage per Subscriber per Month



Source: TRAI PIR

Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

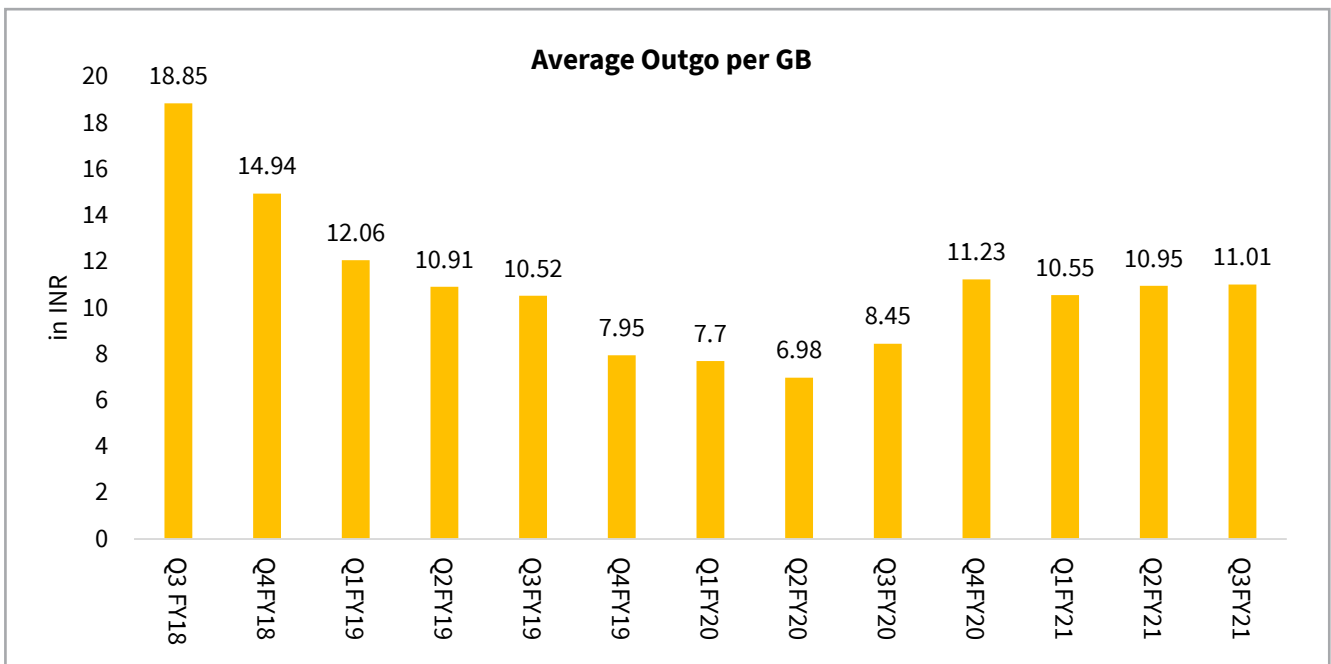
B. Wireless Data Usage per Month



Source: TRAI PIR

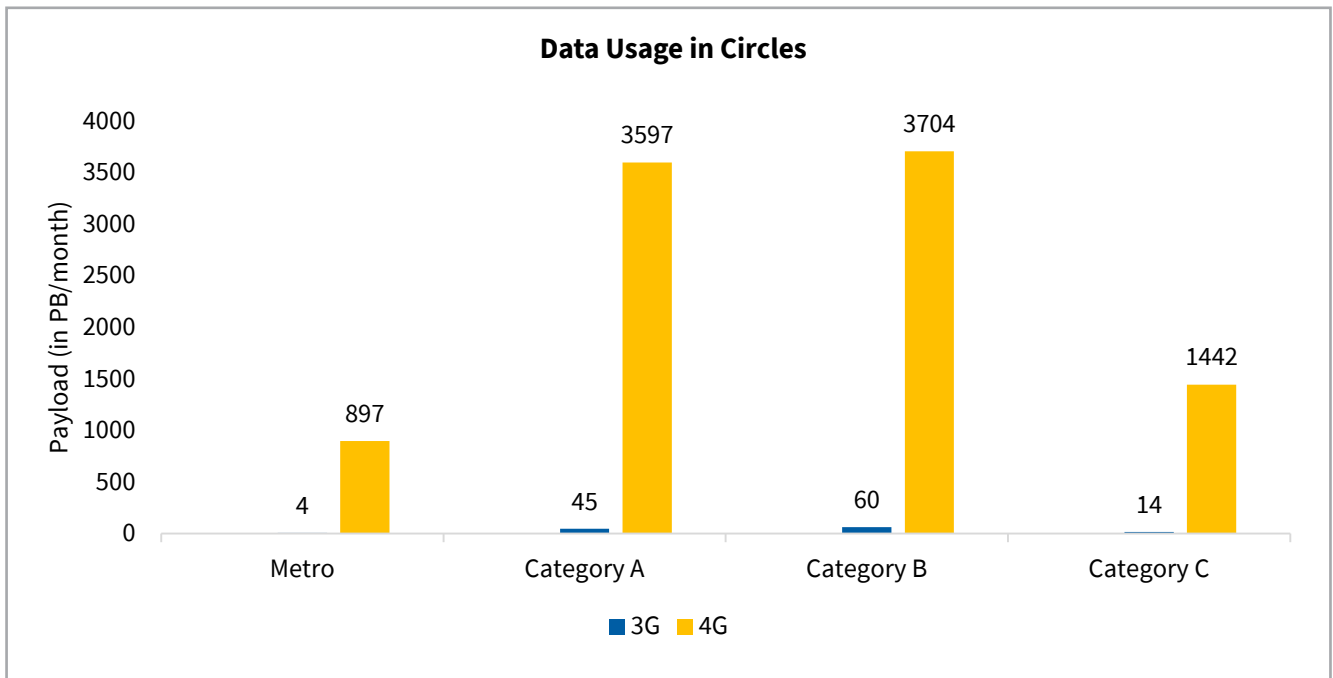
Note : Figures are as of December 31st, as per TRAI Reports

C. Average Outgo per GB per Quarter



Source: TRAI PIR

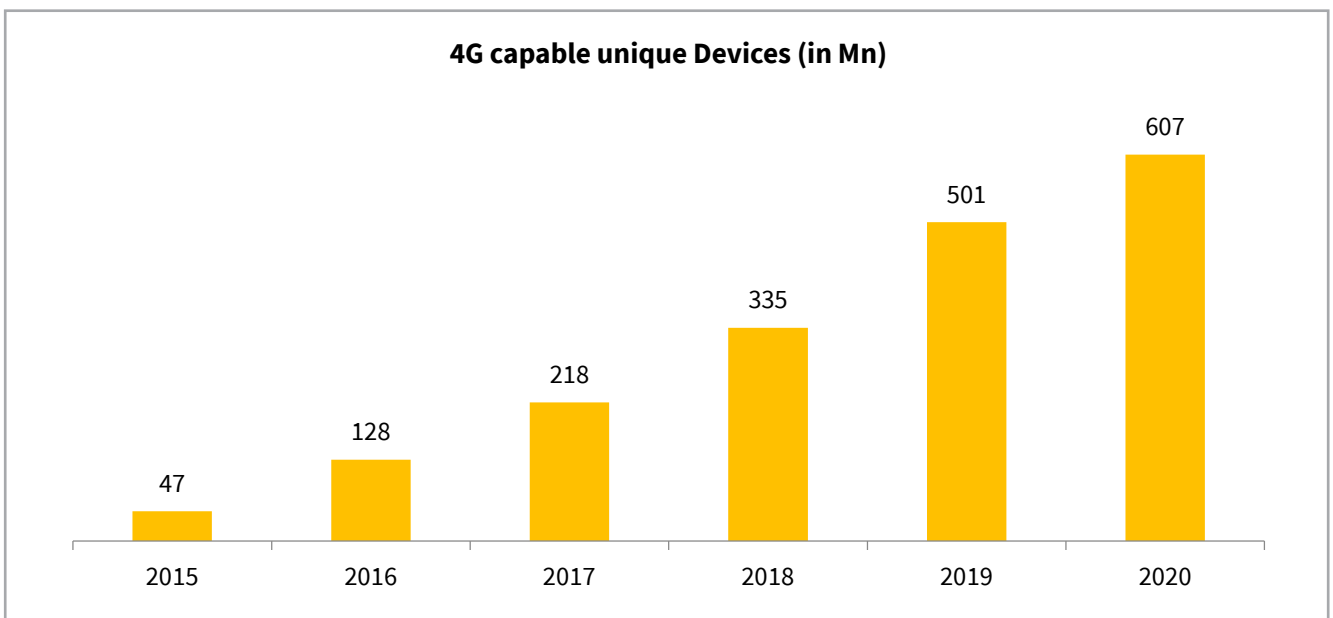
D. Data Usage in Circles



Source: Nokia M Bit 2020

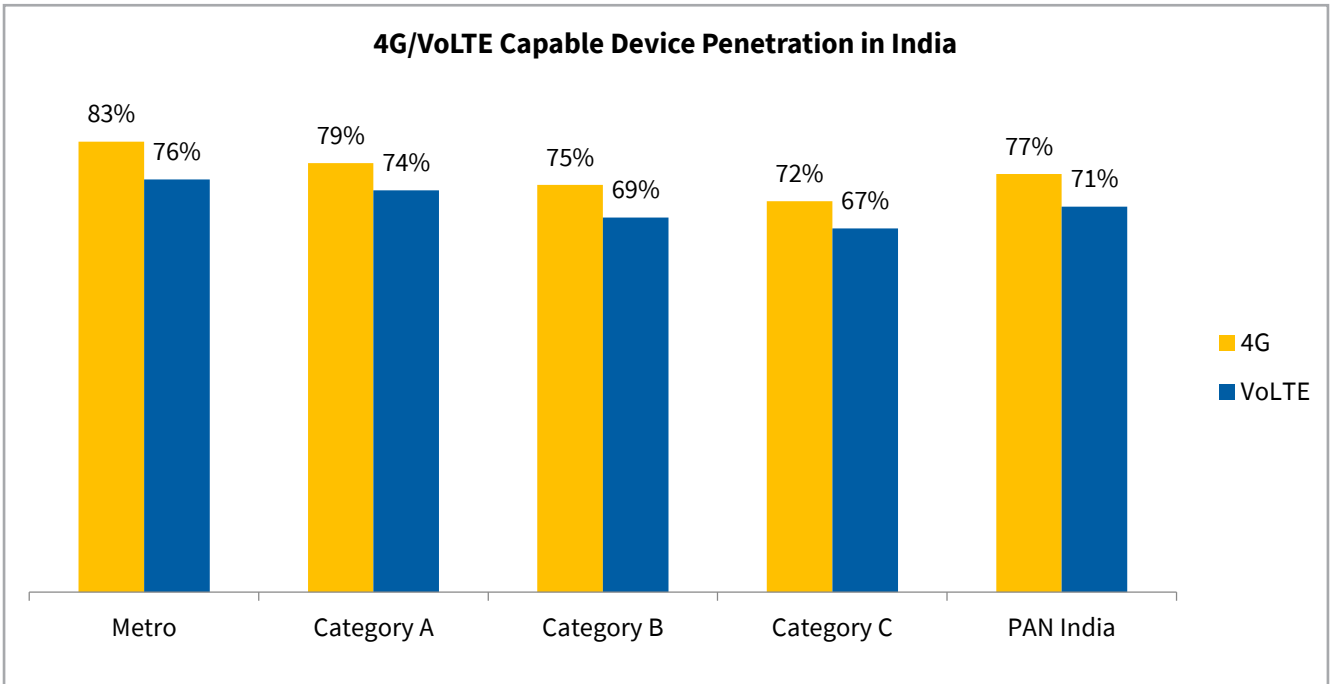
VII. Smartphone Devices in India

A. 4G Capable Unique Devices



Source: Nokia MBit Reports

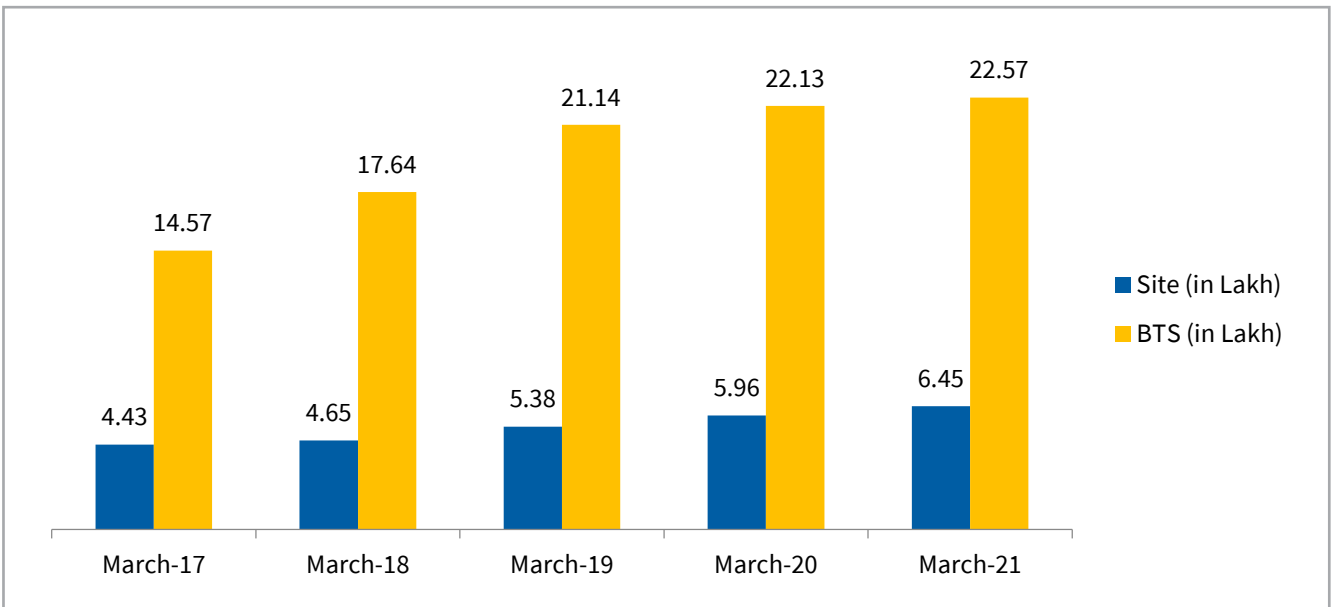
B. 3G/4G Capable Device Penetration in India



Source: Nokia M BIT 2020.

VIII. Telecom Infrastructure

A. Number of Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) and Sites



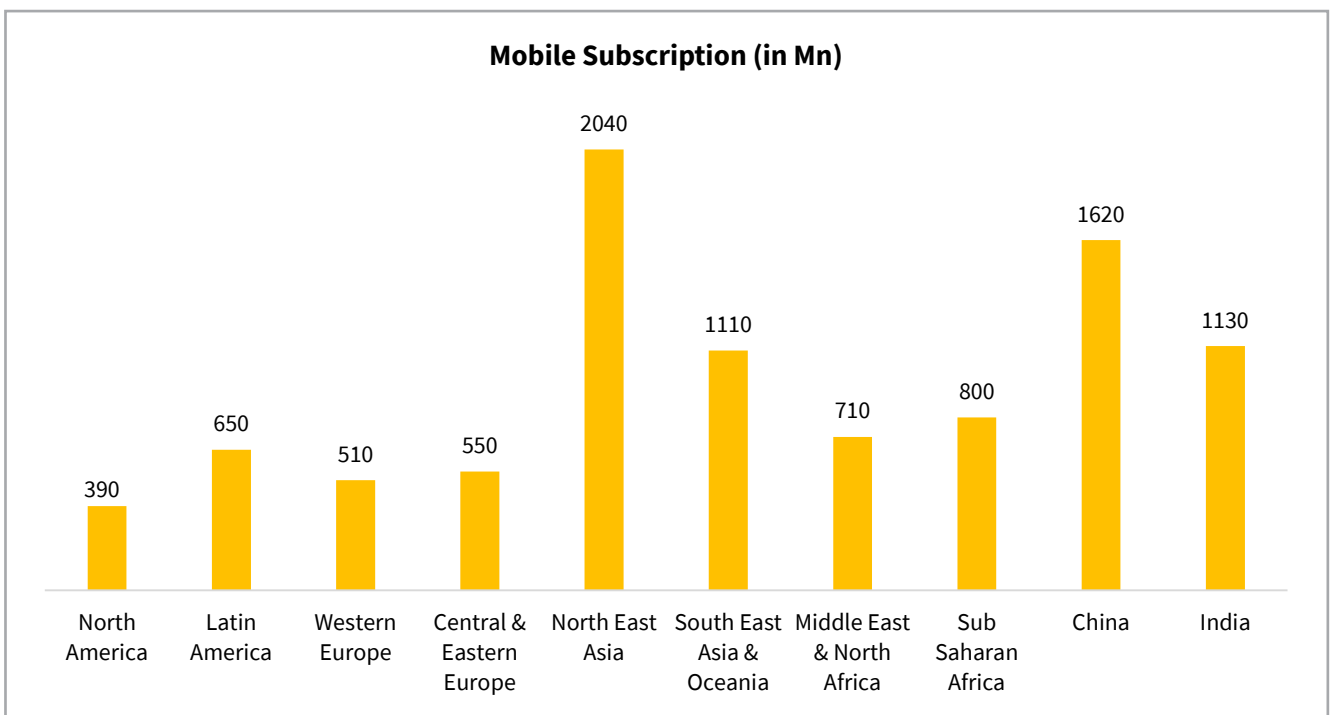
Source: Tarang Sanchar



International Trends



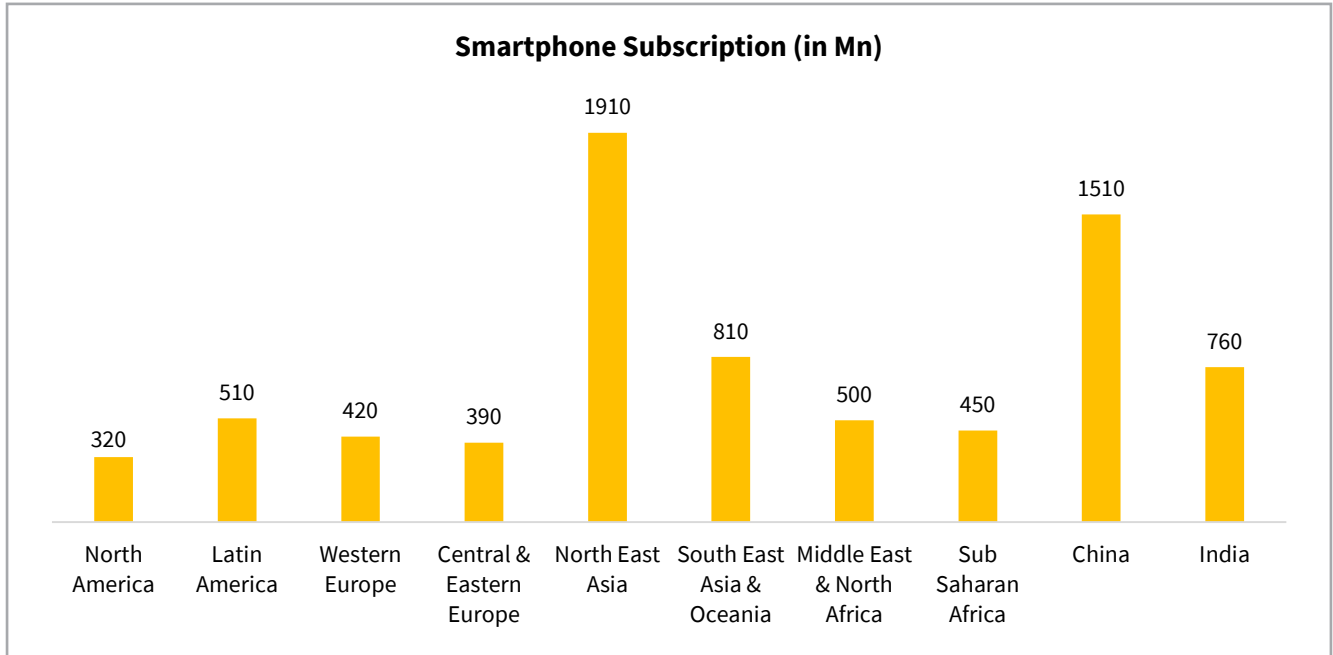
A. Mobile Subscription



Source: Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2020

* India includes India, Nepal, Bhutan

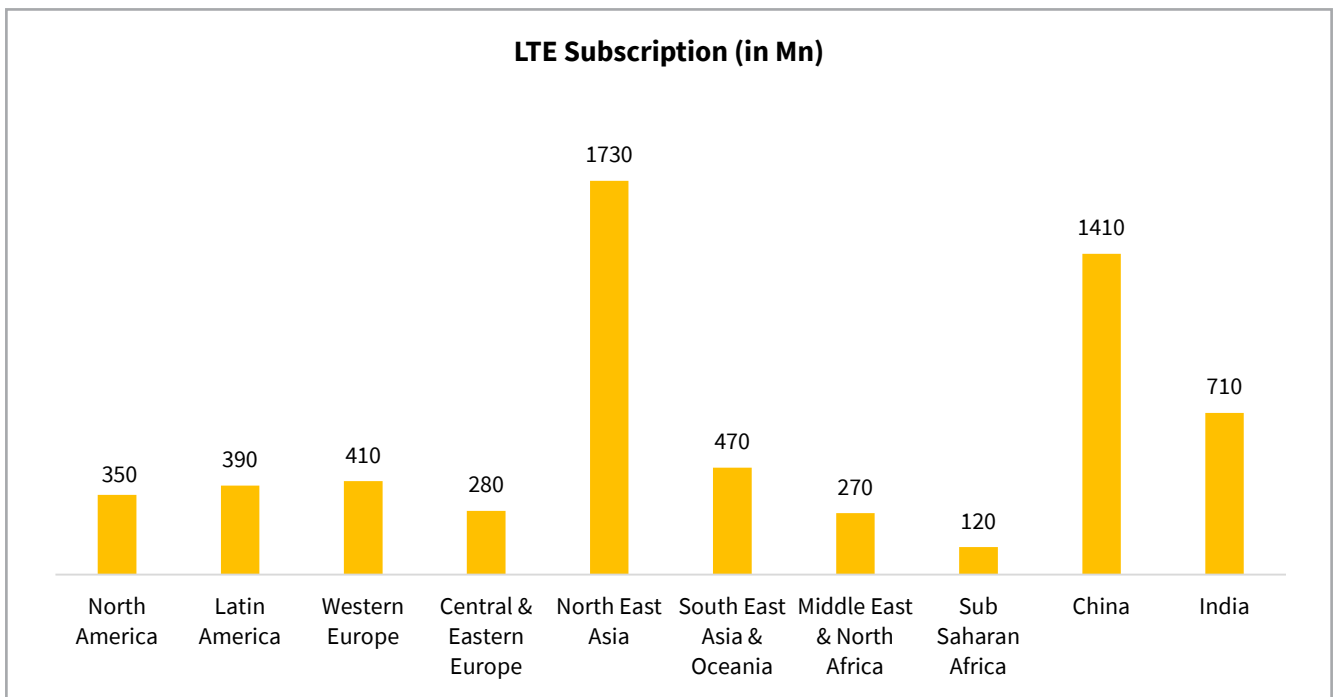
B. Smartphone Subscription



Source: Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2020

* India includes India, Nepal, Bhutan

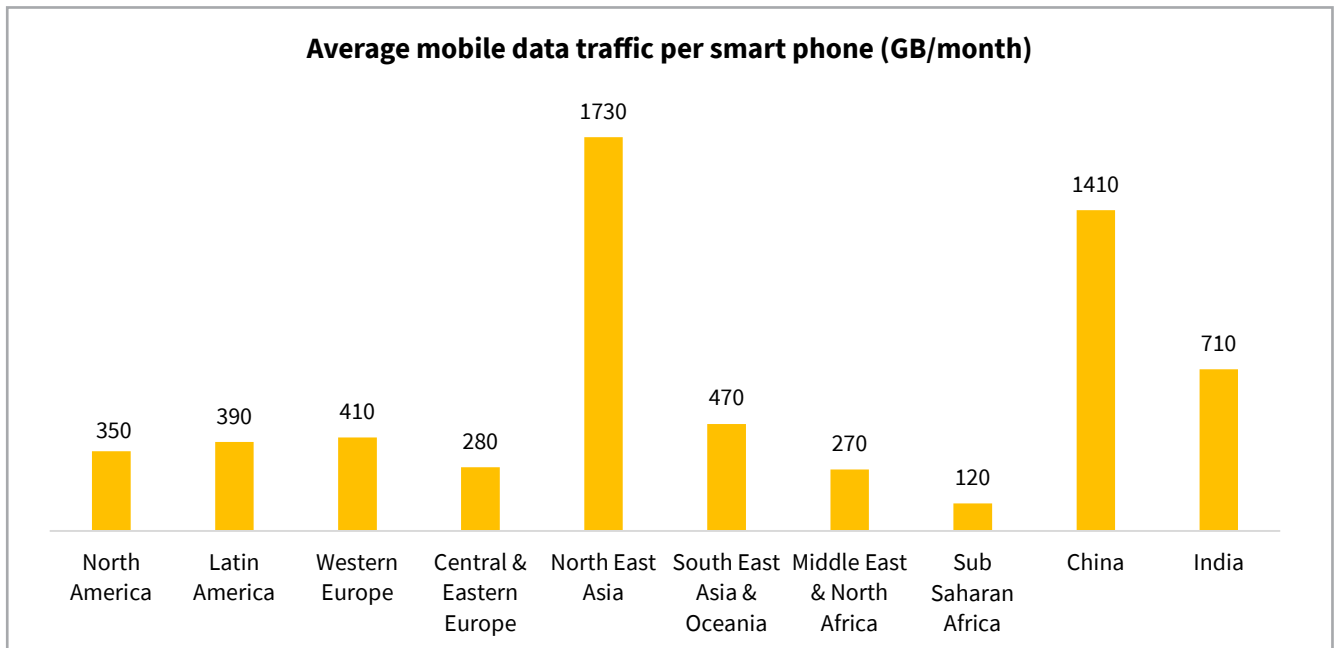
C. LTE Subscription



Source: Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2020

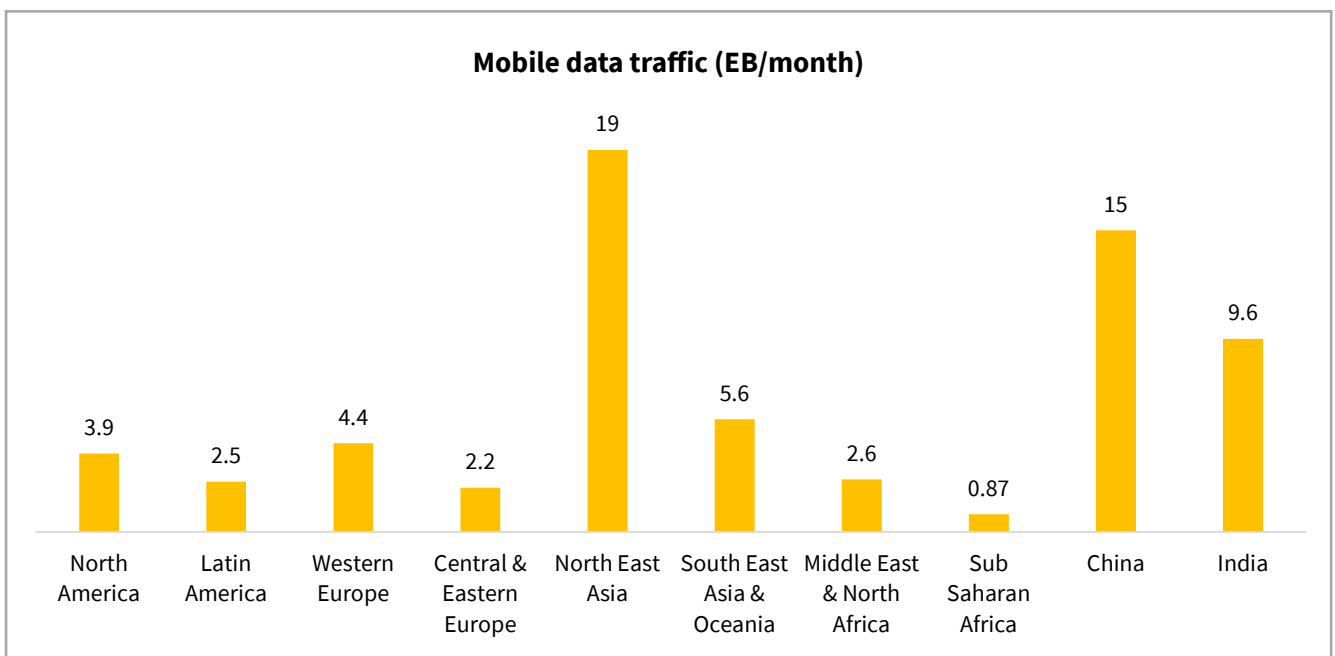
* India includes India, Nepal, Bhutan

D. Global Mobile Data Traffic per Smart Phone (in GB per Month)



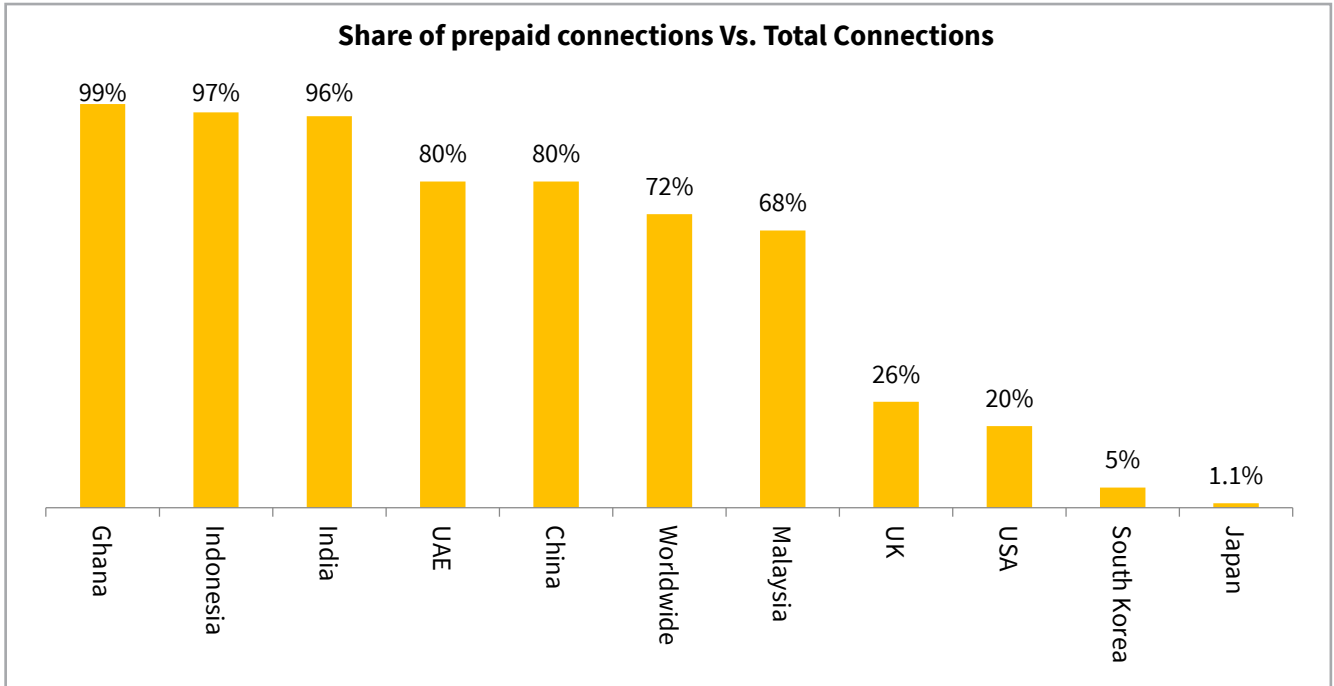
Source: Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2020

E. Global Mobile Data Traffic (in EB per Month)



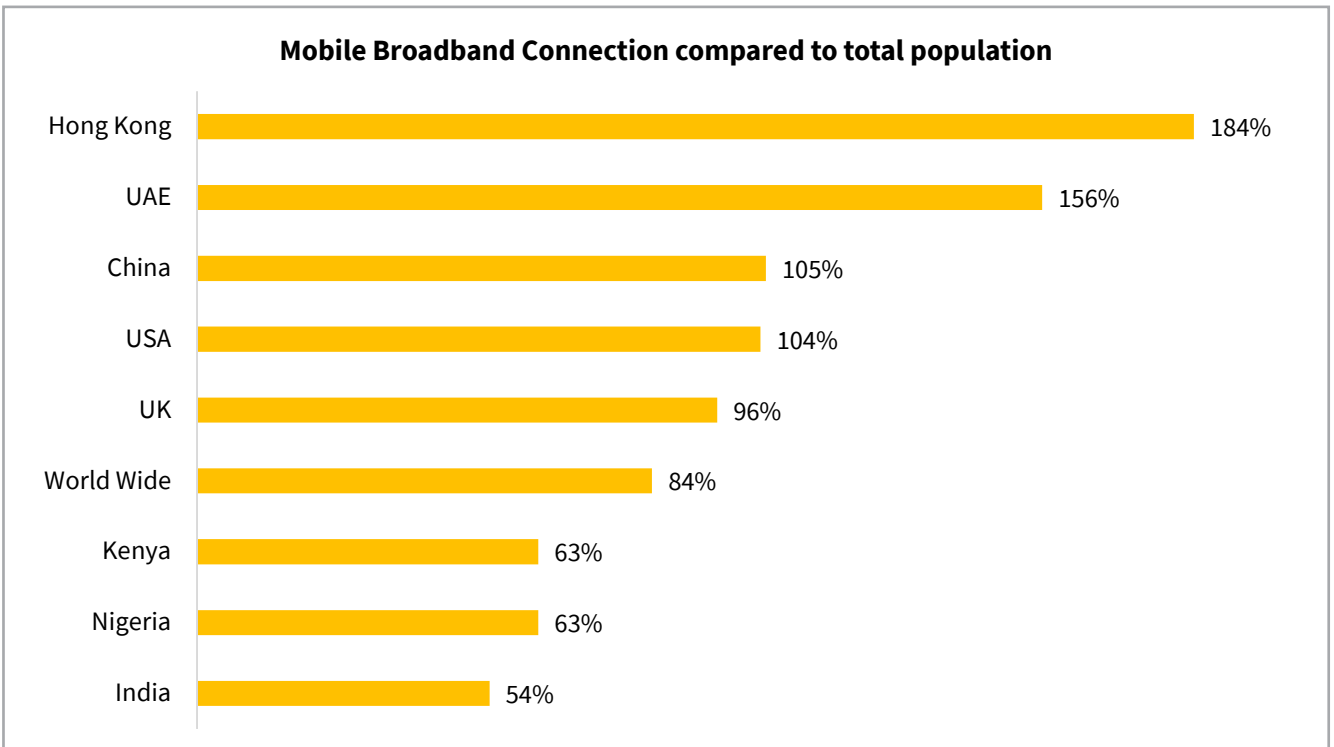
Source: Ericsson Mobility Report, November 2020

F. Share of Prepaid Connections



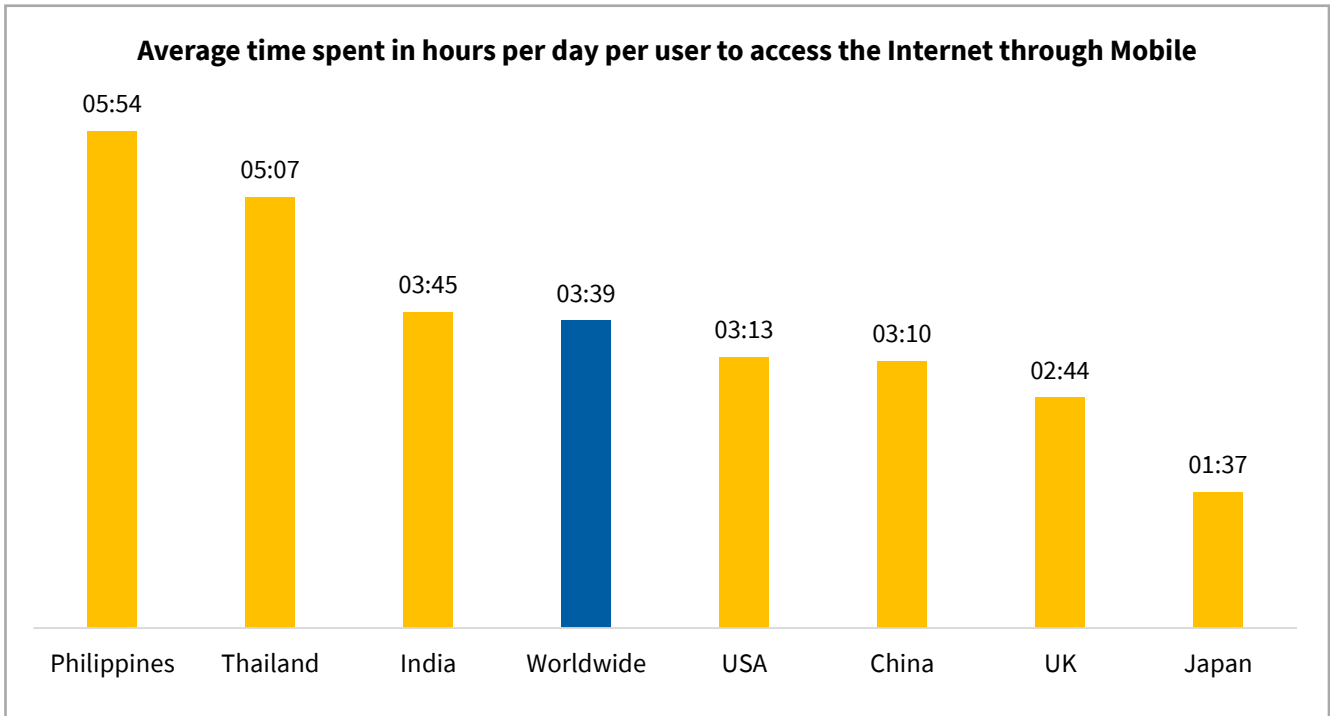
Source: Hootsuite Report, January 202, TRAI PMR, September 2020

G. Mobile Broadband Connectivity



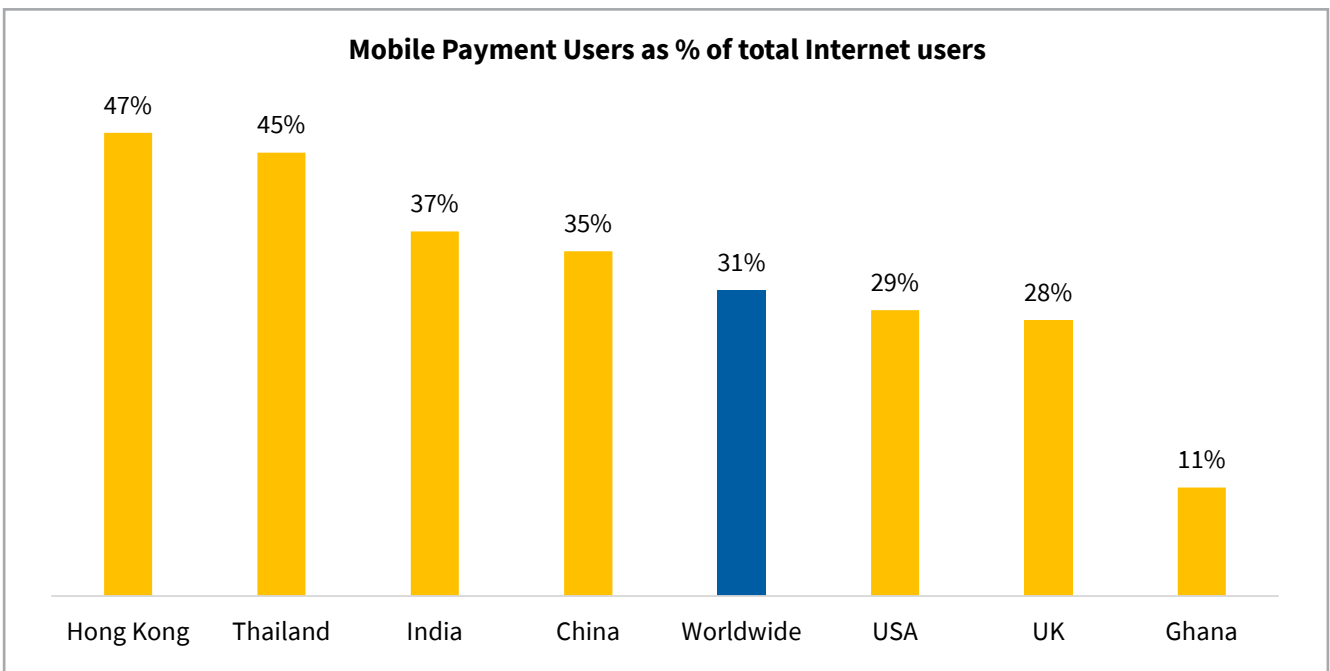
Source: Hootsuite Report, January 2021

H. Time Spent in hours per day on internet using Mobile Service



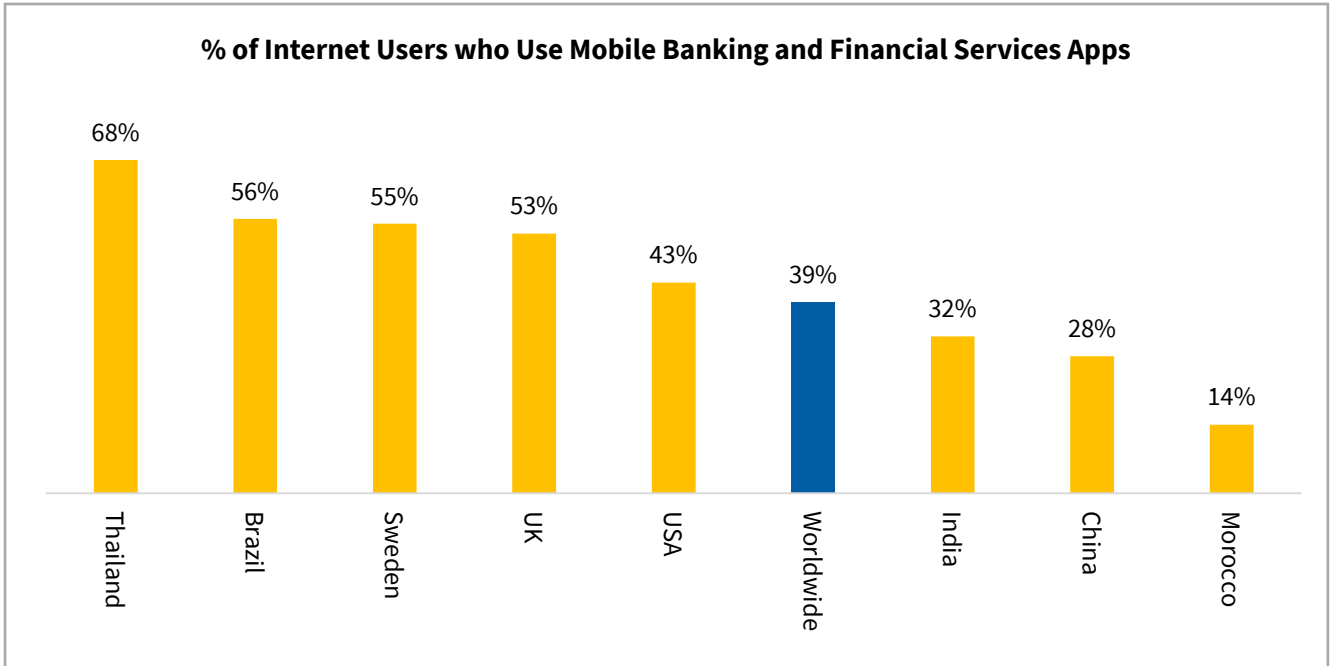
Source: HootSuite Report January 2021

I. Mobile Payment Services Penetration



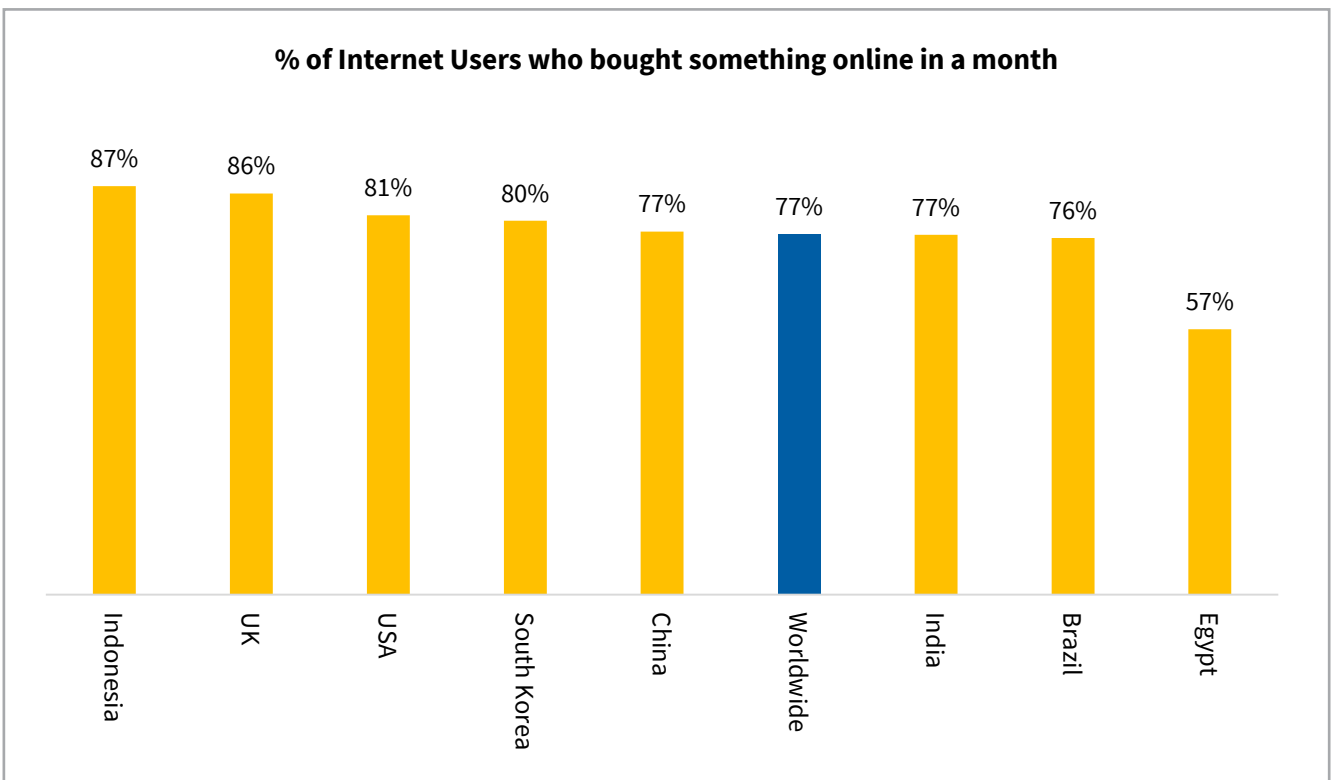
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

J. Mobile Banking and Financial Services Penetration



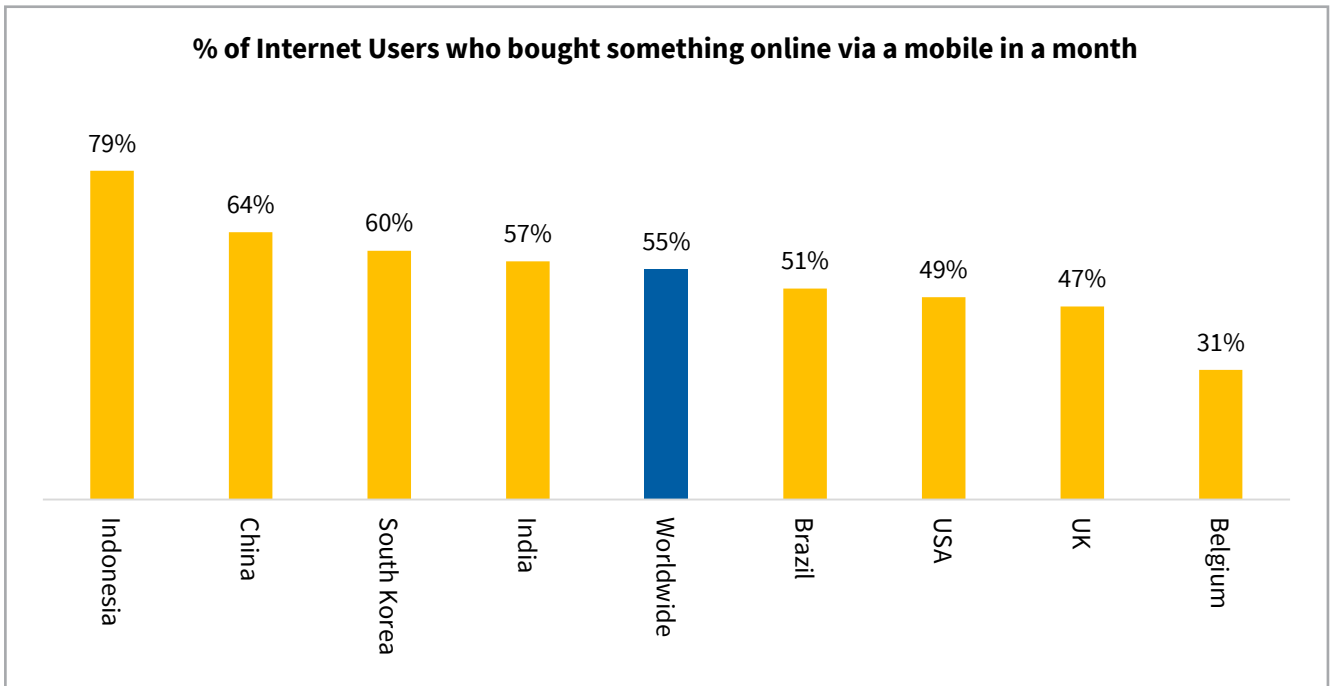
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

K. E-Commerce Adoption



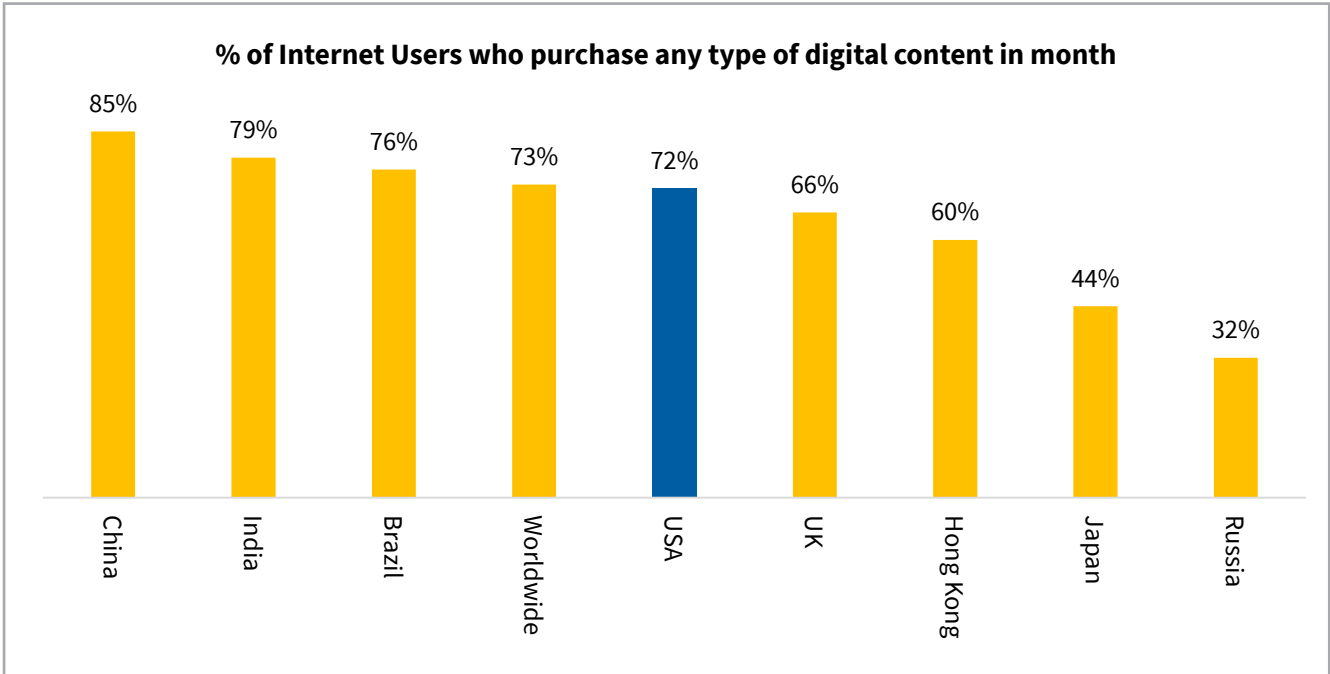
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

L. Mobile E-Commerce Adoption



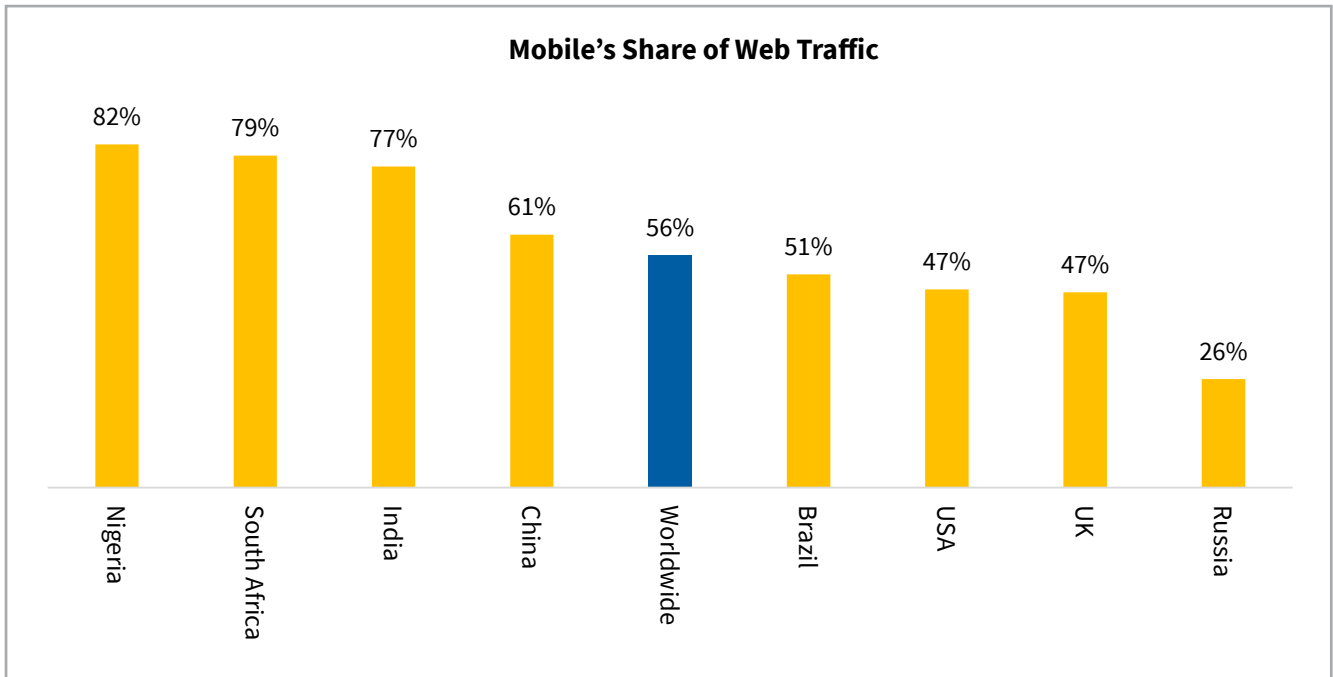
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

M. Paying for Digital Content



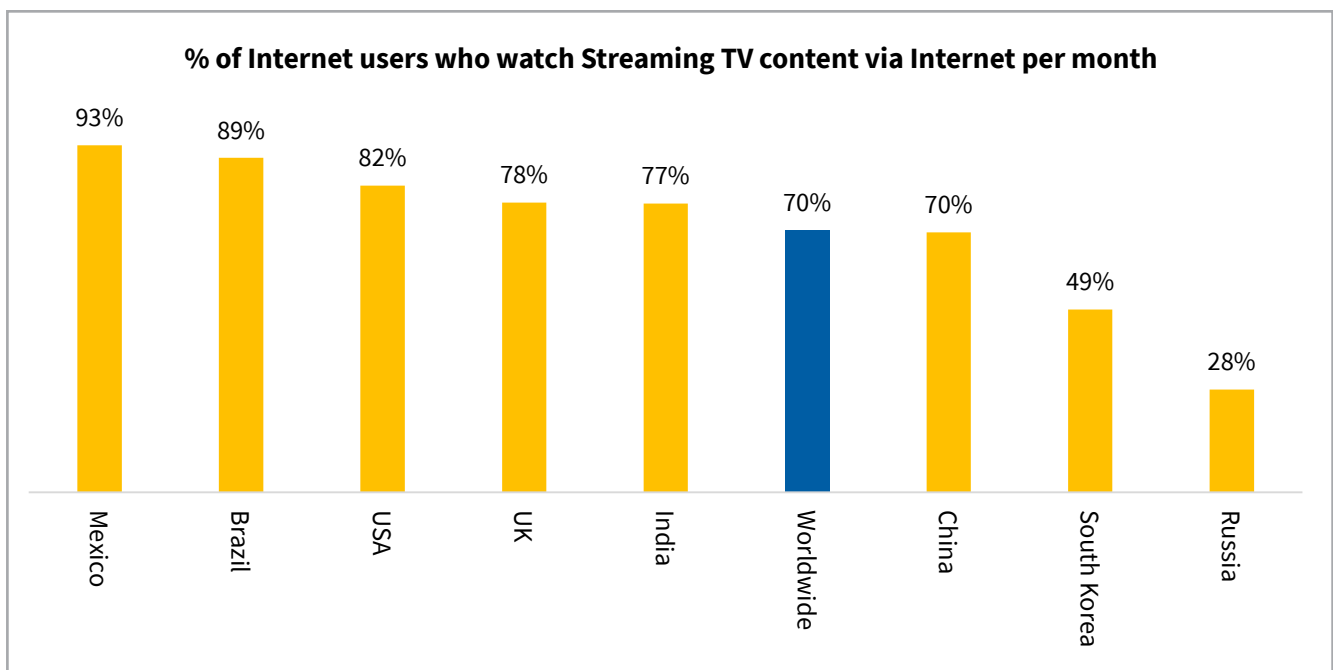
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

N. Mobile's Share of Web Traffic



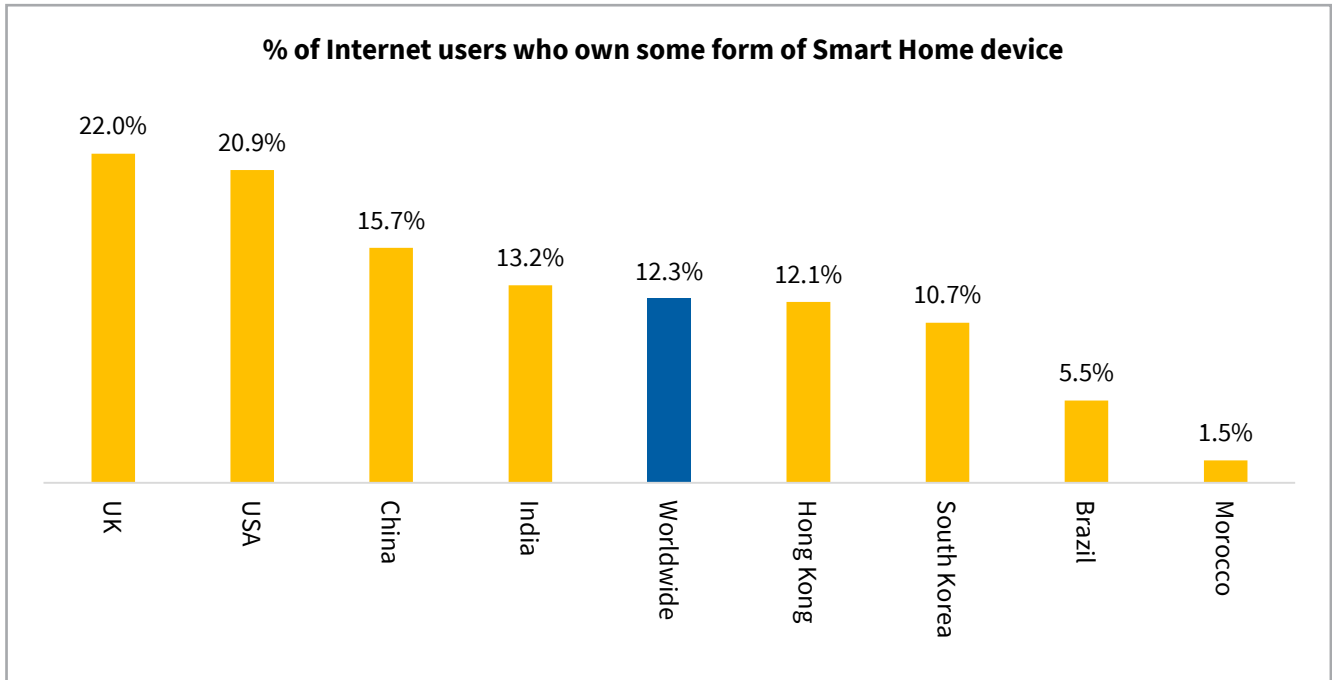
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

O. Streaming TV Content Via the Internet



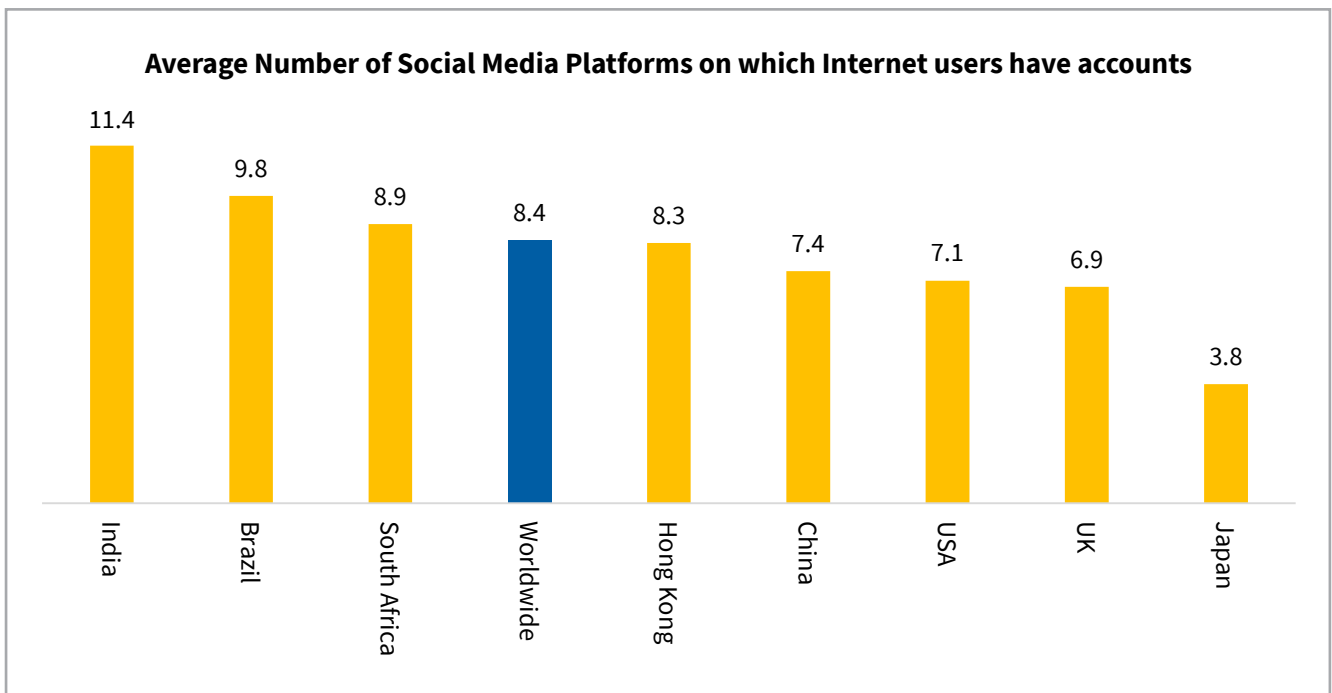
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

P. SMART Home Device Ownership



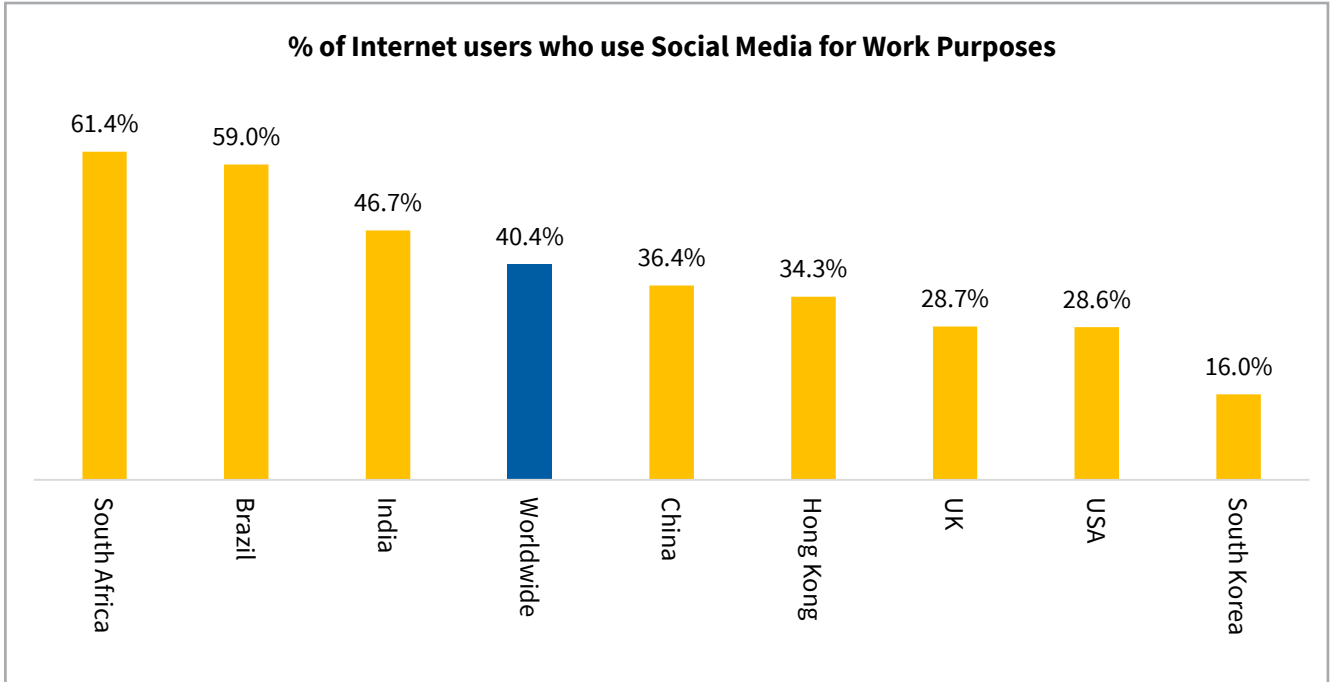
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

Q. Average Number of Social Media Accounts



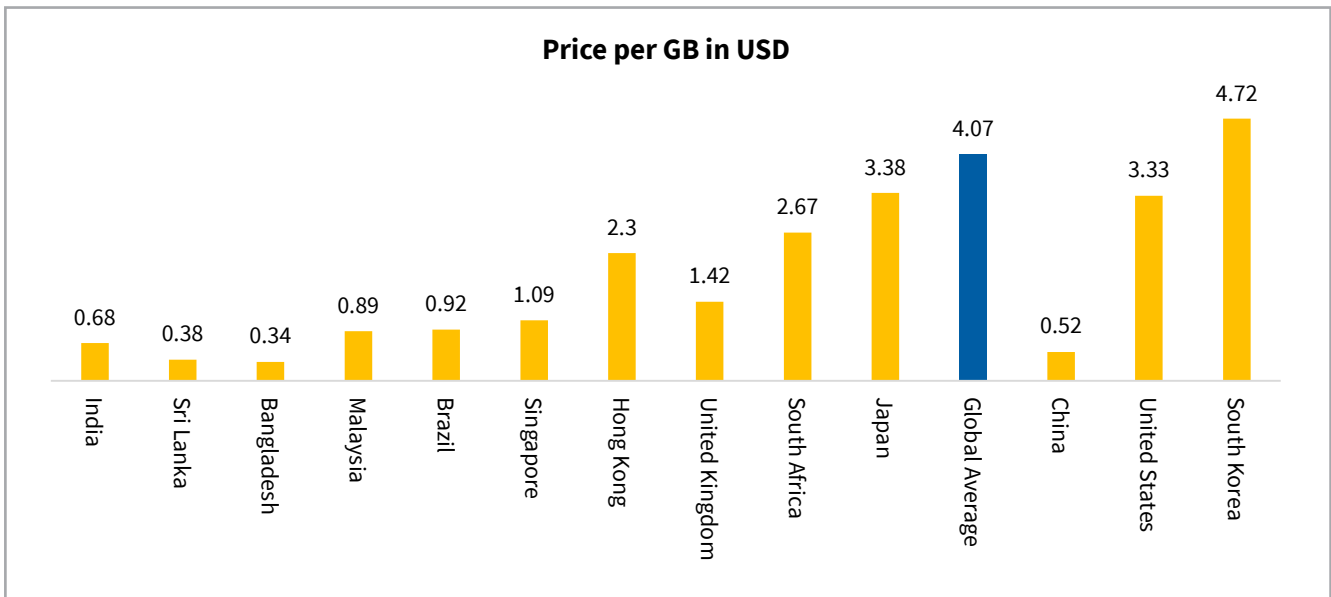
Source: HootSuite Report 2021

R. Individual Use of Social Media for Work



Source: HootSuite Report 2021

S. Price per GB Data Traffic (in USD)



Source: Cable.co.uk



Significant Achievements for the Year 2020-2021



- TRAI allowed the continuation of Conduction of “Consumer Education Workshops” (i.e. CEWs) through electronic medium/Digital Platforms till 30th June 2021:** On the basis of our request due to on-going challenging situation w.r.t COVID19 pandemic, TRAI has granted an extension to carry out the Consumer Education Workshops” (i.e. CEWs) through electronic medium/Digital Platforms first till 31st December 2020 and subsequently till 30th June 2021. This ensured safety for consumers and savings for our member TSPs.
- TRAI gave an extension to file Monthly and Quarterly reports due in April 2020:** Due to the challenges involved on account of on-going pandemic situation of COVID-19, the operations of the members TSPs were impacted as they are functioning and fulfilling operational and licensing requirements with only minimal staff. In such a scenario it is extremely difficult for our members to submit various Monthly and Quarterly reports on the due date as per the requirements of TRAI as most of these reports require circle wise compilation which was very
- difficult during the Covid outbreak. Hence, on our request, TRAI granted an extension in the timelines for the submission of various reports to TRAI due in April 2020.

Handling of Non-Payment Disconnection (NPD) Requests in view of the Current Situation due to COVID-19: Due to the on-going pandemic, several strict restrictions, including curfew/lockdown have been enforced in various parts of the country including major cities. As a result of this, bill deposit centres / customer service centres of TSPs were impacted and people were not able to pay the bills generated against their Post Paid connections. Further, disconnection of the mobile numbers may become critical due to the Non-Payment Disconnection (NPD) process in accordance with MNP regulations. Hence, based on our request, TRAI agreed last year and instructed all TSPs that no new NPD cases should be raised by the DO till 31st March, 2020 and The DO should take back the NPD requests raised in the last 15 days (10 March to 24 March 2020). This year again, TRAI vide its letter dated 4th May 2021 instructed all TSPs that raising of

new NPD requests by the DO shall be temporarily suspended till 31st May 2021 and TSPs as DO shall have to cancel the on-going NPD requests raised in the last 15 days, i.e from 20.04.2021 to 04.05.2021.

4. **5G Regulatory Policy Committee Report:** Committee on Regulatory Policy was constituted vide DoT's Office Memorandum File No. 6-33/2017-IC dated 12th October 2018 for Regulation Policy for 5G India 2020. The Committee discussed and deliberated on the various recommendations of the High-Level Forum on Regulatory Policy. The Report covers aspects related to Rationalisation of Levies, Net Neutrality, RoW, EMF, Spectrum allocation, E&V Bands and Data Protection. Most of the COAI inputs submitted were incorporated in the Report. The Report was finalized and issued by DoT on 15th January 2021.
5. **Review of Biennial Self-Certificate Process:** DoT had issued notification on 4th February 2021 regarding Review of Biennial Self-Certificates process.

The Cycle of Submission has been changed to three years. (Triennial submission). The **current cycle will be 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2022.**

The triennial submission is not required to be done for which the following certificates have been submitted by TSPs during the three year cycle:

- a) Self-Certificates for New BTS
- b) Self-Certificates for Upgrade of BTS
- c) Self-Certificate due to upgrade/addition of BTSs of other/sharing TSP

This is a favourable DoT notification for the industry and the required modifications have been made in the Portal for such triennial certificate submissions.

6. **Latest Self- Certificates to be considered for Audit:** DGT Office, DoT issued a notification on 29th January 2021 regarding Audit of EMF Self-Certificate vide Letter No. 800-15/2010-VAS (Pt).

It was highlighted that LSA will audit latest EMF Self-Certificate only, however all submitted Certificates to be retained in NEP (National EMF

Portal). The quantum of EMF Self- Certificates to be audited may be decided by LSAs depending on available resources.

These instructions are made functional in the Tarang Sanchar Portal with effect from April 1, 2021 as instructed by DoT.

7. **Compliance timeline extension and Audit extension due to Covid pandemic scenario:** DoT issued abeyance of compliance in wake of Covid-19, vide which audit process for EMR, Subscriber Verification and registration and testing of roll out obligations was suspended during the lockdown and later for the containment areas of various LSAs. DoT also provided extension on validity of foreign nationals due to the pandemic.
8. **Digital KYC (D-KYC) process for Bulk mobile connections:** DoT issued Instructions for alternate D-KYC process for issuing new mobile connections in case of Bulk mobile connections on September 18, 2020. In this regard, the DoT mentioned the procedure and directed the TSPs to follow it for issuing new mobile connections to the entity/company/organizations using this alternate D-KYC process. DoT stated that the same shall be implemented within 30 days from the date of issue of the instructions.

COAI sought clarification and extension on the date of implementation of the same and DoT provided extension till January 31, 2021. DoT also issued clarification on March 30, 2021 on the same.
9. **Extension of Acceptance of Test Reports from Labs Accredited by ILAC Signatories up to 30.06.2021 for Technical parameters:** TEC has extended the date of accepting International Test Results/Reports up to 30th June 2021 (earlier it was extended till 30th September 2020). This will be available for test results/test reports of all Requirements of Essential Requirements except Safety Requirements and EMI/EMC Requirements.
10. **Custom clearance of Telecom and DTH Equipment being imported from FTA Nations:** Custom clearances were awarded to COAI members by Custom Authorities of all Sea and Airports to clear the consignments on telecom and DTH equipment without any additional

delay or paying additional duty. Demurrage charges were also waived.

11. **NOC on import of import/export of refurbished telecom equipment Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change:** Competent authority awarded no objection certificate on import/export of refurbished telecom equipment to our members and requested Custom authority at the Air Cargos/Ports/ICDs to verify the documents and release the consignments.
12. **B2C QR Code implementation w.e.f. 01 December 2020 - Clarification issued by MoF on B2C invoices and compliance**

CBIC had mandates that the taxpayers with an annual turnover of more than Rs.500 crore

in any preceding financial year (starting from 2017-18) are compulsorily required to display QR (Quick Response) code on their B2C invoices from 1st December 2020.

Representation was made by COAI to the Hon'ble Finance Minister that Dynamic QR code should not be made applicable to B2C transactions in the Telecom Industry, in light of the necessary processes already in place. Alternatively, Dynamic QR Code should not be made applicable to transactions where invoice is issued after receipt of payment - in telecom; example, pre-paid transactions or other methods of digital payments enabled by NPCI powered UPI should be accepted in lieu of QR codes like UPI Intent and UPI Collect.

13. **Automation for Assessment of LF/SUC process:** Post various interactions, revenue wing of DoT took initiative to develop Revenue Management Software (RMS)-SARAS (System for Assessment of LF Revenue and SUC), which would digitize the assessments, payment and accounting of license fees, spectrum usage charges etc.

SARAS would enable the Licensee to make online payments, digitally file and verify deduction claims, AGR statements, bank guarantee details along with enabling the Department to conduct online assessment of LF and SUC, management of bank guarantees, handle representations etc. This will ease the process of deduction and verification.

TSPs have started making payment of LF and SUC through this portal.

Work is under process to the issues the issues faced by TSPs including duplication of efforts.

Extension granted by DoT for the submission of DVR related documents for Q4 FY 2019-20.

Due to the COVID 19 situation in the country, on 21st May 2020, the COAI had requested DoT to grant an extension for the submission of DVR related documents for Q4 FY 2019-20 from 15th June 2020 till 15th Aug 2020. The request of COAI was accepted by DoT and the extension was granted to the TSPs.

Key Takeaway/s

CBEC vide circular. No. 146/02/2021 dated 23 Feb 2021 has clarified the following.

In case of Pre-Paid invoice

- a. The generation/ printing of Dynamic QR Code on B2C invoices are not mandatory for pre-paid invoices i.e., where payment has been made before issuance of the invoice.
- b. If cross-reference of the payment received either through electronic mode or through cash or combination thereof is made on the invoice, then the invoice would be deemed to have complied with the requirement of Dynamic QR Code.
- c. However, in cases other than pre-paid supply i.e., where payment is made after generation/issuance of the invoice, the supplier shall provide a Dynamic QR Code on the invoice.

Above will help in saving IT upgradation and administrative cost and would ease doing compliance.

14. **DoT - Guidelines/clarifications for one-time deduction reverification exercise:** In February 03, 2020, DoT issued guidelines/clarifications for one-time deduction reverification exercise in which clarifications were issued towards the deduction verification exercise to be carried out by the CCAs. Some of the CCAs were not accepting these clarifications citing that the same is applicable till FY 2017-18.
- Supplementary Invoices: Any supplementary invoice for pass through charges pertaining to BSNL will be allowed subject to verification of invoices and payment proofs, provided that they have been claimed earlier in the Audited AGR of the year of supplementary invoice.

Some of the points clarified by DoT were as follows:

- Deductions were restricted to lower of cash or accrual claims. Same can be claimed on amount actually paid basis.
- Simplification of TDS Certificate Process – to claim the deduction, operators may submit a certificate by Statutory auditor/ Tax auditor.
- Disallowance of 3G Intra Circle Roaming Pass Through Charges - In some cases deduction for 3G ICR were allowed but was restricted to actual usages. DoT directed to CCAs that 3G ICR claims, including the minimum commitment/ premium usage charges, are admissible deductions, subject to submission of supporting documents (concerned invoice and bank statements).
- Disallowance of IUC charges paid to TSPs who have now closed their operations and the operator has the invoices: The IUC cost actually passed through to the closed operator related to this transaction may be allowed subject to the condition mentioned in the notification.

Key Takeaway/s

- A. Representation was made by COAI mentioning that the nature of transactions remains the same irrespective of the financial year and we had requested DoT to allow the above-mentioned clarifications / guidelines of DoT for subsequent assessment years as well so that the CCA offices consider these clarifications while assessing the documents submitted by TSPs.
- B. DoT vide letter dated 23-03-2021 has clarified that DVR guidelines dated 03-02-2020 may be used for DVR verification for the years for all licences post FY 2016-17. Refer attached letter dated 23-03-2021 issued by DoT for more details.
- C. This notification helped the industry in reducing not only significant costs on litigation / coordination but also eased situations with respect to funds which otherwise would have been blocked - thereby enhancing ease of doing business.



15. **Request for extension of due date for submission of Annual Return (GSTR-9) and reconciliation statement (GSTR-9C) for F.Y. 2019-20 from 28/02/2021 to 30/04/2021**

The following GSTN related issues are being faced by taxpayers while preparing GSTR 9 for FY 20. These issues remain unresolved despite representations made to GSTN. In the face of such issue the statutory deadline for filing of these returns also becomes very difficult unless they are resolved without any further delay:

- I. Tax liability and ITC amount of March 2020 month is not getting captured in auto-populated details of GSTR 9 (both liability and ITC).
- II. Even if all the GSTR 1s and GSTR 3Bs for FY 20 have been filed by a tax payer on or before the due date, some tax payers are getting error messages that “GSTR 1/3B filing is pending” and hence GSTR 9/9C is not enabled on GST portal.
- III. There are mismatches between auto-populated ITC data appearing in Table 8A of GSTR9 and the sum of ITC data as per the back-up file (excel file downloaded from GSTN).

Key Takeaway/s

We had requested MoF that in view of genuine hardships and difficulties being faced by trade and industry, due dates for furnishing of Annual Return (GSTR-9) and Annual Reconciliation Statement (GSTR-9C) for the financial year 2019-20 should be extended. The Ministry of Finance has extended the time till 31-03-2021.

IV. ITC date in Table 8A is not getting auto populated in some of the registrations.

V. Online utility of GSTR 9 has been released only on 10th December 2020.

16. **Notification of RoW Policies of States/UTs in alignment with RoW Rules, 2016:** RoW Policies of 14 additional States/UTs notified in alignment with RoW Rules, 2016 during 2020-2021. Till date, 29 States/UTs have aligned their Telecom Infrastructure policy with RoW Rules, 2016 that has streamlined hassle-free Right of Way processes.



Policies notified & Aligned			Draft Policies Released, notification pending	Policy Under Discussion
S.No	State	Notified / Cabinet Approval Date	State	State
1	Jharkhand	04 th Dec 2015	Andhra Pradesh	Gujarat
2	Rajasthan	06 th Feb 2017	Chhattisgarh	
3	*Tripura	08 th Sep 2017	Delhi	
4	Odisha	14 th Sep 2017	Kerala	
5	**Haryana	06 th Oct 2017	Ladakh	
6	Assam	16 th Feb 2018	Daman Diu and DNH	
7	Maharashtra	18 th Aug 2018	Lakshadweep	
8	*Tamil Nadu	21 st Feb 2018		
9	Arunachal Pradesh	15 th Jun 2018		
10	Uttar Pradesh	15 th Jun 2018		
11	Uttarakhand	26 th Nov 2018		
12	Meghalaya	20 th Dec 2018		
13	Madhya Pradesh	08 th Mar 2019		
14	**Karnataka	29 th May 2019		
15	Nagaland	02 nd Dec 2019		
16	Manipur	9 th Jun 2020		
17	***Bihar	19 th Aug 2020		
18	**Goa	20 th Aug 2020		
19	Sikkim	12 th Nov 2020		
20	J&K	27 th Nov 2020		
21	Mizoram	7 th Dec 2020		
22	Punjab	7 th Dec 2020		
23	West Bengal	Cabinet approved on 22nd Dec 2020		
24	Andaman & Nicobar	Cabinet approved on 18th Jan 2020		
25	Himachal Pradesh	9th February 2021		
26	Telangana	19th February 2021		
27	Puducherry	22 nd February 2021		
28	Chandigarh	1 st March 2021		
29	Chhattisgarh	13 th March 2021		

*G.O Only (Detailed Policy is under discussion)
 **Policy notified with some clause not aligned with RoW Rules, 2016
 ***TSPs to be included in DTC

#Source: Information collated by COAI

17. **Formation of Single Window Online Portal:** 5 States/UTs made their Single Window Online Portal operational during 2020-2021 namely Assam, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Punjab and West Bengal. Till date 11 States/UTs have made their Online Single Window Portal Operational that is facilitating speedy roll-out of the Telecom Infrastructure.

State's Online Single Window Clearance Portal Development		
S.No	State/UT	Online Portal Status
1.	Jharkhand	Operational
2.	Haryana	Operational
3.	Uttar Pradesh	Operational
4.	Uttarakhand	Operational
5.	Madhya Pradesh	Operational
6.	Delhi	Operational
7.	Assam	Operational
8.	Tamil Nadu	Operational
9.	Bihar	Operational
10.	Punjab	Operational
11.	West Bengal	Operational
12.	Odisha	Development Stage
13.	Maharashtra	Development Stage
14.	Telangana	Under Discussion
15.	Chandigarh	Under Discussion
16.	Kerala	Under Discussion

18. **Movement of Telecom Staff and vehicles:** COAI requested Secretary (T), DoT and DG(T), DoT office to instruct all LSAs & Chief Secretaries to support and facilitate the request for ease of movement Govt. to allow movement of telecom

staff/vehicles/equipment's during COVID Curfew/lockdown. Based on COAI's follow-up, DG (T), DoT (HQ) sent an email to all LSAs and Ltr. to Chief Secretaries to support telecom industry representative for maintaining telecom towers and connectivity. Favourable instructions to allow movement were issued by 29 States/UTs.



19. **EMF Awareness Campaign:** On request of COAI, DoT issued letter to all LSAs to organise EMF Awareness Sessions with support of COAI (Eminent Doctor and Lawyer). 21 EMF Awareness Sessions/Webinars held, EMF Awareness Radio Show organized on AIR FM and 2 EMF Awareness TV shows organized on Doordarshan. Through our initiatives, we were able to reach out to

Engaged approx. 50 lakh people, 5 doctors, approx. 100 Govt. officials across India, reached out to over 1,000 media (Online, print, channels, Social, etc.) and news appeared in approx. 100 media (print, Online, Radio Channels, TV Shows, etc.) . to dispel the prevailing myths of health impact surrounding EMF emissions from mobile towers



Engaged approx. 50 lakh people



Engaged 5 doctors



Engaged over 1,000 media (Online, print, channels, Social, etc.)



News appeared in approx. 100 print, Online, Radio Channels, TV Shows, etc.



Engaged approx. 100 Govt. officials across India

The above-mentioned DoT(HQ)/ LSA officials led activities along with Doctor's recommendations and positive media reports will help in alleviating the fear among the people and reassure them of safety of mobile towers while influencers also see value in spreading messages from medical professionals. This will further help in building a favorable perception of mobile towers among the public.

As part of the COAI initiative, we will continue EMF Advocacy Campaign to debunk the prevailing myths regarding EMF Emission from BTS installed on mobile towers/poles.

20. **Stop Fiber Cut:** On SOS call from Bangalore, a meeting with chief commissioner BBMP was organized to stop the rampant fibre cut. On COAI's request in the meeting and on the Chief Commissioner's instructions the fibre cut drive was stopped by BBMP.

An industry meeting was arranged for COAI's member representatives of Telangana with IT Department of Telangana Govt. under the Chairmanship of Shri Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce (I&C) and Information Technology (IT) Departments, Govt. of the Telangana government. It was decided to form What's App groups comprising of representatives of the industry, local municipalities and IT Department to share prior information regarding construction/

development plans to avoid any fiber cut and give ample time to the industry for re-location of the fiber.

21. **Rationalisation of restoration charges:** On COAI's request, restoration charges for OFC laying across NDMC region in Delhi NCT reduced from reduced OFC charges from ~ Rs. 28-30 lakh/KM to ~Rs.5 lakh/KM

22. **Allocation of sites for installation of Telecom:** COAI coordinated for re-location of 10 critical sites whose SACFA got cancelled by WPC, DoT around Delhi Airport. Post rigorous follow-ups, over 1000 sites identified by SDMC for re-location of these towers.

On COAI's request, 10 States/UTs have allowed govt. land & building for installation of Telecom Infrastructure.

23. **Demystifying the Misinformation being spread linking 5G testing with the COVID:** On COAI's submission to Secy.(T), DoT; LSA Heads & Ministry of Health; DoT Secretary wrote to Chief Secretaries of the States/UTs to actively communicate/informative video circulation to the public debunking the myth.

Haryana Police, UP Police & Gujarat Police heads had also issued orders in the support of the telecom industry for action to be taken against miscreants spreading myths.



COAI Reports & Submissions



1. **Temporary suspension of internet services due to law and order situation:** COAI submitted a representation to DoT on 22nd March on the issue of Temporary suspension of internet services due to law and order situation. Vide the said letter COAI requested that exemptions be made in the public interest by allowing the subscribers to recharge their balance through TSPs applications so that the telecom services to the subscribers are not disrupted.
2. **Allow manufacturing facilities related to Telecommunication sector during Lockdown:** We submitted a letter dated April 21, 2020 to MHA requesting permission of the Manufacturing units of Telecom to operate. Vide Order no. 40-3/2020-DM-I(A) dated 15th April 2020, MHA had issued the consolidated revised guidelines and had permitted several Industries/ Industrial Establishments across different sectors to operate. However, the required relaxations for the telecommunication Industry were not allowed. Vide our said letter we requested that permission be also given to the Manufacturing units of Telecommunication equipment and related infrastructural material, their raw material suppliers and intermediaries to operate.
3. **Inter-band Spectrum sharing:** COAI submitted a letter to DoT on Inter-band Spectrum sharing on 4th Jan 2021. Vide the said letter COAI made the following request to DoT:
 - a) Allow inter-band sharing of the spectrum considering that the entire spectrum is being allocated through auction and is liberalised/ technology-neutral spectrum.
 - b) Issue instructions on the following two aspects in order to facilitate the spectrum sharing:
 - i. As per TRAI recommendation dated 17.08.2020 for existing spectrum-sharing being done, only an increment of 0.5% on SUC rate should apply on the spectrum holding in the specific band in which sharing is taking place, and not on the entire spectrum holding (all bands) of the TSPs.

- ii. Also, for all future spectrum sharing no increment of 0.5% on SUC should apply.
4. **Payment of License Fee (LF) & Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC) during Q4 FY 2020-21:** COAI Submitted letter to DoT on Payment of License Fee (LF) & Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC) during Q4 FY 2020-21 on 15th Jan 2021, requesting DOT to allow the TSPs to do the payment of LF & SUC dues on 25th March 2021 basis the estimated revenue earned during the quarter.
 5. **Review of Financial Bank Guarantees (FBGs):** COAI submitted letter to DoT on 4th Jan 2021 on Review of Financial Bank Guarantees (FBGs) submitted by Telecom Service Providers. Vide this letter COAI requested DOT to issue a suitable clarification to all the CCA offices so that the dues relating to CAF & EMF penalties and other related matters, that are already sub-judice are not included during the periodic review of the License Fee / Spectrum Usage Charges FBGs by the CCA offices.
 6. **Status of Consumer Educational Workshops (CWEs):** On 6th Jan 2021, COAI submitted to TRAI the status of Consumer Educational Workshops (CWEs) conducted by TSPs via digital platform in July 2020 to Dec 2020.
 7. **Allowing denomination in multiples of Rs. 10 for Special Tariff/ Combo/ Plan Vouchers:** COAI wrote to TRAI on 9th Oct 2020 and subsequently also on 14th Dec 2020, 27th Jan 2021 and April 16, 2021 for allowing denomination in multiples of Rs. 10 for Special Tariff/ Combo/ Plan Vouchers and doing away with the provision of mandatory colour coding of the vouchers.
 8. **Request for additional Time to file Monthly and Quarterly Reports due in April 2020:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, COAI, vide its letter to TRAI dated 26th March 2020, requested TRAI to provide our member TSPs additional time of at least 6 weeks to file all Monthly and Quarterly reports.
 9. **Need for uniform timelines for the declaration of revenue related details by the TSPs:** As per the terms of the license agreement, the revenue related details like License fee (LF), Spectrum Usage Charges (SUC) needs to be submitted to DoT by the TSPs within 15 days of the end of each quarter of the financial year. However, as per Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirement) Regulations, 2015, a listed company is required to submit its financial results to the Stock Exchanges within 45 days of the end of the quarter for the first 3 quarters of the financial year and within 60 days of the end of the quarter in case of the last quarter of the financial year. Hence, we wrote to DoT on 22nd Jan 2021 and subsequently also wrote a follow-up letter on the same issue on 25th March to maintain uniformity in the timelines for declaration of price sensitive information/revenue related details to DoT as well as the Stock Exchanges as prescribed by SEBI as this will bring harmony among all the applicable statutes.
 10. **Reduction in Regulatory Levies – License Fee Contribution:** COAI wrote to DoT on December 03, 2020 and subsequently wrote a follow-up letter on February 10, 2021 along with some international benchmarks and requested that License Fee should be brought down to 1% at the earliest, so as to cover only the admin costs by the DoT/Government.
 11. **Reduction in Regulatory Levies – USOF Contribution:** COAI wrote to DoT on December 18, 2020 and subsequently wrote a follow-up letter on February 25, 2021 along with some international benchmarks and requested that USO contribution should be abolished immediately by the DoT/Government.
 12. **Proposal for implementation of ‘Project Arachnid list’ as an alternate to IWF list for filtering online CSAM (Child Sexual Abuse Material):** COAI wrote a letter to MeitY on Sep 01, 2020 requesting that Project Arachnid list should be adopted as an alternative to IWF. Subsequently, a joint industry letter by COAI and ISPAI had been also submitted to MeitY on October 05, 2020 requesting the same. COAI again submitted a letter to MeitY on Nov 18, 2020 requesting to allow the Project Arachnid list as an alternative to IWF list along with some international examples and comparison with IWF. As per MeitY requirement, we have also submitted the process flow of Project Arachnid to MeitY on 7th Dec 2020. The request is still under process at MeitY.

13. **Draft Data Centre Policy-2020-** Meity had released a draft data centre policy-2020 on 5th November 2020. COAI has submitted inputs to MeitY on 1st Dec 2020 highlighting the factors over which Government should focus like Power consumption, Sustainable Energy Solutions, Land Scarcity, Soft loans/Long Term loans, Requirement of robust telecom infrastructure, adherence to global testing and certification, Fiscal incentives and Promoting start-ups / SMEs/Private Sector.
14. **Licensing Compliance Checklist:** COAI Submitted licensing compliance checklist to DOT on 19th Jan 2021 requesting DoT to review and reduce the compliance burden on TSPs.
15. **Letter to DoT on release of Bank Guarantees:** Vide letter dated 2nd April to DoT, COAI requested that, once the Rollout obligations are completed, PBGs should be returned to the TSPs at the earliest and going forward the submission of PBG by TSPs should be done away with. Similarly, going forward, the submission of FBG by TSPs should be done away with OR DoT may kindly consider the reduction in FBG from 2 qtrs to 1 qtrs.
16. **Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL) published on TRAI website:** Vide letter dated 9th April to DoT, COAI requested DoT that the inclusion of Subscriber Name, TSP Name, Issuance City and Reason for Deactivation, in Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL) published on TRAI website would lead to concerns of privacy and confidentiality of customer information. The same should not be implemented.
17. **Review of Definition of AGR and allowing deductions of lease line / bandwidth charges and the charges paid by one TSP to the other TSP as pass-through charges:** COAI submitted letter to DoT on 20th April, requesting for a Review of Definition of AGR and Allowing deductions of lease line / bandwidth charges and the charges paid by one TSP to the other TSP as pass-through charges.
18. **Request for additional Time to file Monthly and Quarterly Reports due in April and May 2021:** Given the present Covid situation, COAI, vide its letter to TRAI dated 20th April, requested TRAI to kindly provide our member TSPs additional time of at least 6 weeks, from the due date, to file all Monthly and Quarterly reports which are due for submission in April and May 2021.
19. **Handling of Non Payment Disconnection (NPD) Requests in view of the Current Situation due to COVID-19:** COAI Letter was submitted to TRAI on April 22, 2021 regarding disconnection of the mobile numbers due to Non-Payment Disconnection (NPD) process in accordance with MNP regulations, for the subscribers who have recently ported their mobile numbers and are not able to pay their bills to their Donor Operator (DO), post porting.
20. **Impact in SLAs of Quality of Service Parameters due to COVID-19 advisory:** We have requested TRAI vide letter dated April 22, 2021 to not treat any deviations that may be observed in the benchmark of the QoS parameters for all the services in upcoming QE June 2021 reports and reports for the upcoming quarters till the situation stabilizes.
21. **Need to remove paper based information to consumers and shift to digital modes:** This is with reference to the various requirements, under various Regulations and Directions, of communicating certain information to the telecom consumers through physical mediums like newspapers and other such modes. COAI requested TRAI vide letter dated April 14, 2021 to repeal the redundant activities like Welcome Letter and mandatory hard copy of the bill etc.
22. **Decriminalization of Minor Offences under the Acts administered by DoT:** Department of Telecommunications (DoT) conducted an exercise to identify provisions for decriminalization or rationalization of penalties in respect of the laws administered by DoT viz., the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1933.

The exercise focused primarily on decriminalizing relatively minor violation of law and expeditious resolution through compounding with the objective of preventing harassment of citizens, de-clogging the criminal justice system and promoting ease of doing business. DoT indicated that while providing these comments special focus may be given to Section 27, 28, 29A and

30 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 and Section 6(1) of the Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1933.

COAI submitted the industry inputs, after due consultation with members, to DoT on the specific provisions of the Indian telegraph Act, 1885 and Indian Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1933. On the provisions relating to possession of unlicensed wireless telegraphy apparatus, COAI submitted that it is important to deter entities from directly or indirectly selling/ using or facilitating the sale of such apparatus without license as usage of such apparatus by the end customer creates severe interference in the licensed frequency bands assigned to service providers by the Department of Telecommunications and also impacts the overall quality of services. COAI recommended that in case of persons selling or facilitating the sale of such apparatus- fine should be enhanced to minimum Rs. 1 Crore up to Rs. 5 Crores for each offence. Further, penalty of Rs. 1 Lac for first offence and Rs. 2 Lacs for any subsequent offence be introduced for use or illegal possession of wireless transmitter.

On the provision relating to frauds in erection of towers by furnishing documents with forged stamp and mark of the Department of Telecommunications and documents purportedly issued by or under its authority, COAI submitted that the penal consequences should be strengthened in view of the rampant misuse of such fake or fabricated documents by imposters to defraud general public on the pretext of installation of mobile towers for monetary incentives. Further, forgery related to Proof of Identity and Proof of Address for the purpose of availing telecom service should be brought under the ambit of this provision in the interest of national security and to create deterrence. COAI proposed to introduce a minimum penalty of Rs. 1 lac and/ or imprisonment of 6 months in the case of first offence and a penalty of Rs. 5 lacs and/ or imprisonment up to 2 years in the case of each subsequent offence and recommended to make the offence cognizable and non-bailable.

23. **Movement of Telecom Staff and vehicles during COVID pandemic:** COAI requested Secretary(T), DoT and DG(T), DoT office via letter number DG/COAI/2020/078 dated April 08, 2021 to instruct all LSAs & Chief Secretaries to support and

facilitate the request for ease of movement Govt. to allow movement of telecom staff/vehicles/ equipment's during COVID Curfew/lockdown. Based on COAI's follow-up, DG(T), DoT (HQ) sent an email to all LSAs and Ltr. to Chief Secretaries to support telecom industry representative for maintaining telecom towers and connectivity. Favourable instructions to allow movement were issued by 16 States/UTs.

24. **DoT led EMF Awareness Campaign:** On submission of COAI, DoT issued letter to all LSAs to organise EMF Awareness Sessions with support of COAI (Eminent Doctor and Lawyer). 21 EMF Awareness Sessions/Webinars held, EMF Awareness Radio Show organized on AIR FM and 2 EMF Awareness TV shows organized on Doordarshan. Through our initiatives, we were able to reach out to Engaged approx. 50 lakh people, 5 doctors, approx. 100 Govt. officials across India, reached out to over 1,000 media (Online, print, channels, Social, etc.) and news appeared in approx. 100 media (print, Online, Radio Channels, TV Shows, etc.) . to dispel the prevailing myths of health impact surrounding EMF emissions from mobile towers
25. **Demystifying the Misinformation being spread linking 5G testing with the COVID:** COAI's done a submission to Secretary DoT dated May 07, 2021 titled "Demystifying the Misinformation being spread linking 5G technology and testing with the COVID-19 pandemic". Through COAI's submission, an urgent intervention of DoT was requested for the following:
- Issue statement debunking this misinformation being spread linking 5G technology and testing with the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - To actively communicate to the public that 5G technology is not harmful and the rumours that are being spread are completely baseless and without any evidence/facts.
 - Request if an informative video around busting the myths around 5G technology can be issued on all DoT and Ministries' social channels.

COAI requested DoT Secretary, to write to Chief Secretaries of the States requesting them to take

up this issue with the District Magistrate/District Authorities. We have shared with him the draft Instructions and Statement for his support.

COAI's submission to Secretary DoT was also shared with LSA Heads and DDG (CS) of all 22 LSAs across India for their intervention at the circle level. Post COAI's request to UP LSA, UP Police issued orders on action to be taken against people spreading Fake news pertaining to 5G tower testing in UP. This further helped in the speedy roll-out of telecom infrastructure by debunking the myths.

26. **Support Required from DoT During the Current COVID Situation in the Country:** In the current Covid situation representation was made to DoT requesting to issue orders to put in abeyance/suspend the following compliance activities

- I. Extension for submission of Q4 2020-21 payment proof documents which falls due on 15-06-21 till 31st August 2021 or till such period that COVID period and lock down gets over, whichever is later.
- II. Extend timeline for submission of deduction related documents till lock down is lifted.
- III. CCA offices to relax short timeline or suspended verification process till lock down is over as most of the documents are stored in warehouse which itself is tedious task to visit & arrange out of them.
- IV. Relaxation in submission of BGs by accepting the BGs in Digital/Scanned format via e mail till the Covid situation improves.
- V. All communications must be sent through email in addition to physical mode.
- VI. Extension on submission of Submission of Audited statement of Revenue and license statement along with operator wise revenue and cost annexures till 31st August 2021 or till such period that COVID period and lock down gets over, whichever is later.

27. **Verification of documents w.r.t. Deductions claimed from GR to AGR:** TSPs submit AGRs duly audited at the end of financial year. In addition, the Revenue share is subject to regular CAG audits and Special Audits. In the backdrop

of three independent audits of revenue Share and as deductions claimed are going to be small fraction of GR, it is suggested that deduction reporting and verification may be modified in the following manner:

- (i) There should only be reporting requirement of deductions claimed from GR in simplified AG, AO and IR formats without any requirement of submitting supporting documents.
- (ii) The regular verification of deductions claimed from Gross Revenue by Office of CCAs should be discontinued.
- (iii) The format AG, AO and IR can be audited on annual basis to replace the verification process.

28. **DoT Task Force on "Implementation of Single Window System - Tax Issues:** DoT created a Task Force under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary (Telecom) To discuss the issues on "Implementation of Single Window System in DoT".

Key issues related to GST / taxes were represented to this task force with the request to support in getting these issues resolved from the Ministry of Finance / GST Council.

Few issues covered are as follows.

- I. No GST on LF, SUC & Spectrum acquired in auction.
- II. Multiplicity of Compliance, Audits, Investigations and Litigations for Large Pan India service providers.
- III. Refund of accumulated ITC.
- IV. Non applicability of service tax on AGR payable pursuant to Supreme Court Judgement.
- V. Clarification on availability of GST credit on Telecommunication Towers.
- VI. Clarity that GST ITC is available on critical telecom equipment installed on telecom towers.
- VII. No tax on self-supply of service.
- VIII. Entertainment Tax in MP.

IX. Reversal of ITC with interest on account of non-payment to suppliers within 180 days from the invoice date.

29. **GST – Representations made to JS – GST Council, DoT and to concerned officers in MoF:** Representation made to Joint Secretary (JS), GST Council. It was informed that Telcos are facing lot of issues Multiplicity of compliance, scrutiny, Audits, Investigations and Litigation for large Pan India service providers. At state level also members are getting notices for entertainment tax through online media/ internet implies multi fold compliance etc.

Key Issues covered were as follows.

- Refund of the unutilized input tax credit immediately else, soft loan at MCLR rate should be given to companies, using the GST input credit as collateral.
- Exempt the levy of GST on License Fees, Spectrum Usage Charges and Payment of Spectrum acquired in auctions.
- Exemption in respect of levy of Service Tax on RoW permission by the Central Government/State Government and the development authorities.
- Blockage of GST credit
- E-Invoicing from the Portal

30. **AGR Judgement – Consequences on Indirect taxes:** AGR payable pursuant to Supreme Court Judgement – Consequences on Indirect taxes

Some of the state authorities have started sending notices to TSPs regarding payment of Service tax / GST on amount payable pursuant to Judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court.

- Representations made with the request to issue specific clarification / exemption mentioning that the amount payable by the TSPs for the period from April 2016 till June 2017 is exempt from the payment of Service tax
- or
- In case Service tax is payable, input tax credit of such tax is available against the liability of GST.

Representations filed / made to JS of GST Council, Revenue Secretary, Chairman CBIC and to concerned officer in MoF.

31. **GST - E-Invoicing from the Portal:** Representation was made regarding exemption to Telecom Industry under new E-invoicing system being introduced w.e.f. October 01, 2020.

It was informed to the Government that Telecom Industry generally generates around 20-25 lakh taxable B2B invoices in a month. Further, the invoices raised to B2C customers run in crores. Further, other taxable documents like credit notes, debit notes, invoices for intra-company transactions are in addition to the above which are also huge in number.

The GST Council in its 39th meeting held on March 14, 2020 has extended exemptions to various industries including Banking, Insurance, Financial Institutions, Goods Transport Agencies, etc. from e-invoicing system.

Detailed representation was made to the Ministry of Finance and expected technical issues / problems were informed to the ministry. Request was made that exemption from e-invoicing system should be provided to TSPs also.

32. **Equalization Levy (EL) introduced in Finance Act 2020:** Detailed representation made to the Chairman CBDT and to the concerned senior officers highlighting issues and challenges expected to be faced by members.

33. **Extension of due date for submission of Annual Return (GSTR-9):** Request was made for extension of due date for submission of Annual Return (GSTR-9) and reconciliation statement (GSTR-9C) for F.Y. 2019-20 from 28/02/2021 to 30/04/2021

- a. There were Lot of GSTN related issues being faced by taxpayers while preparing GSTR 9 for FY 20. These issues remain unresolved despite representations made to GSTN.
- b. In the face of such issue the statutory deadline for filing of these returns also becomes very difficult.

Timeline was extended by the government till 31-03-2021.

34. **RoW - Service Tax Liability:** On November 30, 2018 notification was issued by the MoF, exempting service tax on services provided by way of granting permission of “right of way” by “local authorities” during the period from 01 July 2012 to 30 June 2017.

That was a big relief to the Industry.

- I. This solved partially problem as the scope of exemption is limited to only ‘local authorities’
- II. In addition to “local authorities”, charges for ROW permissions are also collected by Central and State Government Departments like Railways, and PWD etc.

Follow up representation filed with the office of Revenue Secretary, Chairman CBIC and to other concerned senior officers with a request to amend the said notification and replace ‘local authorities’ with ‘appropriate authorities.

35. **Clarity on issue of availability of input tax credit on critical telecom equipment:** COAI had taken up the issue of ongoing enquiries by certain state tax authorities against various telecom

operators about eligibility of input tax credit on the equipment installed on telecommunication towers with a request that due process of law should be followed by the authorities before denying any input tax credit to the telecom operators on the telecom equipment installed on telecom towers. Such equipment constitutes the very heart and core of any telecom network without which it is not possible to provide telecom services and denial of credit on such equipment would result in grave financial hardship to the telecom operators which will lead to a huge increase in cascading of input taxes, which is not the spirit of GST law.

36. **Pre and Post Budget-Recommendations 2021-22:** Detailed representations with regard to key issues related to Direct and Indirect Taxes were sent to the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Telecom etc.

Key issues included in the representation related to regulatory levies were as follows:

- I. Reduction in the SUC
- II. Abolition of the USOF Contribution
- III. Reduction in remaining License Fee
- IV. Review of the AGR definition Prospectively



37. Direct Tax:

Sr. No	Subject	Recommendation
1.	Section 211 - Introduction of a scheme for deposit of monthly advance tax in case of large companies.	It is recommended that an amendment should be made in section 211 of the Act wherein large tax payers should pay monthly instalment of advance tax instead being subject to tax deducted at source
2.	TDS under section 194H on trade margins	A clarification should be issued that such trade margins should not fall within the ambit of TDS provisions. However, if the government still wants to pursue this route for tax collection, it should introduce the TDS rate at 1% instead of the current 5%, which would be closer to the actual tax liability of distributors as margins earned by the distributors are low and they sustain only on volumes.
3.	Section 115JAA - Removing limitation on time period of utilization of MAT credit	Limitation of 15 years period should be removed to provide respite to companies to utilize their accumulated MAT credit.
4.	Section 72A - Amendment in conditions of amalgamating companies	<p>a) It was recommended to bring down the threshold of keeping 75% of book value of fixed assets to 25% for maximum 2 to 3 years' time period. The relaxation of this condition would also facilitate conducting environment supporting digital India initiative of Government.</p> <p>b) It is recommended that the provision be amended to bring parity on the carry forward losses and unabsorbed depreciation between the amalgamation and demerger of companies. This would facilitate better reorganization of businesses.</p>
5.	Section 197 – Certificate for deduction at lower rate	Amendment to rule 28AA to provide that AO will not consider tax liabilities which have either been stayed by AO / appellate forums or for which adequate security is provided by the tax payer, for the purpose of processing LDC application.
6.	Section 206C(1H) – Tax Collection at Source on sale of goods	It is recommended that suitable amendments be made to Section 206C(9) of the Act to provide the taxpayer/ buyer an option to obtain a lower/ NIL taxes collection certificate.
7.	Issues related to Faceless Assessment Scheme	
8.	Section 279 – Prosecution for TDS defaults	To bring out amendment to section 279 to provide immunity from prosecution in genuine cases of default in depositing tax with the Government by due date.

Sr. No	Subject	Recommendation
9.	Interest expenditure incurred towards 'right to use spectrum', is allowable as revenue	An appropriate clarification should be issued to provide that the interest expenditure incurred towards 'right to use spectrum', is allowable as revenue u/s 36(1)(iii) read with Section 37(1).
10.	No TDS under section 193 on 'interest on securities' earned by a business trust defined as per section 10(23FC)	It is recommended that as provided in section 194A, a similar exclusion should be provided in section 193 – Interest on Securities with respect to no applicability of tax withholding on any income by way of interest referred to in section 10(23FC).
11.	No TDS on exempt income under section 10(23FE) of specified person	It is recommended that a clarification should be issued that there would not be any deduction of tax, since the income of such specified person is anyway exempt under section 10(23FE) of the Act
12.	Additional information in Form 26AS	It is recommended to provide Invoice reference number and PAN of the deductor in Form 26AS
13.	Overlap in definition of 'technical' and 'professional' services under the Income-tax Act, 1961	It is recommended that in definition of technical services and professional services, it should be clearly brought out by way of explanation that if technical consultancy services are rendered in the course of carrying out business then it would fall in technical services and rate applicable would be 2% while if technical services are rendered in the course of carrying out any profession (such as CA firms, Architects firms, Engineering consulting firms, etc.) then such services would be regarded as professional services and therefore rate applicable would be 10%.

Service Tax

Sr. No	Issue	Recommendation
1.	Exemption in respect of levy of Service Tax on Right of Way permission granted by the Central Government/State Government and the development authorities	Notification 1/2018 -ST dated 30th November 2018 be amended to include 'appropriate authority' as defined in ROW Rules in addition to the exemption granted to the 'local authority'
2.	Exemption from levy of Service tax on incremental LF and SUC payable pursuant to the Hon'ble Supreme Court order.	<p>The relief by way of exemption could also be granted under Section 11C of STA read with Section 83 of the Finance Act. Similar exemptions from payment of Service tax on various services have been issued by the government in the past including Notification 1/ 2018-Service Tax dated 30 November 2018 where payment of Service tax on 'right of way' charges for period April 2012 to June 2017 was exempted by the Central Government.</p> <p>Alternatively, Government may prescribe a time bound simple process to claim cash refund of the Service tax to be paid under the RCM.</p>

GST

Sr. No	Issue	Recommendation
1.	Exemption from GST on Spectrum payment, license fees, Spectrum usage charge. (Annual Payment for all 3 operator is approx. 3200 Cr).	<p>Given the huge burden of taxes and regulatory levies on telecom operators and considering the fragile state of their finances, special benefit should be provided to telecom operators in GST by way of exemption on regulatory payments of LF, SUC and spectrum assigned under auction.</p> <p>Alternatively, payment of GST under reverse charge, which otherwise is required to be paid in cash, be allowed to be paid from the balance of the Input Tax Credit.</p>
2.	Refund of accumulated balance in Input Tax Credit	GST regulations may be amended, or notification be issued to allow refund of Rs 35,000 Cr of accumulated ITC to those Companies who are in an investment cycle and unable to recover ITC (similar to an inverted duty structure).
3.	Ease of doing business – Reduce multiplicity of Compliance, Audits, Investigations and Litigations for Large Pan India service providers	<p><i>Facilitate Centralized Assessment, Audit Procedure for large tax taxpayer units (LTU) having a pan India turnover of more than Rs 500 Cr AND presence in more than 12 States/Union Territories.</i></p> <p><i>This would limit this facility to less than 1% of all Corporates. This will ensure ease of doing business with no corresponding loss of revenue to the Government.</i></p>
4.	Ambiguity on eligibility to avail ITC available on account of Telecommunication Towers and Shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TSPs should be eligible to claim credit on telecommunication towers. Explanation to Section 17 should be amended to include telecom towers within the definition of ‘plant and machinery’. <p>It was recommended to remove ambiguity which is likely to result in widespread litigation and blockage of much needed working capital. The exclusion of telecom towers from the definition of ‘plant and machinery’ in section 17(5) should be removed.</p>
5.	Clarify that input tax credit is available on critical telecom equipment installed on telecom towers	We recommend for intervention in getting the issue deliberated in the GST Council for issuance of an appropriate clarification to ensure that the telecom operators do not suffer on account of few authorities taking a flawed interpretation. Denial of such credits and that too right from the inception of GST will cast a huge financial burden on this critical sector which is playing a very important role in development of basic infrastructure of providing digital connectivity across the country at very affordable tariffs which are the lowest in the world.

Sr. No	Issue	Recommendation
6.	No tax on self-supply of service Provide Zero Rated	All Intra-operator transactions between distinct persons (with different GSTINs belonging to one legal entity) of telecom operators should be notified under Rule 32(7) of the CGST Rules, 2017s

38. **Custom Duty:**

Sr. No	Issue	Recommendation
1.	Post supreme court judgment in September 2019 amendment of a bill of entry is permitted without a limitation of time: this is not being implement at the jurisdiction level.	It is recommended that Section 27 of Customs Act, 1962 should be appropriately amended (either by way of clarification, Issuance of notification or otherwise) to eliminate the requirement of Appeal procedure in self-assessment refund matters with retrospective effect.
2.	Change in procedure for claiming benefits under Free Trade Agreement.	It is recommended that law may be amended to allow the preferential treatment exporting document as per the Treaty provisions and Certificate of Origin and documents on part of the importer to be made less onerous to make it more reasonable.
3.	Rate of Customs Duties	Representations were made for exemption from the levy of BCD should be granted on the Telecom equipment under CTH 8517 which has been increased w.e.f. October 11, 2018.

39. **Roadmap for Use of Radio Frequency Spectrum in India during next 10 years:**

COAI appreciated DoT's efforts in initiating consultation on a Roadmap for Spectrum. Preparation of a roadmap is a long-term exercise and needs continuous engagement with all stakeholders. COAI submitted to DoT on January 15, 2021 that robust policy on spectrum is necessary for its efficient management and allocation. A clear Roadmap is required for both short- and long-term including Quantum of Spectrum and timelines for availability of the bands. Periodic availability of backhaul spectrum has to be made part of the Roadmap for Backhaul spectrum. Detailed suggestions were made regarding long term approach for use of Spectrum.

For identifying future spectrum requirements, it is important that traffic forecast/ capacity requirements are worked out through continuous studies. This study will give the requirements for India and the spectrum in various bands for capacity and coverage. A

traffic estimates study be undertaken similar to the approach taken by ITU in preparing the Doc <https://www.itu.int/pub/R-REP-M.2290/en>.

40. **TRAI Consultation Paper on Roadmap to promote Broadband Connectivity and Enhanced Broadband Speed:**

Consultation Paper "Roadmap to promote Broadband Connectivity and Enhanced Broadband Speed" was issued on August 20, 2020 by the Authority. COAI submitted response in November 2020. Highlights of the submission made to TRAI are as follows:

- a. Existing broadband definition should be based on the type of services being accessed by the Consumers, Comparable with Global norms, ensure optimal Utilization of existing Infrastructure and have priority towards availability and affordability.
- b. Development of an online centralized portal for monitoring electronic RoW applications and clearances for all the

States/government land owning authorities in the Country based on Gazetted RoW Rules of Nov 2016 will help to achieve & maintain the objective of NBM and formation of SBCs, by making all the states to adopt uniformity and standardized process as per the Gazetted Rules for submission and tracking of RoW applications and in the APIs and data structure.

- c. Central PSUs, NHAI, MoD, Railways, Port authorities, Airports and similar entities should also follow the Gazetted RoW Rules 2016.
- d. Review of Indian Telegraph Right of Way (RoW) Rules 2016: There is a requirement to review the RoW Rules of 2016 to include provisions for Street Furniture, aerial fiber cables, incentives/ support from the states to cover the uncovered villages and implementation related guidelines to states etc.
- e. National Building Code for in-building fibre layout be adopted by new housing societies and link it to issue of completion certificate.
- f. Policy Support Requirements for Small Cell Deployments for Broadband Network by Cell Densification Using Existing Street Furniture.
- g. While TSPs have acquired access spectrum through auction and trading to meet the increasing voice and data usage demand, the additional microwave spectrum has not been allocated in the last few years. Thus, requisite backhaul spectrum to be provided to TSPs depending on amount of access spectrum the operator has. However, the number of current carriers should not be reduced.

The fibre in the air i.e., E&V band to be auctioned at the earliest.

41. **SACFA Related Issues:** COAI submitted various representations to the Government regarding review of Existing Business Processes for SACFA Clearances for Ease of Doing Business and Industry Inputs on improvement of Saral Sanchar Portal for SACFA Clearances. We appreciated the efforts of Government and their focus towards

ease of doing business and we thanked the DoT and WPC for making Saral Sanchar functional for submission of SACFA Applications, which has helped in easing the process to promote efficiency in faster clearances and transparent working.

Some suggested changes are as below:

- a. One SACFA clearance for a site/tower for multi band / multi technology deployment by a TSP for providing wireless services.
- b. No mandate to obtain SACFA clearances for LPBTs. for faster deployment to meet end objective of Digital India.
- c. Review the current registration fee and its structure and the same may be rationalized at the earliest.

COAI also requested DoT/WPC to continue the procedural reforms to make WPC / SACFA approvals simpler & faster to meet the future challenges and expectations.

42. **Test Procedure For Measurement Of Electromagnetic Fields From Base Station Antenna:** Test Procedure for Measurement of Electromagnetic Field Strength from Base station Antennas (TEC/TP/EMF/001/04.JUN 2018) was undertaken for review by TEC based on various references received for the same. The draft document along with the modifications proposed and comments on specific clauses were shared with all stakeholders of Sub-DCC. The comments/inputs on the draft document were submitted and discussed in the consultation meetings (DCC-SC and DCC). Final Test Procedure is awaited to be issued by TEC and AS-Cell, DoT.
43. **Defining of Restricted Area Sites in NEP portal:** DoT issued Clarification regarding submission of Self-Certificates for Restricted Area Sites vide File No. 17-07/2020-DGT/2 dated 13th August 2020.

The Clarification point 2 i) mentioned that a letter from the competent authority to be attached with Self-Certificates stating that taking images of the location was not permitted.

We brought to the notice of DoT that it was not possible to get explanatory letter(s) on the

restrictions applied for not taking photographs from the authorities of such restricted areas (armed forces, petroleum refineries, Airport, CM residence, Courts, Ordinance Factories, Prisons etc). These Government or Private Authorities are not obligated to provide such letters or undertakings to the TSPs. COAI submitted and highlighted the same through the email response (dated 28th July 2020) to queries raised by DoT on defining of Restricted Area Sites in Portal vide email dated 17th July 2020.

DoT agreed and recommended as below:

- a. TEC may relax the requirement of submission of Site photograph along-with EMF self-certificate in case of restricted area sites. However, no relaxation other than Site Photograph may be permitted.
- b. While submitting EMF self-certificate through NEP portal, TSP may choose 'Restricted Area Site' Category with further drop-down of Restricted Area Site Type amongst one of the following: -
 - i) Armed forces Area
 - ii) Petroleum Refineries
 - iii) Airport
 - iv) CM residence
 - v) Courts
 - vi) Ordinance factories
 - vii) Prisons
 - viii) Any other with remarks column where TSP may fill the information of 'Restricted Area Site'

44. **Delicensing of Spectrum in E & V bands:** COAI wrote to Ministry of Communication, Finance, Cabinet Secretary, Niti Ayog and all DCC members on the important issue of assignment of E-Band (71-76 GHz with 81-86 GHz) & V-Band (57 - 64 GHz) to the Access Service Providers (ASPs).

The V-band and E-band are extremely valuable resources for India for 5G as well as backhaul for mobile broadband, which will enable millions of homes to access high speed broadband for entertainment, education, and work.

As India aspires to take a leadership position in 5G, the existing and long-term availability of spectrum that can be used for carrier grade services for 1.3 billion Indians will be crucial. The administrative allocation of licenses for V/E-bands by few countries was mainly in the pre-5G era. However, as explained above, the situation has now changed leading to addition of this spectrum for 5G services by both ITU and APT.

Thus, any decision of de-licensing or administrative allocation of high commercial value spectrum in E & V-Bands:

- i) Is technically not feasible.
- ii) Will be contrary to the prevailing policy framework of spectrum allocation.
- iii) Contrary to the principle promulgated by the Hon'ble Supreme Court
- iv) Contempt of Hon'ble Supreme Court
- v) Create non level playing field for Licensed Telecom Operators,
- vi) Will not guarantee the efficient use of E & V-Bands
- vii) Shall cause huge Revenue loss to the exchequer.

We requested to allocate spectrum in E & V bands through transparent auction to Access Service Providers.

45. **Spectrum Bands identified for IMT 2020/ 5G applications:** COAI submitted to DoT that in order to realise the potential benefits, country should plan accordingly for the timely availability of sufficient and affordable spectrum for mobile services, considering that these are key factors for most of the critical and high bandwidth applications. Therefore, it is important that key spectrum bands are not only identified but also earmarked and protected for 5G.

NDCP-2018 has recognised mid-band spectrum in the 3 GHz to 43 GHz range as central to India's 5G strategy, availability of spectrum for 5G in <1 GHz, 1-6 GHz and >6 GHz bands and has called for identifying new bands for access and backhaul segments for timely deployment of 5G networks. These bands are also identified for 5G applications in the 5G High Level Forum

Committee Report which was made after comprehensive discussions and detailed analysis and evaluation of every stakeholder submissions.

It was also highlighted to DoT that to make India 5G ready at the earliest, Government needs to allocate at least the following spectrum per operator:

- 3.5GHz: at least 100MHz per operator
- Mm Wave (26, 28, 37 GHz): at least 400MHz per operator
- Sub-GHz (600MHz & 700MHz): at least 2x20MHz per operator
- E-Band: at least 2x1GHz per operator
- V-Band: at least 1GHz per operator

46. **Earmarking Spectrum in mmWave Bands for IMT 2020 (5G):** COAI had highlighted to DoT the importance of 26 GHz (24.25-27.5 GHz) band and 28 GHz band which are prime bands for 5G in India.

We requested DoT for an early referral to TRAI for earmarking and including these mmWave bands for auction along with other 5G bands (namely 3.5 GHz) as this is an imperative requirement as recommended by 5G HLF and also to achieve targets identified in NDCP-2018.

47. **Sale of Illegal Repeaters and Boosters on e-Commerce Websites/Platforms and Outlets:** We made submissions regarding sale of Illegal Repeaters and Boosters on e-Commerce Websites/Platforms which causes Spectrum interference to the Telecom Service Providers network signals.

COAI appreciated the efforts of the officers at Wireless Monitoring Organisation, Department of Telecom (DoT), for the support of relevant authorities to conduct inspection drive on several locations across Delhi, Agra, Mathura, and Mumbai to take down illegal mobile signal repeaters installed by individuals. Earlier WPC had issued circular to curb such sales and issued notices to some platforms as well as retailers.

However, we also requested DoT to kindly intervene in the matter and take strict measures to ensure complete ban of sale of these illegal

repeaters and boosters on all the e-commerce websites/ platforms with these e-commerce companies through an appropriate notification to them.

48. **Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Essential Requirements (ERs) for MTCTE:** COAI requested DoT/TEC to incorporate the following suggestions:

- i. Voltage Dips and Interrupts on DC PSU per IEC 61000-4-29: Revisit such ERs either to completely remove or add the note” this standard is applicable to low voltage DC power ports of equipment supplied by external DC networks. Also, this test is applicable only in equipment in which the battery backup is not permanently connected to the distribution system.”
- ii. Conducted and Radiated Emission – “Class-B should be applicable only to the equipment intended primarily for use in domestic (residential & commercial) environment.”
- iii. Immunity to surges-TEC EMI/EMC standard EN/IEC 61000-4-5- “Regarding DC ports, only those DC ports shall be tested that are intended to directly connect to outdoor lines.”
- iv. Modes for Testing: Define the test configuration modes to remove the ambiguity during testing and review and approval by the approving agency.
- v. PTP PMP Microwave Fixed Radio Systems (ER No. TEC56422005): Consider in removing this ER as this safety standard is not applicable to PTP Microwave System.
- vi. Local Testing for EMI/EMC for Radio Telecom Products: Take up this issue with local labs and confirm regarding their readiness, so that our OEM members may start preliminary testing.
- vii. Protocol Implementation Conformance Statement (PICS Test): Remove this ER as facility is not available to conduct the tests mentioned under PICS test.

49. **Communication Security Certification (ComSec) Scheme:** COAI submitted letter on January 19, 2021 regarding Challenges and

Concerns in respect of Security Requirements for telecom products under MTCTE faced by OEM Members.

COAI requested DoT to incorporate suggestions with respect to implementation of ComSeC scheme to reduce burden of Multiple Testing and Certifications on the sector and requested that there should be a single window scheme for testing and certification including for security in DoT.

50. **MTCTE Phase 2 Certificates put on Abeyance:**

COAI made a submission to DoT on February 12, 2021 to lift the abeyance on certificates on PON family and SDH products dispensed to our members for MTCTE Phase 2 at the earliest to enable recommencement of the deployment of OFC based broadband networks.

51. **MTCTE Test Sampling Equipment to be brought under ATA Carnet Scheme:**

COAI made submission to DoT on March 5, 2021 on the matter. COAI requested DoT that test sample equipment be allowed under the testing equipment category (ATA Carnet) and to work in collaboration with Ministry of Finance to issue relevant notification / circular for imports of telecommunication equipment by Registered Importer with TEC for mandatory testing without payment of Basic Customs Duty (BCD) & Social Welfare Surcharge (SWS). Such equipment can be restricted to 5 (five) units per model.

COAI suggested that post testing, not only majority of equipment will not be in a condition to be reutilize after undergoing such EMC/EMI stress / drop tests and must be discarded / destructed, but also it will not be possible to deploy them for commercial purpose.

52. **Amendment on guidelines issued to Import prototype wireless devices working within unlicensed bands and restricted by DGFT:**

COAI letter was submitted to DoT on February 26, 2021 on the matter. COAI highlighted that earlier such prototypes were allowed based on self-declaration basis by WPC as it was not a licensed product. But according to the new DGFT policy, such prototypes were categorised as a licensed product and cannot be imported without a license from DGFT.

DoT was requested to work cohesively with DGFT to allow test equipment based on self-declaration in WPC format for regular import license will be taken.

53. **Exemption of IMEI Certificate from ICDR portal for Devices imported for Manufacturing, Testing or Research and Development (R&D) purpose:**

COAI made submission to DoT on March 22, 2021 on the matter. COAI wrote to DoT seeking exemption on IMEI certificate requirement from ICDR portal to import mobile phones into India for manufacturing, testing, research, and development purposes for Manufacturing and R&D entities.

It was highlighted that, prior to the development of ICDR portal such phones were imported on self-declaration-based process, hence needs to be continued with this well-established process. This Self-declaration process can also be automated to allow the industry to make online submission of undertaking on ICDR portal, which will further help the government to track the exemptions sought and imports done.

54. **Vacant bench and pending applications at Authority of Advance Rulings (AAR) office and associated issues faced by the Industry:**

COAI made submission to Department of Revenue on the matter. We requested kind support on following recommendations:

- a) Industry representation seeking remedy to have the AAR bench constituted in 30 days.
- b) Hearing and order issuance of the pending orders in 90 days as per the mandate from the Customs Act, 1962.
- c) Industry representation seeking a new mechanism of online / fast track rulings to improve the speed of the advance rulings from statutory 90 days period to 60 days as this will further aid the nation's objective to improve the EODB ranking.

55. **Industry inputs on PP-PMI Policy for telecom sector:**

COAI made submission to DoT on the matter. We requested to consider following factors that could severely impact the vibrant telecom & networking industry in the absence of a balanced procurement policy:

- a) Conduct a scientific study to ascertain India's manufacturing prowess in telecom & networking and Uniqueness of telecom products - to ensure a competitive market as well as no large implications on users.
- b) A catalogue of products and local manufacturers should be developed - which will act like a master reference for evaluating the PP (PMI) eligibility and be made available in the public domain.
- c) We submitted that pragmatic value addition norms at the minimum should be considered i.e. - the current formula of arriving at value addition by subtracting imported components from selling price, should be factored in for services and warranty rendered by local partners besides providing weightage for the R&D investments in India.
- d) As global companies bring multibillion dollars of investments into India, who manufactures products which are highly complex and low volume, with a large customization, so to encourage component eco-system in India. Government may consider Innovative credit schemes for example - giving PMA credits for companies sourcing components from India for global factories.
56. **Location Based Services:** COAI made various submissions to DoT across the year on the concerns regarding handset operating systems impacting LBS reporting accuracy. In this regard, COAI requested DoT for its urgent intervention to:
- a) Define the mandatory requirements (Features, Functionalities, security related guidelines etc.) for Handset OEMs/ Chipset Manufacturers/ OS providers for India market and define the validation agency for the same.
- b) Issue clear guidelines to Chipset/OS providers and handset/Device OEMs. For eg: LPP, A-GPS/ OTDoA /ECID should be first supported by chipset vendors, then, OS must permit fetching the information in control plane on request from server (as per security guidelines) and further, the same must be supported by OEM software. Any broken link in this chain will result in failures.
- c) Define immediate & clear plan of implementation of for existing devices in market and forthcoming launches by OS providers, handset and device OEMs.
57. **Implementation of Single Number based Emergency Response Support System:** COAI submitted a letter to DoT on the subject as TSPs were required to provide connectivity at single location of state Emergency Response Centre (ERC)/PSAP. However, as TSPs were moving forward with their rollout of PRI lines to establish connectivity with PSAP location, they were observing frequent change in PSAP address as CDAC has started adding more PSAP locations. Hence, following request was made to DoT in the submission:
- a) Issue suitable instructions to CDAC/State Agencies to reconsider such new addition of locations of PSAP.
- b) Instruct PSAP service providers to desist from demand of PRI cards of PSAP at every location to TSPs.
- c) Instruct state agencies to approve RoW applications pending at their end and not to levy any RoW charges for the work concerning PRI connectivity to PSAP.
58. **Issues Related to Revised Process for Use of 'Aadhaar' Authentication Service for Issuance of Mobile Connections:** COAI made various submissions to DoT and UIDAI on the revised process for use of Aadhaar e-KYC process shared by UIDAI to reduce authentication charges for e-KYC to cover the costs of administration to around 70-80 paise at maximum per subscriber activation. Further, we urged UIDAI to institutionalize one time KYC for PoS/ PoS agents.
- In view of the high e-KYC authentication charges of INR 20 per transaction, COAI submitted that the industry would like to unequivocally convey its reservations towards adoption of Aadhaar based e-KYC process for issuance of mobile connections and requested an opportunity for further discussions with DoT & UIDAI for further reduction of authentication charges for issuance of mobile connections. A meeting was held with

UIDAI, TSPs and COAI to discuss authentication charges recently and submission has been made to DoT post the meeting as well.

59. **Security Audits conducted by DoT:** COAI made submissions to DoT on the matter. As per the discussion in the meeting with DoT, all the TSPs had unanimously requested that most of the security policies and controls are managed by all TSPs at Central level and thus, it is not reasonable to audit these centralized policies/controls at each LSA. Hence, we requested that a final framework/SOP be published at an earliest to clearly bifurcate the points which are to be conducted at Central Level and LSA Level and henceforth, comprehensive audits be conducted at central level audit only to minimize overlap.
60. **Support Required from DoT During the Current Situation in the Country:** COAI made submission to DoT seeking abeyance/ suspension for next few months on certain activities including fields visits like various audits. Also, in order to maintain and practice the need of social distancing in time to come, COAI also requested DoT to issue guidelines on Self-KYC, OTP based conversion from prepaid to postpaid and vice versa and Digital-KYC based SIM Replacement/ Exchange.
61. **Issues observed in CDRs due to Handset behaviour:** COAI made submission to DoT stating that due to the intrinsic behaviour of the handset, TSP networks are unable to capture the IMEI during the VoLTE call procedure because of no information being made available by handset. On the other hand, the IMEIs are being captured during the data session (data CDR) and being populated as per the requirement. This anomalous behaviour in the handsets is causing the situation of no IMEI/null IMEI in the CDRs. It has also been observed that this behaviour is depicted by such handsets sporadically across different handset models of various handset providers. Apart from some instances, these handsets are sending the details in the correct format and IMEIs are being captured in the CDRs. While, the said situation of null IMEI is very miniscule, however, COAI submitted that rectifying the same is not in the operator's control, but, the corrective steps need to be taken by the respective handset providers.
62. **Traffic from International Internet Gateway routers – Requirements of Authorized agencies:** COAI made submission to the DoT seeking intervention of DoT to ensure that the legitimate needs of the agencies are met without impacting the performance of the networks and putting any additional financial burden on the operators. In the interim, COAI also requested DoT to please take it up with CERT-In to not take any coercive steps to get the Rules of Engagement (RoE) agreement signed by TSPs that allows collection of un-sampled traffic flows (1:1) metadata from these International Internet Gateway routers, and to wait until such time that DoT has formulated a considered opinion on the same in consultation with all stakeholders.
63. **Request to bring the Carriage Distribution (DTH & Cable) Platform under the Ministry of Communications:** COAI made submission to the Cabinet Secretary requesting that the Government create sharper focus and orderly separation between content and carriage by:
 - a) Assigning the DoT to be a single Department for all licensing requirement across the access platforms ☒ Mobile, Broadband, Cable and DTH.
 - b) Retaining Ministry of Information & Broadcasting as an umbrella body for all content regulation, management and appropriate censorship across all mediums with these platforms being covered under orderly rules to carry the same content.
64. **Use of e-EPIC/Digital Voter ID card for issuance of SIMs:** COAI submitted a letter to DoT on the subject that the e-EPIC is just like an e-Aadhaar and can only be printed and is not editable. Also, this e-EPIC or Digital Voter ID card hosts a secured QR code with image and demographics like serial number, part number, etc. and the authenticity of the card can also be established by scanning the QR code and checking with the information available on the card. Hence, COAI requested DoT to allow the use of EPIC or Digital Voter ID for the issuance of SIMs.
65. **Police Verification of PoS Agents in J&K, Assam and NESA:** COAI made various submissions to DoT as the process of registering agent/PoS

takes significant amount of time which directly impedes customer experience. COAI requested DoT to do the following in the letters:

- a) Review the requirement of Police verification of each POS agent that is currently taking an inordinate amount of time and to do away with this requirement.

OR

- b) Keeping in mind the time taken by the local Police as in Para 3 above, kindly allow PoS agent to be on-boarded after a reasonable 15 days of request being made to Police/ TERM for verification.

66. **Requirement of Storage of Paper Based CAFs:** COAI made various submissions requesting DoT to kindly modify the time period for storage of CAF/documents and make it only for a period of 1 year after the subscriber is deactivated from the TSP network unless directed otherwise by the Licensor/LEAs/ Courts. Further, the paper CAFs should be allowed to be stored only in scanned form.

DoT also sought response on some queries based on the COAI submission on the subject. COAI submitted detailed point-wise Response to DoT's queries in respect of storage of paper based CAFs of active and disconnected subscribers.

67. **Submission of Subscriber Database in uniform format across all LSAs:** COAI made submission to DoT as a response to DoT circular stating that the TSP members have carefully examined the requirements mentioned in the circular & associated annexures for standardizing the subscriber database format and shared some observations for DoT's consideration and advice before any changes are initiated.

In this regard, COAI submitted that making the desired changes is a complex activity which would need IT intervention for appropriate formatting of database to ensure integrity of information. Also, COAI requested DoT to allow 90 days for implementation starting from the date of clarification to ensure accurate data submission which is the most critical input for success of the project.

68. **Self – KYC Process:** COAI proposed self-KYC process on subscriber verification for issuing SIM to new mobile subscribers & SIM exchange using online facilities. COAI submitted that such an alternate digital process is the need of the hour as there is uncertainty regarding the period of the social distancing restrictions being imposed in the country. COAI requested DoT to kindly issue suitable guidelines to allow the industry to use this alternate process in addition to the current process. In this regard, DoT issued draft on Proof of Concept (PoC) of Self-KYC (S-KYC) as an alternate process for issuing of mobile connections to Individual and Outstation category customers. However, the industry awaits the final guidelines to be issued by DoT.

69. **Implementation of New CDR Format:** COAI submitted letter to DoT based on the email communication received by TSPs vide which DoT requested the TSPs to ensure provision of CDRs in 22 fields only without any further delay and compliance to be submitted to DoT.

COAI reiterated the earlier submissions made to the DoT wherein technical concerns around the inclusion of certain fields in the CDR format were highlighted. COAI has requested DoT to issue the amended format for CDRs and provide the timeline of at least 8 to 10 weeks to the TSPs for implementation post the issuance of amended format.

70. **Dissemination of Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) messages through SMS based system for Disaster Management:** COAI made a submission to DoT on the dissemination of CAP to the general public through SMSs in case of disaster/emergency situation mentioning that our members have been receiving various CAP dissemination requests, mostly related to COVID-19 to create general awareness. These requests cover large part of an LSA and are been sent multiple times in a day. COAI requested DoT that the following steps need to be taken in order to reduce the timeline significantly under CAP dissemination through SMS:

- a) C-DoT to send the polygon with relatively smaller area size.

- b) Polygons to be sent after an interval of at least 1 hour.
- c) Define critical and non-critical messages and allow sending of non-critical messages in non-busy hours.
- d) Reduce the length of the messages so that it can be covered under 1 SMS.
- e) Removal of duplicity check at CAP platform before triggering the SMSs.





Legal Updates 2020-21



1. COAI Petition challenging Penalty imposed for Missing North direction and missing measurement value at ground level – TDSAT

Background: COAI filed a Petition challenging the demand notices issued by DoT, whereby DoT has wrongly levied penalty on alleged grounds that “North” direction was not marked in the site layout and calculation of Equivalent Isotropic Radiated Power (Eirp) and broadband measurement on the ground for Roof Top Towers (RTT) were not calculated, which is unfair, unjust, unreasonable, unwarranted, arbitrary, violative of the terms of the License Agreement / contract between the Cellular Operators and the Government and otherwise illegal.

Key Takeaway/s: Applications / Petitions challenging the imposition of demand for missing north mark by J&K and Kolkata LSA, despite interim order dated August 13, 2019, were filed by COAI.

On September 28, 2020, TDSAT granted interim relief and stayed the impugned demand notices

issued by DoT in J&K LSA. On October 15, 2020, TDSAT granted interim relief and stayed the impugned demand notice issued by DoT in Kolkata LSA in another similar Petition.

2. COAI Appeal in MCD Tower Matter – Delhi High Court

Background: COAI had filed a writ challenging MCD orders and praying inter alia quashing of MCD Office order dated November 20, 2003, Circular dated February 07, 2008 and office order dated April 08, 2010 as these office orders were lacking in competence, ultra vires the DMC Act, unfair, unjust, unreasonable, arbitrary, without power and jurisdiction, unconstitutional and violated Petitioners’ rights under Article 14, 19(1) (g) and 21 of the Constitution of India.

On January 30, 2017, a mediation settlement agreement with MCD was signed by COAI, Aircel, Airtel, Idea, Vodafone, RJio, Indus, ATC Viom, GTL Infra and Tower Vision.

Key Takeaway/s: On December 24, 2020, Hon'ble Court granted time to MCD to file reply to Pole Site application and directed MCD not to take any coercive steps against the TSPs/IPs.

On April 14, 2021, Hon'ble Court held the following:

- i. No coercive steps shall be taken till the next date of hearing.
- ii. The TSPs/IPs who have made payment under the settlement shall be granted

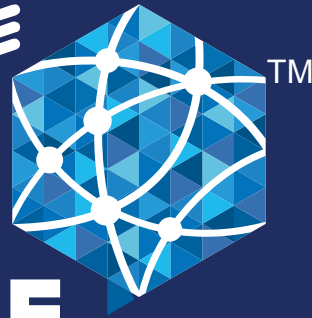
permission for erection and construction of towers in accordance with the judgment of the learned Single Judge and the settlement agreement.

- iii. The authorized representatives of COAI and the three MCDs are directed to meet in a bid to amicably resolve the issues. The date, time and venue of the meeting shall be intimated by the Municipal Corporations to the COAI Counsel within a week.





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INDIA MOBILE CONGRESS 8-10 Dec, 2020

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INDIA MOBILE CONGRESS 2020



Department of Telecommunications (DoT) along with Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) organized for the fourth year India Mobile Congress 2020 (IMC 2020). Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, this edition of India Mobile Congress was an entirely virtual event, scheduled from 08th December through 10th December 2020, with the theme "Inclusive Innovation - Smart, Secure, Sustainable". It was the largest such event in the country. IMC 2020 had 27,213 visitors, national and international delegates, over 170 partners & exhibitors, over 30 start-ups and more than 196 speakers. The conference had 31 keynote sessions, 18 panel discussions and 12 fireside chats, 72 hours of content and more than 1.16 billion media impressions spanning three days.

The event was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi and attended by various esteemed government and industry leaders. These included the Hon'ble Minister for Communication, Electronics & Technology and Law & Justice, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, the Secretary (T) & Chairman DDC, Department of Telecommunications, Shri Anshu Prakash, Chairman Bharti Enterprises, Mr. Sunil Bharti Mittal and the Chairman Reliance Industries Limited, Mr. Mukesh Ambani, along with the who's who of the telecom, technology, media and allied sectors.



IMC 2020 NUMBERS



03 Days



72 Hours Semi Live Content



12 VIP Inaugural Sessions



18 Panel Sessions



31 Keynote Sessions



12 Fireside Chats



07 Exhibit Halls



30 Premium Sponsor Booths



170 Partner & Exhibitor Booths



6725 Resources Downloaded



11,306 Session Views



70
'Make in India'
booths



30
'5G Startups'
booths



40
'Canada Pavilion'
booths



196
Speakers

IMC 2020 Unmatched Social Media Stats



Total

1.16 Bn

Impressions

89.32

Sentiment Score

DATE RANGE
12/06/2020 - 12/13/2020

48,65,93,866

Potential Reach



1970800

Video Views



TOTAL POSTS

21060

The biggest digital technology platform in South Asia with unmatched reach and popularity



IMC 2020 has a gathering of brightest minds in telecom sector

IMC has all the key players who have played a critical role in the recent past and are expected to lead India towards a prosperous future

Shri Narendra Modi

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

IMC 2020 saw the participation of telecom giants, OEMs, system integrators, technology experts, industry analysts, government officials, young professionals, start-ups, and students. The focus area for IMC 2020 was 5G and emerging technologies with more than 72 hours of pseudo-live content streamed over three days.

Additionally, India Mobile Congress has been involved with various stakeholders to organize events supporting telecom industry in different ways. For instance, the telecom sector also celebrated a memorable milestone of 25 Years of Mobile Telephony in India with a special webinar series “Desh Ki Digital Udaan” which was organised by COAI and India Mobile Congress with Department of Telecommunications (DoT), through ‘IMC Studio’. The event witnessed key messages from the Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, and the Hon’ble Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Law & Justice, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

The webinar series hosted five episodes with different themes, which saw participation from various industry stalwarts including Dr. RS Sharma, IAS, Chairman, TRAI; Shri Anshu Prakash, Secretary (T) & Chairman, DCC; Mr. Sunil Bharti Mittal, Chairman, Bharti Airtel; Mr. Mukesh Ambani, Chairman, Reliance Industries Ltd; Mr. BK Modi, Chairman, Spice Group and Lt Gen Dr. SP Kochhar, Director General, COAI. The online event also witnessed participation from government representatives and industry leaders from Ericsson, Nokia India, STL, Ciena Communications, Ribbon Communications, Vodafone Idea Limited, Bharti Airtel Limited, Reliance Jio Infocomm, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), and MediaTek Inc.



Department of Telecommunications presents



Hackathon



Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

“

Hackathons provide great platforms for youngsters to test their ideas and innovative skills. They can leverage state of the art technology for the solution of global problems.

”

In addition, The Department of Telecommunication (DoT) launched a 5G Hackathon on 21st February 2020 in collaboration with MeitY, NITI Aayog, Startup India and India Mobile Congress to identify and promote 5G applications. The main objective of the initiative is to build a 5G ecosystem that can help developers to convert their ideas into workable products and services. Winners will be declared in various phases and the prize will be given to them from a pool of INR 2.5 crore to help scale and implement their ideas.

Furthermore, India Mobile Congress also partnered with the Telecom Equipment and Services Export Promotion Council (TEPC) for two virtual events India - Telecom 2021 and India Africa ICT Expo 2020.



Media Advocacy and Stakeholder Outreach Desk

COAI writes to FM, seeks relief measures

COAI had written letter to the government seeking relief measures such as reduction in licence fee and spectrum usage charges (SUC) as well as access to low-cost funding. The association said in the last few days, the load on telecom networks has seen an exponential surge due to the Covid-19 outbreak and people working from home.

“Telecom service providers (TSPs) have invested and will continue to invest significantly in the telecom infrastructure and it has enabled to meet the increased demand for telecom services,” COAI director general Rajan Mathews said in a letter dated March 28 to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

COAI writes to FM, seeks relief measures

FE BUREAU
New Delhi, April 2

THE CELLULAR OPERATORS Association of India (COAI) has written another letter to the government seeking relief measures such as reduction in licence fee and spectrum usage charges (SUC) as well as access to low-cost funding.

The association said in the last few days, the load on telecom networks has seen an exponential surge due to the Covid-19 outbreak and people working from home.

“Telecom service providers (TSPs) have invested and will continue to invest significantly in the telecom infrastructure and it has enabled to meet the increased demand for telecom services,” COAI director general Rajan Mathews said in a letter dated March 28 to finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

The COAI said given the current situation and adverse impact on the economy, the government should rationalise high burden of regulatory levies on the telcos.

“The effective rate of the SUC should be reduced by 3% for all TSPs and licence fee contribution should immediately be brought down from 8% to

It has sought reduction in licence fee and spectrum usage charges as well as access to low-cost funding

3%,” it said.

The association also said to provide liquidity and low-cost funding, refund of unutilised input tax credit should be made, or soft loan at MCLR should be given to companies using the GST input credit as collateral.

It also sought exemption of levy of the GST on licence fee, SUC and payment of spectrum acquired in auctions. “Exempt service tax on amount of licence fee/SUC payable by telecom operators in compliance with the Supreme Court order,” the letter said.

The COAI said there has been a severe disruptive impact on the global supply chain, demand and supply elements and most importantly, on cash flows of companies due to slowing down economic activities. “This downturn will have an impact on all payments including those of employees, interest, loan repayments and taxes.”

TELCOS SEEK RELIEF MEASURES AMID COVID-19

MUMBAI: While telecom service providers have been grouped under essential services to keep businesses running during the nationwide lockdown, the Cellular operators Association of India (COAI) has written to the Finance Minister to offset the sector’s financial concerns. The industry body that represents private telecom operators Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Reliance Jio has requested for refund of unutilised input tax credits, low cost funding, rationalisation of levies and reduction of spectrum usage charges (SUC) among others. According to various reports, the telecom companies differ from government numbers on the increase in internet usage and subsequent pressure on telecom resources. While government bodies noted up to 10% increase in usage, COAI has given an estimate of 20% increase.

REPORTERS AND AGENCIES

Telco body COAI dials FM for relief

New Delhi: Industry body COAI has written to FM Nirmala Sitharaman seeking urgent relief measures, including lowering of levies with immediate effect, for the telecom operators on account of the “adverse impact” of Covid-19. The industry association said that despite the outbreak and spread of the coronavirus pandemic across the country, operators are playing a “critical role” in addressing the challenges. **AGENCIES**

Extend min roll-out timeline: COAI

COAI has urged the telecom department to consider extending the timelines for minimum roll-out obligation by at least 6 to 9 months, saying it would be difficult to complete many of the “complex” activities due to the lockdown triggered by the

coronavirus pandemic. COAI said it would be unfair if the telecom operators were to suffer from any of stipulated penalties “for a situation that can at best be described as Force Majeure”.

'Extend Time for Minimum Rollout Obligation'

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The Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) said it would be unfair if the telecom operators were to suffer from any of stipulated penalties “for a situation that can at best be described as force majeure”.

The entire process of MRO entails multiple critical and complex activities. — PTI

Extend min roll-out timeline: COAI

■ PTI

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Telecom plea: Industry body COAI has written to finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman seeking urgent relief measures, including lowering of levies with immediate effect, for the telecom operators on account of the “adverse impact” of Covid-19. The industry association said that despite the outbreak and spread of the coronavirus pandemic across the country, operators are playing a “critical role” in addressing the challenges faced by individuals, corporates, governance services, emergency and utility services.

PTI

COAI urges DoT to extend timelines for min roll-out obligation by 6-9 months

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Industry body COAI has urged the telecom department to consider extending the timelines for minimum roll-out obligation by at least 6 to 9 months, saying it would be difficult to complete many of the “complex” activities due to the lockdown triggered by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) said it would be unfair if the telecom operators were to suffer from any of stipulated penalties “for a situation that can at best be described as Force Majeure”.

“We request the DoT to kindly consider extending the

currently specified timelines for minimum roll-out obligation by a period of at least 6 to 9 months so that relief is afforded to all forthcoming minimum roll-out obligation timelines and not just to those due for testing at this present point in time,” COAI said in a recent letter to Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

Noting that the DoT circulars suspending the registration and testing related to roll-out obligation of telcos (initially till March 31, April 30 and subsequently till May 31), the association said the industry had, however, requested for relaxation and extension for meeting all forthcoming minimum roll-out obligation

(MRO) timelines by further 6-9 months as it would be difficult to complete many activities leading to registration and testing, due to the lockdown.

The entire process of MRO entails multiple critical and complex activities.

The fulfilment of MRO testing itself requires going through multiple steps where time is of essence, including site acquisition and approvals required from various local bodies, arranging maps, which requires interaction with state Government/municipal authorities, coordinating with various partners for drive-ins/self-testing, preparation of exhaustive test reports, and submission of reports.

Telecom plea

■ NEW DELHI: Industry body COAI has urged the telecom department to consider extending the timelines for the minimum roll-out obligation by at least 6 to 9 months as it would be difficult to complete all the work due to the lockdown. PTI

Expect a supportive policy framework, ecosystem to bring in new tech: COAI DG

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) has requested for several policy interventions to address financial distress faced by the telecom sector.

Expect a supportive policy to bring in new tech: COAI

NEW DELHI: Telecom industry body COAI expects supportive policy framework and ecosystem to bring in new technologies in India as it looks towards journey for the next 25 years in the country, a top official of the body said.

COAI's newly-appointed Director General S P Kochhar told PTI starting from scratch 25 years ago the Indian telecom sector is the second largest growing market globally after China with a huge subscriber base of over 120 crore serving them with the cheapest tariffs in the world.

"Ever since the first mobile call, made on July 31, 1995, telecom service providers have always come through in difficult situations, keeping the citizens connected, the nation's economy

buzzing, governments functioning and the networks running.

"The sector has seen phenomenal growth and has been the economic backbone of the nation by contributing 6.5 per cent to the GDP in 2019," Kochhar said.

He said 5G is going to be a game changer when India begins its journey for the next 25 years in the telecom sector and will need supportive policies for its growth.

"5G is the next generation of mobile networks, as we expect a supportive policy framework and ecosystem to bring in the new technology. The contribution of telecom sector in GDP will remain a critical factor as usage increases and more subscribers are added," Kochhar said. PTI

Expect a supportive policy framework, says COAI DG

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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Ever since the first mobile call, made on July 31, 1995, telecom service providers have always come through in difficult situations.

Keeping the citizens connected, the nation's economy buzzing, governments functioning and the networks running.

"Government should rationalise the high burden of the regulatory levies on the telecom service providers (TSP) with immediate effect including GST," Kochhar said. At present, the government levies 18 per cent goods and services tax on telecom services.

Supportive framework needed for telcos: COAI

New Delhi: Telecom industry body COAI expects supportive policy framework and ecosystem to bring in new technologies in India as it looks towards journey for the next 25 years in the country, newly-appointed Director General S P Kochhar said, reported PTI. "5G is the next generation of mobile networks, as we expect a supportive policy framework and ecosystem to bring in the new technology," he said.

Seek service tax waiver on AGR dues

COAI approached the finance ministry seeking waiver of service tax on adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues to be paid to the government. The telecom operators have been paying service tax and then GST under

the reverse charge mechanism (RCM) on licence fees (LF) and spectrum usage charges (SUC) made to the Department of Telecom for the period starting April 1, 2016.

Telcos seek service tax waiver on AGR dues

NEW DELHI: Telecom operators' body COAI has approached the finance ministry seeking waiver of service tax on adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues to be paid to the government.

The telecom operators have been paying service tax and then GST under the reverse charge mechanism (RCM) on licence fees (LF) and spectrum usage charges (SUC) made to the Department of Telecom for the period starting April 1, 2016.

The industry paid around Rs 6,600 crore between April 2016 to March 2017 in cash to discharge its output service tax liability, the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) said in a letter to the ministry

dated July 17.

"Telecom Sector should not be burdened with Service tax liability due to incremental LF and SUC payable pursuant to the SC decision, as it is going through challenging times," COAI Director General S P Kochhar said in the letter.

When contacted, COAI did not comment on the matter.

The industry body's members include Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea.

The Supreme Court had in October last year upheld the government's position on including revenue from non-telecommunication businesses for calculating the annual AGR of telecom companies, a share

of which is paid as licence and spectrum fees to the exchequer.

Kochhar said total service tax payable under RCM on licence fees and spectrum usage charges, even after considering incremental demand due to the apex court decision, would have been less than Rs 2,000 crore.

COAI said had the industry known about the incremental demand of LF and SUC, it would have considered the same for computing the amount to be paid under RCM.

Consequently, the output service tax liability paid in cash at that time would have reduced by a corresponding amount.

"The industry is a front runner in contributing to the Indian

economy through payment of fees, taxes, generating employment etc. This will be evident from the fact that in the last 5 years, telecom operators have cumulatively paid service tax and GST of approximately Rs 2 lakh crore," Kochhar said.

According to COAI, in addition to the taxes, telecom players have paid regulatory fees in the form of LF and SUC of approximately Rs 87,000 crore in the last five years.

COAI said the telecom sector employs almost 22 lakh people directly and 18 lakh indirectly. It has the second largest private sector investment in infrastructure at about Rs 11 lakh crore. PII

Waive service tax on AGR dues: telcos

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI**

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Telcos still hopeful of reduction in spectrum price, doing regular follow-up on NDCP: COAI

COAI said that the industry is waiting to hear from the DoT on the definition of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) which is must for the sustainability of the sector.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) has given its recommendation on AGR in 2015 based on which the government should collect its share of revenue from the service providers but the DoT is yet to take any decision on the same.

Telcos still hopeful of reduction in spectrum price, doing regular follow-up on NDCP: COAI

TELECOM OPERATORS ARE still hopeful of reduction in base price of spectrum for the next auction round even though the Digital Communications Commission (DCC) has cleared cumulative floor price of ₹5.22 lakh crore for the airwaves to be sold, industry body COAI has said.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) — whose members include Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea, etc — is doing regular follow-up on promises made by the government in National Digital Communications Policy (NDCP), 2018,

COAI Director General SP Kochhar told *PTI*. Industry players have been requesting the government to reduce levies and fees as promised under the policy two years back and also rationalise spectrum prices.

The DCC, the apex decision making body of the Department of Telecom (DoT), in May had approved the spectrum auction plan subject to the Union Cabinet approval. The DoT, however, is yet to come up with any notification for the next round of auction in which airwaves worth ₹5.22 lakh crore are to be sold. —PTI

Telcos still hopeful of reduction in spectrum price, doing regular follow-up on NDCP: COAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 12 OCTOBER

Telecom operators are still hopeful of reduction in the base price of spectrum for the next auction round even though the Digital Communications Commission (DCC) has cleared cumulative floor price of Rs 5.22 lakh crore for the airwaves to be sold, industry body COAI has said.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) -- whose members include Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea, etc -- is doing a regular follow-up on promises made by the government in National Digital Communications Policy (NDCP), 2018, COAI Director General SP Kochhar told *PTI*. Industry players have been requesting the government to reduce levies and fees as promised under the policy two years back and

also rationalise spectrum prices. The DCC, the apex decision-making body of the Department of Telecom (DoT), in May had approved the spectrum auction plan subject to the Union Cabinet approval. The DoT, however, is yet to come up with any notification for the next round of auction in which airwaves worth Rs 5.22 lakh crore are to be sold. "A lot of water has flown since then (DCC meeting). A lot of logical representation, arguments have been submitted to the government. Government has not said that we reject your argument. The government has not come out with any notice of the price," Kochhar said.

He said in response to a query with regard to industry position on spectrum auction as the DCC has not heeded to request of telcos on reducing price. Mukesh Ambani-led Jio in a letter

dated September 28 to Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash said that any delay in the auction of the unutilised spectrum will lead to serious issues around quality of mobile services in terms of call drops etc and also result in "revenue loss to the government". According to Jio, spectrum worth Rs 3.92 lakh crore is lying unused with the DoT for auction. Other players like Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea have divergent views on the timing of the spectrum auction.

Kochhar said companies will take decisions on participation in an auction based on their requirements and differences will continue on some issues.

"At the same time, telecom operators are on the same page over strategic issues. We have written to the DoT that E and V band spectrum should be auctioned and not allocated," he said.

IMC 2020

Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the inaugural address at the virtual India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2020 on Tuesday. The fourth edition of the three-day

telecom industry event held online for the first time due to the coronavirus pandemic.

इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस में स्टार्टअप पर नजर रहेगी

नई दिल्ली | एजेसी

इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस (आईएमसी) का आयोजन वर्चुअल तरीके से 8-10 दिसंबर तक किया जाएगा। यह दूरसंचार क्षेत्र का सरकार के समर्थन वाला कार्यक्रम है।

सेल्युलर ऑपरेटर्स एसोसिएशन ऑफ इंडिया के महानिदेशक एस पी कोचर ने सोमवार को इस आयोजन की तिथियों की घोषणा करते हुए कहस कि

इसमें भारी भागीदारी की उम्मीद है। दूरसंचार सचिव अंशु प्रकाश ने कहा कि इस बात को लेकर सबाल उठाए जा रहे थे कि क्या यह कार्यक्रम 2020 में आयोजित हो पाएगा।

उन्होंने कहा कि चुनौतियों के साथ यह कार्यक्रम अवसर भी प्रदान करता है। प्रकाश ने कहा कि दूरसंचार विभाग आईएमसी-2020 सफल बनाने के लिए पूरा समर्थन उपलब्ध कराएगा।

वर्चुअल होगी मोबाइल कांग्रेस

नई दिल्ली @ पत्रिका चौथी इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस के चौथे संस्करण का आयोजन इस वर्ष आठ से दस दिसंबर तक आयोजन किया जाएगा, लेकिन कोरोना के कारण यह वर्चुअल आयोजित होगी। संचार, शिक्षा एवं इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स राज्य मंत्री संजय धोत्रे ने आज यहां यह घोषणा करते हुए कहा कि इस कांग्रेस में 50 से अधिक कंपनियां, तीन हजार से अधिक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी और 15 हजार से अधिक विजिटर शामिल होंगे।

इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस 8-10 दिसंबर को

जम्मू काशमिर, नई दिल्ली : कोविड-19 ने दूरसंचार सेक्टर को लेकर सरकार की योजनाओं को काफी प्रभावित किया है। लेकिन अब सब कुछ तेजी से सामान्य होने की तरफ बढ़ रहा है। इस क्रम में सबसे पहले अक्टू दिसंबर से तीन दिनों का इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस (आईएमसी) आयोजित किया जा रहा है। इस बार का आयोजन वर्चुअल तरीके से होगा। हालांकि सरकार का मानना है कि वैश्विक निवेशकों व मोबाइल से जुड़े सभी तरह की कंपनियों के बीच भारतीय संचार क्षेत्र की संभावनाओं को सही परिदृश्य में रखने में कोई परेशानी नहीं होगी।

आईएमसी का आयोजन दूरसंचार विभाग और देश की दिग्गज मोबाइल कंपनियों के सहयोग से किया जाता है। दूरसंचार विभाग के सचिव अंशु प्रकाश ने बताया कि मौजूदा चुनौतीपूर्ण माहौल में दुनियाभर के सामने इसका प्रदर्शन अहम जरूरी है कि मोबाइल सेक्टर में कितनी संभावनाएं हैं। वह दक्षिण एशिया का सबसे बड़ा मोबाइल मेला है। सरकार की कोशिश है कि इसमें ज्यादा से ज्यादा कंपनियां हिस्सा लें।

इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस के चौथे संस्करण की घोषणा

नई दिल्ली । केंद्रीयसंचार, शिक्षा और इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स एवं सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी राज्यमंत्री श्री संजय धोत्रे ने इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस (आईएमसी) 2020 के चौथे संस्करण की आज घोषणा की जिसका आयोजन 8-10 दिसंबरतक होगा। मौजूदा कोरोना महामारी को देखते हुए इस साल यह आयोजन वर्चुअल होगा। इस प्रतिष्ठित कांग्रेस को दूरसंचार विभाग और सेलुलर ऑपरेटर्स एसोसिएशन ऑफ इंडिया (सीओएआई) द्वारा मिलकर किया जा रहा है जिसमें 50 से अधिक देश, 110 से अधिक वैश्विक वक्ता, स्टार्टअप्स और 150000 से अधिक आगंतुकों के शामिल होने की संभावना है। इस साल के आईएमसी की थीम होगी 'समावेशी नवप्रवर्तन-स्मार्ट, सुरक्षित, टिकाऊ'। आईएमसी 2020 का लक्ष्य आत्मनिर्भर भारत को बढ़ावा देने के प्रधानमंत्री के विजन के अनुरूप होना, अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षेत्रीय सहयोग बढ़ाना, श्रेष्ठ भारत, सनातन भारत (ऑप्टिल फाइबर से करीब छह लाख गांवों को जोड़कर डिजिटल समावेश और टिकाऊ विकास को प्रोत्साहित करना) को प्रेरित करना, समय भारत, सक्षम भारत (उद्यमशीलता एवं नवप्रवर्तन), विदेशी और स्थानीय निवेश को बढ़ावा देना, दूरसंचार और उभरती प्रौद्योगिकी के क्षेत्रों में आरएंडडी को प्रोत्साहन और सहयोगात्मक नियामकीय एवं नीतिगत रूपरेखा बनाने में सहयोग है। इस साल एरिक्सन इंडिया मोबाइल कांग्रेस की प्रधान साझेदार होगी और अन्य प्रमुख साझेदारों में डेल टेक्नोलॉजीज, रिबन कम्युनिकेशंस और रेड हट शामिल हैं।

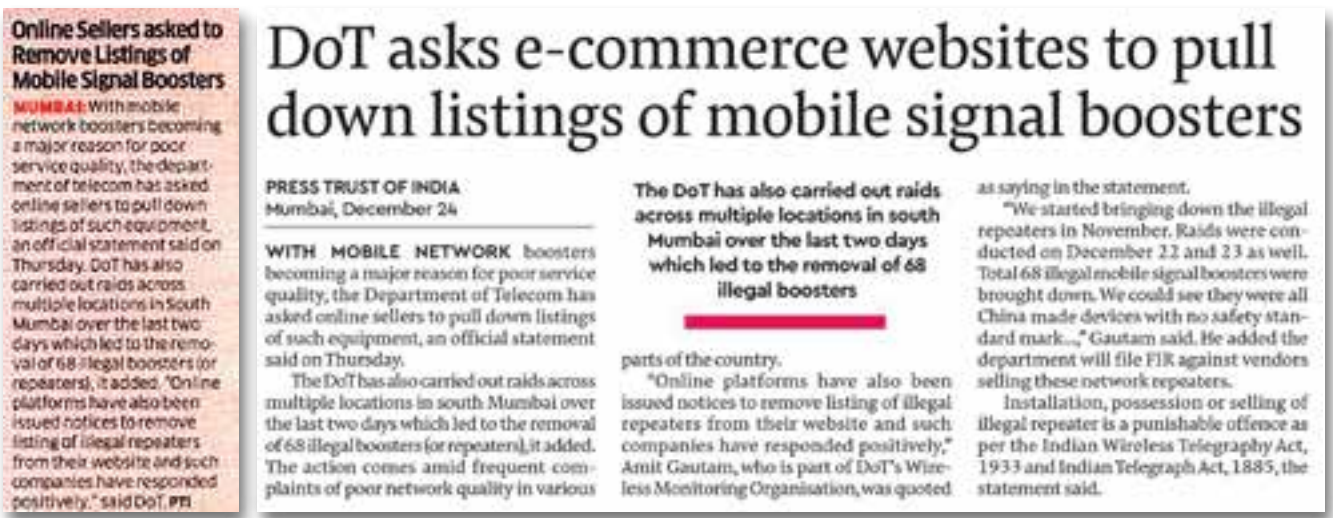
Illegal Mobile Boosters

To curb the use of mobile boosters that wreak havoc on mobile networks and impact the experience for customers, Wireless Monitoring Organization, Department of Telecom (DoT), with the support of COAI and mobile operators, has conducted inspection drives in South Mumbai

The drive was conducted on December 22 and 23 across residential and commercial establishments

in LT Marg, Masjid Bunder, Bhoiwada, Zaveri Bazar, Kolsa Street, Nagdevi Street, Abdul Rahman Steet, Narayan Dhuru Street and Sarang Street.

The release said 68 illegal repeaters were removed, wire joints were cut down giving feed to 50 illegal antennas and 29 notices were given to remove the identified ones with immediate effect.



COAI condemns attack on telecom towers by Farmers

The COAI in a statement said that it respects people's right to protest on any issue, but sabotaging the telecom network infrastructure and disrupting telecom services as a form of protest by anyone is strongly condemned.

"Telecom services are the lifeline of lakhs of customers, including students taking online classes,

professionals working from home, people going in for online health consultations in the tough time of COVID 19. The disruption of telecom services, which are considered "essential" under various enactments, is causing immense inconvenience to the common man for whom the mobile services are so essential," said Lt. Gen Dr. SP Kochhar, DG, COAI.

सख्ती के आदेश के बाद भी कोई एफआईआर नहीं

मोबाइल टावरों में तोड़फोड़ से डेढ़ करोड़ उपभोक्ता प्रभावित

हर्ष कुमार सलारिया

चंडीगढ़। पंजाब में किसानों की ओर से रिलेक्स जियो के मोबाइल टावरों में तोड़फोड़ से करीब डेढ़ करोड़ उपभोक्ता प्रभावित हुए हैं। मुख्यमंत्री कैप्टन अमरिंदर सिंह की चेतावनी के बाद मंगलवार को राज्य पुलिस हरकत में आई और टावरों की सुरक्षा बढ़ाने के साथ ही राज्य में संबंधित कंपनियों के मूलांशिकों की अपनी देखरेख में मोबाइल टावरों को दुरुस्त करवाने में सहयोग दिया जा रहा है।

टाई के अनुसार पंजाब में 3.9 करोड़ मोबाइल का इस्तेमाल करने वाले लोग हैं। इनमें रिलेक्स जियो के अनुसार करीब डेढ़ करोड़ लोग उनके नेटवर्क सेवा का इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं। कंपनी की ओर से कहा गया है कि सुबे में 1561 मोबाइल टावरों पर सेवाएं बाधित हुई हैं, जिनमें से 440 टावरों की मरम्मत की जा चुकी है। पंजाब के सभी 22 जिलों में कुल 21306 मोबाइल टावर लगे हैं।

केंद्र सरकार के तीन कृषि कानूनों के खिलाफ सोशरल किसानों ने लोगों से कारपोरेट घरानों के सहान के बहिष्कार के तहत जियो नेटवर्क का उपयोग न करने का आह्वान किया था। इसके तुरंत बाद ही राज्य में किसानों व अन्य लोगों ने



21306 मोबाइल टावर हैं पंजाब में

जियो के मोबाइल टावरों की बिजली बाधित करने के अलावा कई स्थानों पर टावरों में तोड़फोड़ करके संचार सेवा बाधित करना शुरू कर दिया था। शनिवार को सामान्य अपील के बाद मुख्यमंत्री ने सोमवार को कड़ी चेतावनी जारी करते हुए राज्य पुलिस को निर्देश दिए थे कि मोबाइल टावरों में तोड़फोड़ करने वालों से सख्ती से निपटा जाए। हालांकि राज्य पुलिस ने अब तक टावरों को नुकसान पहुंचाए जाने के मामलों में एक भी एफआईआर दर्ज नहीं की है। वहीं मंगलवार को राज्य पुलिस ने टावरों पर संचार सेवा बहाल कराने पर ज्यादा ध्यान दिया।

दूरसंचार नेटवर्क बाधित करना निंदनीय : कोछड़

संजुल आर्पोटर पुलिस आर्क डीईआ के महानिदेशक लीफ्टनेंट जनरल डा. एसपी कोछड़ ने एक बयान जारी कर मोबाइल टावरों को नुकसान न पहुंचाने की अपील की है। अपने बयान में उन्होंने कहा कि हम किसी भी मुद्दे पर लोगों के विरोध के अतिक्रम का सम्मान करते हैं, लेकिन किसी भी व्यक्ति द्वारा विरोध के नाम पर दूरसंचार नेटवर्क और सेवाओं के सुनिश्चिती हाथ में तोड़फोड़ या बाधित करने के कदमों की निंदा करते हैं।

टावरों को नुकसान न पहुंचाएं सामान खरीदना बंद करें : चट्टनी

रेवाड़ी। कृषि कानूनों के खिलाफ दिल्ली-जयपुर हाईवे पर 17 दिन से धरने पर बैठे कई राज्यों किसानों के बीच मंगलवार को भारतीय किसान युनियन के नेता सुरजाम सिंह चट्टनी भी पहुंचे। वहां पर किसानों को संबोधित करते हुए चट्टनी ने कहा कि किसान टावरों को नुकसान पहुंचाने की बजाय अंगानी, अहमती व खाना रामदेन की कंपनियों में बने सहान का बहिष्कार करें। उन्होंने कहा कि यह लड़ाई किसानों की अपनी फीटों को बचाने की है, ऐसे में सभी को साथ मिलकर आंदोलन को चलाया जाए। बात दें कि हाईवे पर संयुक्त किसान मोर्चा के नेतृत्व में आंदोलन चल रहा है। वृत्त

COAI condemns attack on Rjio towers by protesters in Punjab

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, December 29

Telecom industry body Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) on Tuesday has condemned the vandalism of Reliance Jio's towers and equipment in Punjab during the farmers protest.

"While we respect people's right to protest on any issue, sabotaging the telecom network infrastructure and disrupting telecom services as a form of protest by anyone is strongly condemned. Telecom services are the lifeline of lakhs of customers, including students taking online classes, professionals working from home, people going in for on-line health consultations in the tough time of Covid-19," SP



Farmers burn Reliance Jio posters as they protest against the Centre's agril-reform laws AFP

Kochhar, Director General, COAI, said in a statement.

The disruption of telecom services, which are considered "essential" under various enactments, is causing immense inconvenience to the common man for whom the mobile services are so essential, he said.

Over the past few days there have been reports of telecom services disruption due to damage caused by protesters.

The State government has also confirmed that 1,561 mobile towers had been affected over the past few days and 146 of them were impacted since Monday due to disruption of power supply to 32 towers.

Jio meanwhile, has accused Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea of misconduct by urging the protesters to port their networks. There are reports of Airtel and Vodafone Idea setting up kiosks at the protest venue to help port customers to their networks from Jio.

Both Airtel and Vodafone Idea have said Jio's allegations are baseless.

Budget 2021-22

COAI highlighted the unutilised input tax credits of Rs 35,000 crore and proposed changes in the GST law.

“The industry recommends suitable amendments in the GST law may be made to allow a refund of unutilised ITC. Alternatively, an unutilised amount

may be applied to other government liabilities of operators,” said Kochhar.

COAI also sought exemption from payment of service tax for the period of April 2016 to June 2017.

Telcos seek levy cuts, exemption of import duty on gear in budget

India's telecom operators have urged the finance ministry to reduce levies such as licence and spectrum usage charge in the Union Budget 2021.

The telcos have recommended that the import of certain telecom equipment crucial for building infrastructure for 4G and 5G wireless services should not attract any basic customs duty.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), which made a representation to the finance ministry in December, said a 20% import duty on telecom gear such as antennas, optical transport equipment, networks, IP routers, long-term evolution (LTE) products, and switches, hurts the cost-effectiveness of telcos.

Bhawanee Jaiswal, COAI, said that the industry has also demanded that licence fee be reduced to 1% from the current 3% and said the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) should be abolished. It also urged the government to lower spectrum usage charge to 2% for all telcos.

“This is disrupting the cost-effectiveness of the telcos and impacting the financials of the sector negatively. As a consequence, the levy of DCI (basic customs duty) should be granted on telecom equipment,” said S.P. Kochhar, director general, COAI.

Customs duty on the import of 4G/5G equipment and network-related products should be “good quality” equipment manufactured judiciously at affordable prices, Kochhar said. At present, India imports 80% of its telecom equipment.

The rollout of 5G services will require massive laying of optical fibre and a dense network of mobile towers, which could lead to a expenditure of thousands of crores for telcos operators, and import duty and other levies by the government

Telcos Want Lower Licence Fee, Less Tax and Refund of Input Tax Credits

Industry faces major upcoming expenses on infra upgradation, says COAI's SP Kochhar

Guarding the Turf
COAI says relaxation of certain levies is critical for a sector that contributes ₹58,000 crore annually to the exchequer and has invested ₹11.24 lakh crore till date.

Currently, telcos pay 3% of their AGI to the govt.

COAI proposed that the fund be abolished and liable for the effective rate of 5%, be reduced by 3% for the three telcos.

With a 4G spectrum auction set for March, which is done with a deficit of over ₹3.5 lakh crore, may not bid aggressively for airwaves.

The association recommended removal of GST on various fees and charges and payment for spectrum acquired in an auction since it is “compounding the operational challenges.” Instead, keeping in line with international practices, the payment of regulatory levies by telcos operators should be exempted from GST.

COAI highlighted the unutilised input tax credits of ₹35,000 crore and proposed changes in the GST law.

“The industry recommends suitable amendments in the GST law may be made to allow a refund of unutilised ITC. Alternatively, an unutilised amount may be applied to other government liabilities of operators,” said Kochhar.

Our Bureau

Mumbai: Mobile phone service providers have sought a reduction in licence fees, removal of goods and services tax on those fees, spectrum acquisition charges and spectrum usage charges, besides a refund of input tax credits along with tax and custom duty exemptions in the upcoming budget.

“In this challenging time, the industry also faces major upcoming expenses on infrastructure upgradation like spectrum auction, 5G introduction, network expansion and fiberisation, which is very critical for providing future communication services,” SP Kochhar, director general of the Cellular Operators Association of India, said in a statement detailing the sector's budget recommendations.

According to the association, which represents Bharti Airtel, Jio, and Vodafone Idea (VI), the relaxation of certain levies is critical for a sector that contributes ₹58,000 crore annually to the government exchequer and has invested ₹11.24 lakh crore till date.

“The industry recommends that the licence fee is brought down to 1% from 3% at the earliest to cover administrative costs by the DoT government,” Kochhar said, adding that the rise in India is “way above” the world average.

Currently, telcos pay 3% of their adjusted gross revenue to the government, of which 1% goes towards the Universal Service Obligation Fund, COAI proposed that the fund be abolished and called for the effective rate of spectrum usage charges be reduced by 3% for the three telcos.

Industry Webinars:

Joint session with GSMA & COAI, organized a webinar to help the country tackle critical issues surrounding Spectrum. The Webinar deliberated on important issues such as spectrum availability, spectrum

auction and the importance of spectrum pricing. What roles spectrum slicing, trading and availability of free spectrum to manage the networks during emergencies were also discuss



25 years of Mobility

Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and COAI, through IMC Studio, organized a special online event “Desh Ki Digital Udaan” On the occasion, Hon’ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, congratulated and appreciated the contribution by Department of Telecommunications, telecom companies and COAI in the telecom sector via a written letter. The

letter mentions, Digital Mobility as an enabler of multiple other kinds of mobility – social, economic and informational. The companies active in the ecosystem of digital connectivity have done yeoman service to the poor and underprivileged by ensuring connectivity reaches them.

एक कॉल से हुई थी देश में मोबाइल क्रांति की शुरुआत
भा... की शुरुआत का 25 साल पहले 31 जुलाई 1995 को यह पहला मोबाइल फोन का कॉल हुआ था। इस घड़ी का साने ने भारत दुनिया के पहले सार्वजनिक मोबाइल फोन का संचार शुरू किया। और यह सुझाव ने भारत दुनिया के पहले सार्वजनिक मोबाइल फोन का संचार शुरू किया। और यह सुझाव ने भारत दुनिया के पहले सार्वजनिक मोबाइल फोन का संचार शुरू किया।

जयंती बसु ने सुझावन को दे करती मोबाइल फोन क्रांति
31 जुलाई, 1995 को जयंती बसु ने उन दिनों के केंद्रीय संचार मंत्री सुखदेव खोसले को मोबाइल फोन का सुझाव दिया। जयंती बसु, पूर्व मुख्यमंत्री, बंगाल

सुखदेव खोसले, केंद्रीय संचार मंत्री
1995 के बाद से देश मोबाइल फोन का संचार शुरू किया। आज देश में करीब 40 करोड़ मोबाइल फोन उपलब्ध हैं। यह मोबाइल फोन की शुरुआत से आज के संचार को सुलभ करने में मदद करता है। इस अवसर पर भारतीय सेलुलर आपरेटर्स संघ द्वारा 'देश की डिजिटल उड़ान' नाम से वर्चुअल कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने दूरसंचार कंपनी और सीओएआई द्वारा योगदान के लिए लिखित पत्र के माध्यम से उन्हें बधाई दी। ऑनलाइन कार्यक्रम में मंत्री रविशंकर प्रसाद मौजूद रहे। इस दौरान डॉ. आरएस शर्मा, डीसीसी अंशु प्रकाश, भारती एयरटेल अध्यक्ष सुनील भारती मित्तल, रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज लिमिटेड अध्यक्ष मुकेश अंबानी और सीओएआई के महानिदेशक लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल डॉ. एसपी कोचर ने भी बातें रहीं।

'देश की डिजिटल उड़ान' में टेलिकॉम इंडस्ट्री ने याद किया
नई दिल्ली। 25 वर्ष पहले आज ही के दिन देश में पहली मेड इन इंडिया मोबाइल कॉल की गई थी। इस अवसर पर भारतीय सेलुलर आपरेटर्स संघ द्वारा 'देश की डिजिटल उड़ान' नाम से वर्चुअल कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने दूरसंचार कंपनी और सीओएआई द्वारा योगदान के लिए लिखित पत्र के माध्यम से उन्हें बधाई दी। ऑनलाइन कार्यक्रम में मंत्री रविशंकर प्रसाद मौजूद रहे। इस दौरान डॉ. आरएस शर्मा, डीसीसी अंशु प्रकाश, भारती एयरटेल अध्यक्ष सुनील भारती मित्तल, रिलायंस इंडस्ट्रीज लिमिटेड अध्यक्ष मुकेश अंबानी और सीओएआई के महानिदेशक लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल डॉ. एसपी कोचर ने भी बातें रहीं।

टेलिकॉम इंडस्ट्री ने पूरे किए 25 साल
नई दिल्ली। 25 वर्ष पहले शुक्रवार के दिन देश में पहली मेड इन इंडिया मोबाइल कॉल की गई थी। इस अवसर पर भारतीय सेलुलर आपरेटर्स संघ सीओएआई द्वारा देश की डिजिटल उड़ान नाम से एक वर्चुअल कार्यक्रम का आयोजन किया। इस कार्यक्रम के मौके पर प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने टेलीकॉम सेक्टर में दूरसंचार विभाग, दूरसंचार कंपनी और सीओएआई द्वारा योगदान के लिए लिखित पत्र के माध्यम से उन्हें बधाई दी। पत्र में उल्लेख किया गया है कि डिजिटल मोबिलिटी कई अन्य प्रकार के काम भी कर रही है, जिसमें सामाजिक, आर्थिक और सूचनात्मक कार्य शामिल हैं। डिजिटल कनेक्टिविटी के इकोसिस्टम में सक्रिय कंपनियों ने गरीबों की सेवा की है और यह कोशिश की है कि उन तक कनेक्टिविटी पहुंच सके। इस मौके पर संचार मंत्री रविशंकर प्रसाद मौजूद रहे। कार्यक्रम में आईएस अध्यक्ष, ट्राई डॉ आरएस शर्मा, सुनील मित्तल, मुकेश अंबानी, सीओएआई के महानिदेशक लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल डॉ एसपी कोचर ने भी अपनी बातें रखीं।

COAI-GSA-Qualcomm Webinar

COAI, GSA and Qualcomm India Private Limited jointly organized a webinar to discuss the various aspects of device ecosystem for 5G spectrum bands in terms of deployment, advancement, readiness and challenges faced globally as well as in India. The webinar deliberated on issues such as the availability

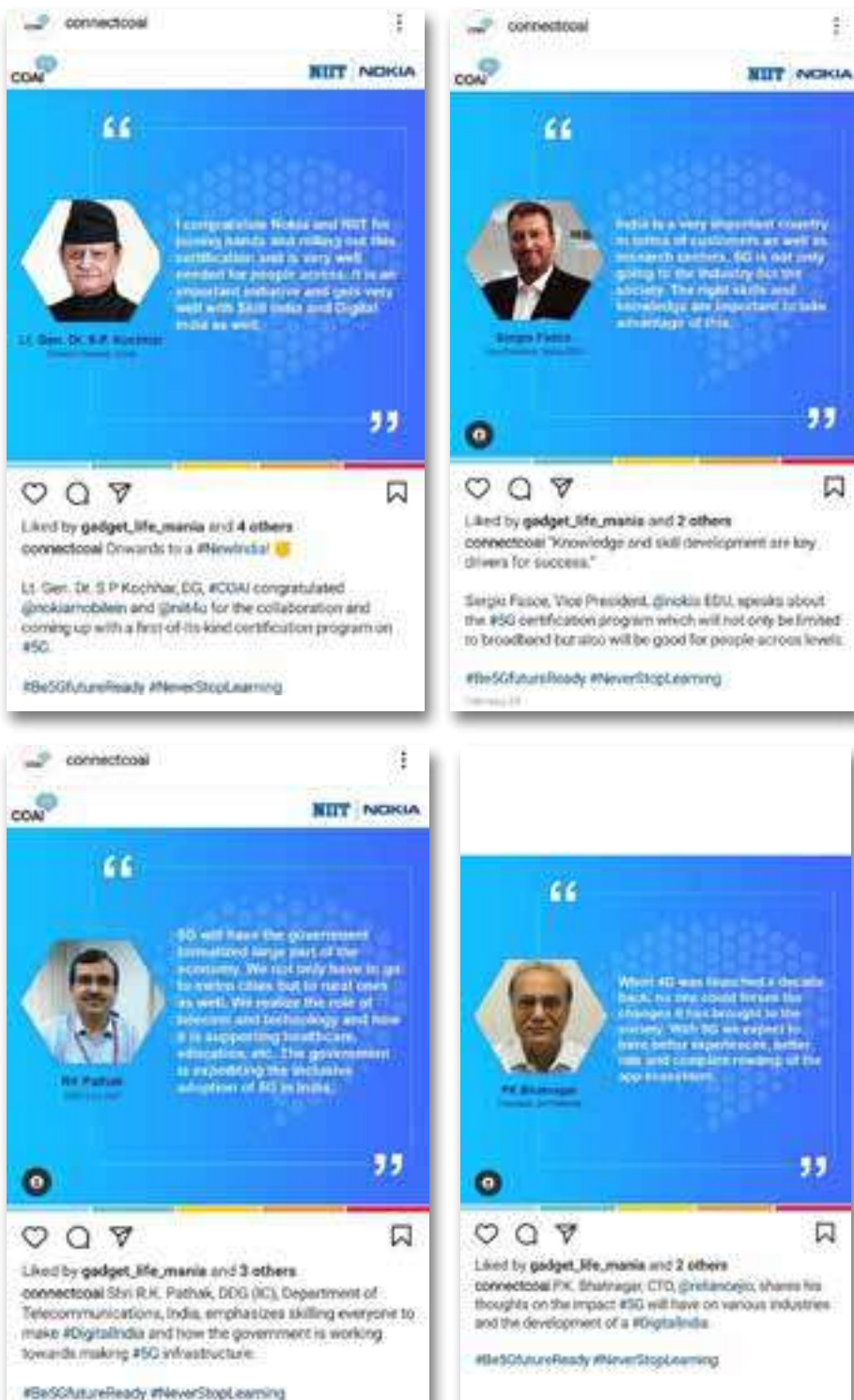
of 5G devices and components, the critical role played by device makers and suppliers to accelerate 5G adoption in the country, as well as the issues surrounding security and standardization of these devices.



Nokia and NIIT launch first-of-its-kind 5G certification program over a webinar with COAI to train and certify industry professionals in India

COAI (Cellular Operators Association of India) together with Nokia and NIIT Ltd. The Keynote address was delivered by Mr. R.K. Pathak, DDG (IC), DoT. Senior Industry leaders who shared their views during the launch included – Mr. U K Srivastava, Sr. DDG, NTIPRIT; Mr. P K Bhatnagar, President, Jio Platforms; Mr. Sandeep Gupta, EVP, Network Strategy, Airtel; Lt. Gen Dr. S P Kochhar, Director General, COAI;

Mr. Vikram Tiwathia, Deputy Director General, COAI; Mr. Sergio Fasce, Vice President, NokiaEDU; Ms Alison Burns, Head of Customer & Partner Learning, Nokia; Mr. Sanjay Malik, SVP & Head of India Market, Nokia; Mr Amit Aggarwal, CEO, IT-ITES Sector Skills Council, Nasscom; Mr. Sapnesh Lalla, CEO, NIIT Ltd. and Mr. Uday Singh, Chief Strategy Officer, NIIT Ltd.



Authorities act against Illegal Mobile Network Boosters in New Delhi

We have been able to find 48 illegal mobile signal boosters in Connaught Place. People are generally not aware that these devices are illegal. They immediately surrendered when we informed them.

In fact, people have been very cooperative during the drive,” International Monitoring Station Engineer-in-charge Devendra Kumar Rai told PTI.



DoT clamps down on illegal mobile network boosters

NEW DELHI: The Department of Telecom's wireless monitoring organisation on Friday conducted raids in South and South-West Delhi to bring down illegal network boosters which interfere with mobile services and result in call drops and other quality issues, an official said. The Wireless Monitoring Organisation (WMO) has also issued notice to e-commerce companies warning against the sale of network boosters without valid permit, the official said. "We got an assignment from WMO regarding unauthorised mobile boosters in East of Kailash, Sant Nagar and South West. We have identified some unauthorised mobile boosters but people are not aware that installing them without a valid permit is illegal. We made them aware of it," G K Reddy, engineer-in-charge, international monitoring station, Wireless Monitoring Organisation, told PTI. Telecom operators have complained to the Department of Telecom that illegal mobile boosters are interfering with their network which is leading to frequent calls drops, hampering call connection etc. According to industry sources, there were reports of around 3,000 illegal boosters working in Delhi.

DoT pulls down illegal mobile network boosters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, October 16

South-West Delhi to bring down illegal network boosters which interfere with mobile services and result in call-drops and other quality issues, an official said.

The WMO has also issued notice to e-commerce companies warning against the sale of network boosters without valid permit, the official said.



PLI Scheme

We are confident the government will have designed the PLI scheme to ensure demand for telecom gear in the local market is enhanced and that exports

too are suitably supported and incentivised,” said S P Kochhar, director general of Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)

Incentives to help India emerge as a mfg hub

Industry lauds PLI

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, NOV. 11

Industry firms that with the Rs 1.45 lakh crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, the government has rightly identified the high potential sectors to make the country a manufacturing hub.

“The PLI announcement of Rs 1,45,000 crore across 10 key sectors till 2025 is a strategic policy intervention. Coming at the back of Covid-19 and the general slowdown, this is expected to boost production, lead to job creation and ultimately be a major kicker for GDP and taxes,” said Sangita Reddy, president, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industries (Ficci). “The government has carefully chosen the sectors for the PLI scheme. There could be more sectors that would receive the PLI benefits in the future.”

“The new PLI policy is transformational and timely and will facilitate India becoming a global manufacturing hub. The policy is strategically targeted and will go a long way to boost production, make Indian goods competitive and expand exports as part of global value chains,” said Uday Kotak, president, Confederation of India Industry (CII).

As for textiles, the PLI scheme for man-made fibres will support the much-needed shift in Indian textile exports that will help it cater to the global market, skewed towards man-made fibre products. In the case of technical textiles, the National Technical Textile

The government has carefully chosen the sectors for the PLI scheme. There could be more sectors that would receive the PLI benefits in the future.
Sangita Reddy, president, Ficci

The industry was eagerly awaiting for this scheme to increase its competitiveness and take the growth of the sector to the next level.
Kenichi Ayukawa, president, SIAM

This will pave the way for the pharma industry to move into newer areas. The industry had set a target to achieve \$130 billion exports by 2030 from the current \$42 billion. Now we can aspire for it.
Dinesh Dua, chairman, Pharmexcil

Mission aims at more than tripling production to \$90 billion in four years and achieving export revenues of Rs 20,000 crore in two years and the PLI scheme will help the industry achieve the target. The government has announced a Rs 10,683 crore PLI scheme for the textile sector for the next five years.

“The future of Indian textile exports is MNF as the share of MNF-based textiles and clothing products would account for 60 per cent of the global export market by 2030. The government has rightly identified the segments within textiles,” said the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI).

George Pahl, CEO, Manufacturers’ Association of Informatics Technology (Mait) says that with the PLI, the government has boldly declared that the next 10 years will be the decade for manufacturing. It recognises disabilities in the system and looks at Indian companies in a fresh light. Manufacturers of semiconductor fabrication, display fab, laptop, notebooks, servers, IoT devices and specified computer hardware will receive Rs 3,000 crore PLI.

For pharmaceuticals, the government had earlier announced a PLI scheme for active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) and bulk drugs. The new PLI scheme has covered a large spectrum of pharma products. “This will pave the way for the pharma industry to move into newer areas. The industry had set a target to achieve \$130-billion exports by 2030 from the current \$42 billion. Now we can aspire for it,” said Dinesh Dua, chairman, Pharmexcil-India (Pharmexcil).

The government has provided PLI of Rs 12,136 crore for telecom and networking products, including core transmission equipment, 4G/5G, next

generation radio access network and wireless equipment, access and customer premises equipment (CPE), internet of things (IoT), access devices and other wireless equipment and enterprise equipment, switches and routers.

“We are yet to receive details of the scheme from the DoT, however, we appreciate the proposed outlay of Rs 12,000 crore for telecom and networking equipment and are confident that the government would have designed the scheme in such a manner to ensure that the demand for telecom equipment from the local market is enhanced and remains robust as well as exports from India are suitably supported and incentivised,” said E. Gen. De S.P. Kochhar, director general, Cellular Operators Association of India.

The largest chunk of the incentive of Rs 57,242 crore will be provided for automobiles and auto components. “The industry was eagerly awaiting for this scheme to increase its competitiveness and take the growth of the sector to the next level,” said Kenichi Ayukawa, president, SIAM.

“We are hopeful that the outlay announced will encourage the industry to become net-exporter and help reduce import dependence,” said Deepak Jain, president, Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (Acma). “Whilst the auto component industry exports over 20 per cent of its production, our ambition is to capture a significant proportion of global trade,” added Jain.

Haze over production sop

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

New Delhi: The Union cabinet on Wednesday approved a production-linked incentive scheme (PLI) worth Rs 1.45 lakh crore that will be parcelled among 10 sectors over a five-year period.

The scheme will encourage domestic manufacturing, reduce imports and generate employment, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said after the cabinet meeting. But the details are not forthcoming yet and if the scheme follows the previous PLI scheme for electronics, it is likely to leave many players in the lurch while benefiting only the bigger ones.

The 10 sectors to get the in-

centives are: advance chemistry cell (ACC) battery (Rs 18,100 crore); electronics and technology products (Rs 5,000 crore); automobiles and auto components (Rs 57,042 crore); pharmaceuticals and drugs (Rs 15,000 crore); telecom and networking products (Rs 12,136 crore); textile products (Rs 10,683 crore); food products (Rs 16,900 crore); high efficiency solar PV modules (Rs 4,500 crore); white goods (Rs 6,250 crore) and speciality steel (Rs 6,322 crore).

“The PLI scheme, since it is based on incremental output, is more effective from the government’s standpoint than some of the other grant based schemes such as mega food parks, which are more input oriented. The PLI scheme is



Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi on Wednesday.

also targeted towards the larger anchor investors who are capable of mobilising the initial investment for brownfield or greenfield projects by themselves,” said Arindam Guha of Deloitte India.

The government had approved another PLI scheme of

Rs 51,311 crore effective April 1, 2020 for mobile manufacturing and specified electronic components among others.

Analysts had pointed to several grey areas of the scheme. First, the incentives were in the range of 4 per cent to 6 per cent of incremental sales, meaning greater the production the higher the incentive. But higher production rests on higher demand — a company cornering a greater share of the market will get more of the incentives muscling out the others as each sector will get the support only up to a limit.

The scheme had thus attracted big players such as Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron — all contract manufacturers for Apple — and Rising

Star, which makes Samsung phones.

The PLI scheme for mobile phones also has stiff annual incremental production targets — Rs 25,000 crore over the base level by the fifth year — which will work to the advantage of the bigger players.

“The industry was eagerly awaiting this scheme to increase its competitiveness and take the growth of the sector to the next level. We look forward to the details of the scheme,” Kenichi Ayukawa, president of SIAM and managing director & CEO Maruti Suzuki India, said.

S.P. Kochhar, director-general of COAI, said the telecom companies were yet to receive details of the scheme from the telecom department.

COAI-NOKIA_PPDR Network needs to be built for future and LTE is way forward

The webinar witnessed the welcome note by Lt. Gen Dr. SP Kochhar, DG, COAI followed by presentation of Mr. Marc Balliet, Public Sector Solutions (Enterprise), Global, Nokia on LTE for Mission Critical Services. The online event also had a panel discussion on the

issue with the participation of experts on the subject including Mr. Pranav Jha, Professor, IIT Bombay, Brig. Ajay Gangwar, Advisor, Operations and Communications, NDMA, and Mr. Randeep Raina, CTO, Nokia.



5G Technology and Spectrum Trials

COAI said the government’s decision to start exhaustive 5G trials in different categories of locations across India will stimulate the local research and development ecosystem to develop innovative applications tailored to commercial needs.

“It will enable TSPs to validate 5G technologies and use cases such as IoT and Industry 4.0. We hope the government will also look into the industry’s call for revisiting the 5G spectrum pricing,” COAI Director General S P Kochhar said.



SMS Scrubbing

Trai has allowed telecom operators to start the process of scrubbing and prepare a database of messages that do not comply with norms.

‘As per the revised directive from TRAI to resume the scrubbing, in case of failure of the messages due

to any reasons including content ID, mismatch of template etc. same may be recorded.

‘However, the message may be allowed to be delivered to the recipient. Thus, no messages will be getting blocked,’ COAI’s Director General Lt Gen (Retd) S P Kochhar said in a statement.

SMS scrubbing comes into effect: Hiccups for banking, e-comm ops

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 8

THE FUNCTIONING of banks and e-commerce firms were hit on Monday as telecom service providers (TSPs) started implementing the second phase of SMS regulation. The move disrupted several crucial services, especially sending of one-time password (OTP) by banks and e-commerce firms for various services.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) guideline that the verification process of every SMS content will have to be done before it is delivered — known as scrubbing — was implemented on Monday after several delays. As result, unverified and unregistered SMS messages were blocked by telecom operators.

However, the implementation of the SMS regulation hit the process of sending OTP for various payment services. “Banks were flooded with complaints from customers who didn’t get OTPs for fund transfers. This affected serv-

Crucial services, especially sending of OTP, were disrupted

ices across the country. The implementation was not fine-tuned. It should have been implemented carefully,” said a banking source.

“I wanted to transfer some funds to my relative. But as the OTP never came, I couldn’t execute the transfer,” said the customer of a leading private bank.

According to Trai, unscrupulous telemarketers today override the stated preference of the subscriber by claiming consent that may have been surreptitiously obtained. “New regulations provide the subscriber with complete control over their consent and the ability to revoke the consent already granted, at their option. A major abuse of the current regulations would thus be stopped,” the regulator had said.

Trai said the concept of registered templates for both SMS and

voice communication has been introduced to prevent deliberate mixing of promotional messages into the transactional stream. Telcos said telemarketers and businesses should comply with the standards set by Trai. A block-chain method is used to verify the content of every SMS and every unregistered SMS is blocked.

Responding to the issue, telcos said they had communicated with entities to register their content template before March 7.

“TSPs are following Trai regulations and have activated due process of content scrubbing to address the issue of unsolicited commercial communication. TSPs have sent various communications to the principle entities to register their content template with the TSPs before March 7, 2021. We request all the PEs to get their content template registered with TSPs at the earliest, and help TSPs to address the issue of unsolicited commercial communication,” said SP Kochhar, director general, Cellular Operators Association of India.

EMF Advocacy Activities



Engaged over 5,000 people



Engaged 5 doctors



Engaged over 1,000 media (Online, print, channels, Social, etc.)



News appeared in approx. 100 print, Online, Radio Channels, TV Shows, etc.



Engaged approx. 100 Govt. officials across India

Press release was issued in Andhra Pradesh, Karimnagar, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai, Ranchi, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Goa, Pune, Kerala and Ranchi regarding various EMF Awareness

Seminars/Sessions organised by LSAs across India. Email interviews of LSA officials and Doctors were also arranged.



Media Visibility Snapshot 2020-21



Rules should be same for similar services: COAI head

Telecom operators are looking for a decision from the government on similar services. COAI head S.P. Kochhar said that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV. He also pointed out that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.



S.P. KOCHHAR
Director General, Cellular Operators Association of India

Will telecom operators be impacted by Trai's decision on similar services? What's the industry's view?
 One has to understand the nature of the services. If they are similar, then the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV. The government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.

How do you see the impact of 5G on the telecom industry?
 The government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV. The government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.

Telcos Urge Trai to Speed up Setting of Data Tariff Floor

Industry body meets chairman Vaghela, seeks review of decision to not regulate communication apps

Industry Wishlist
 The industry is looking for a decision from the government on similar services. COAI head S.P. Kochhar said that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.

Telecom should be seen as essential service and enabler: COAI DG

The telecom sector with transformational powers is set to be a force-multiplier for other sectors, and the government needs to view it as an essential service and enabler for industries, not as the lucrative sector for attracting revenues, industry body COAI said. Director General S.P. Kochhar said the advent of 5G means that artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, robotics and other futuristic technologies will "grow and partake telecom and vice versa".

Telecom operators ask Centre for clear 5G roll-out road map

Telecom operators have globally harmonised bands to be identified for 5G services in the country. COAI head S.P. Kochhar said that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.



Spectrum sale on Mar 1
 The industry is looking for a decision from the government on similar services. COAI head S.P. Kochhar said that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.

COAI seeks urgent allocation of E and V band spectrum via auction to access providers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
 Industry body COAI has cautioned that any decision on de-licensing or administrative allocation of high commercial value E and V bands spectrum will violate prevailing policy framework, create non-level playing-field for licensed telcos and cause huge revenue loss to the government. In a letter to Communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) on Monday called for allocation of spectrum in these specified bands "through transparent auction to access service providers immediately".

Telecom operators ask Centre for clear 5G roll-out road map
 The industry is looking for a decision from the government on similar services. COAI head S.P. Kochhar said that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.

COAI seeks urgent allocation of E and V band spectrum via auction to access providers
 The industry is looking for a decision from the government on similar services. COAI head S.P. Kochhar said that the government should not differentiate between similar services like OTT and mobile TV.

Incentives to help India emerge as a mfg hub Industry lauds PLI

SANGHVI'S
Delhi, Nov 11

Industry leaders here said that the Rs 1.81 lakh crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, the finance ministry has rightly identified the high potential sectors to make the country a manufacturing hub.

"The PLI announcement of Rs 1.81 lakh crore across 17 key sectors is a big step in the right direction. It is expected to boost production, lead to job creation and improve the country's competitiveness," said Sanghvi.



The government has rightly identified the high potential sectors to make the country a manufacturing hub.

Sanghvi
President, FICCI

This will pave the way for the pharma industry to move into cancer care. The industry had set a target to achieve \$100 billion exports by 2025 from the current \$42 billion, he added.

Manufacturers in more than 100 countries are competing to be the first to bring production to India. The government has to ensure that the PLI scheme will help the industry achieve the target. The government has announced a Rs 10,000 crore PLI scheme for the mobile phone sector. This will help in the growth of the PLI scheme for the mobile phone sector. The PLI scheme will help in the growth of the PLI scheme for the mobile phone sector. The PLI scheme will help in the growth of the PLI scheme for the mobile phone sector.

Telcom Sector Revenue May Rise Up to 15% in FY21: COAI

PTI

New Delhi: Telecom industry's revenues are expected to rise by 10-15% in the current financial year and by 15-20% in FY21, according to a report by COAI. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI.

The newly appointed Director General of Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) S.P. Kochhar told PTI that any four per cent reduction in the current three-player private telco market cap "won't be a good thing".

"COAI will continue to work for a balanced and sustainable growth of the sector. We will continue to work for a balanced and sustainable growth of the sector. We will continue to work for a balanced and sustainable growth of the sector. We will continue to work for a balanced and sustainable growth of the sector."

INDUSTRY WOES & AGR DEFINITION Telcos expect immediate steps from govt for resolution: COAI

PTI
New Delhi, December 28

Mobile operators here said they expect the government to take immediate steps to resolve the issues of the industry. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI.



COAI Director General said that the transformation that was seen in 2020 after the pandemic has further proved that telecom acts as a growth catalyst in a digital India.

"The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI."

The COAI also said that the government should ensure the flow of 5G services. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI. The industry expects a 10-15% increase in revenue in FY21, according to a report by COAI.

COAI @ConnectCOAI · In
होशल डिजिटिंग करें, #COVID19 से और #FakeNews से।

5G और कोरोना का कोई संबंध नहीं है।
यह वाक्य मोबाइल नेटवर्क के जरूरे नहीं फैल सकता।
आप सभी के मिशन है की ऐसे #जर्नी राइटे दे शिक्षा ना करें।

#5G #MobileTowers #Connectivity #Coronavirus #FactCheck #5GforIndia

COAI
24 November 2020

Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar, DG, COAI, sharing his views on how #telecom is an essential service in today's time. In the live #webinar on 'Marketing Whitebook E-Summit 2020', by BW Businessworld, #IamMarketer #IATV#Broadcastable #Tech Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, #Ravi Shankar Prasad Airtel India VI Jio Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India #MyGov Corona-Hub Digital India #TRAI -Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Sanjay Dhote

BW BUSINESSWORLD
MARKETING WHITEBOOK E-SUMMIT 2020

“Telecom is an essential service in today's time and imagining a life without telecom is next to impossible. The foundation of telecom is growing at a deeper level as we move into 5G and other modern technologies which are just around the corner. Additionally, other major sectors will thrive on telecom and will stimulate much more than what would have been traditionally produced.”

Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar
Director General
COAI

COAI
10 February 2021

Watch eminent industry experts come together in a live #webinar on 'Device Ecosystem for 5G Spectrum Bands', with #classcoms & #Global mobile Suppliers Association (GSA), at 3:30pm on Friday, February 10, 2021.

Register: <https://bit.ly/3DOAJGU>

Department of Telecommunications, Government of India #TRAI -Telecom Regulatory Authority of India #Airtel India #Samsung #Nokia #Bell Labs #Ravi Shankar Prasad Sanjay Dhote VI Jio #Nokia Digital India #Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India

5G
DEVICE ECOSYSTEM FOR 5G SPECTRUM BANDS

The 5G ecosystem is rapidly evolving and it's crucial to have a strong manufacturing, device supply and maintenance, system integrators, test & verification and consulting. GSA will be a partner to help with the ecosystem and ensure a smooth transition to 5G.

We welcome and discuss the various aspects of Device Ecosystem for 5G Spectrum Bands in terms of #chipsets, #manufacturing, #maintenance and #testing. For more information, visit www.gsa.com.

Friday, 10 February 2021 3:30pm onwards
Register: <https://bit.ly/3DOAJGU>

COAI
@ConnectCOAI

"Cellphones radiate more energy that could harm human health. Hence, they should be judiciously used." Dr. Suresh Attili, addresses the health concerns related to emissions from the towers at the #EMF Awareness Webinar conducted by GOA LSA, @DoT_India.

#TowersAreSafe #COAI

TRAI and 8 others
1:07 PM - Mar 23, 2021 - Twitter Web App



COAI @ConnectCOAI · Jan 28

#SayNoToSignalBoosters Do you constantly face poor #network connectivity and frequent call drops? Look for #SignalBooster in your area. These devices constantly interfere with service provider's #cell sites leading to poor #connectivity and deteriorating the network experience.

WHAT DOES A SIGNAL BOOSTER DO?

Signal boosters cause interference with existing networks and impact the overall quality and experience for other customers in nearby areas. Let's not congest the flow of communication for others!



SAY NO TO SIGNAL BOOSTERS

COAI

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Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar, Director General, #COAI shared his valuable thoughts on '#ArtificialIntelligence: Opportunities and Challenges' and its use in the various sectors of the country at the ITU APT Foundation of India Webinar.

@aitcfindia



TRAI and Co-ops

8:25 PM · Apr 8, 2021 · Twitter Web App



About COAI

COAI was constituted in 1995 as a registered, non-governmental society. The Association is dedicated to the advancement of modern communication through the establishment of world-class mobile infrastructure, products and services and to delivering the benefits of innovative and affordable mobile communication services to the people of India.

Industry Policy



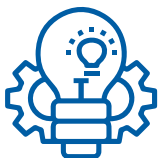
COAI has emerged as the official voice of the Indian telecom industry that interacts directly with ministries, policy makers, regulators, financial institutions and technical bodies. It provides a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas between these bodies and the service providers, who share a common interest in the development of mobile telephony in the country.

Telecom Issues



COAI collaborates with other industry associations such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, GSMA, ISPAI, ICA, etc., with the objective of presenting an industry consensus to the Government on crucial issues related to the growth and development of the Indian telecom industry.

New Technologies



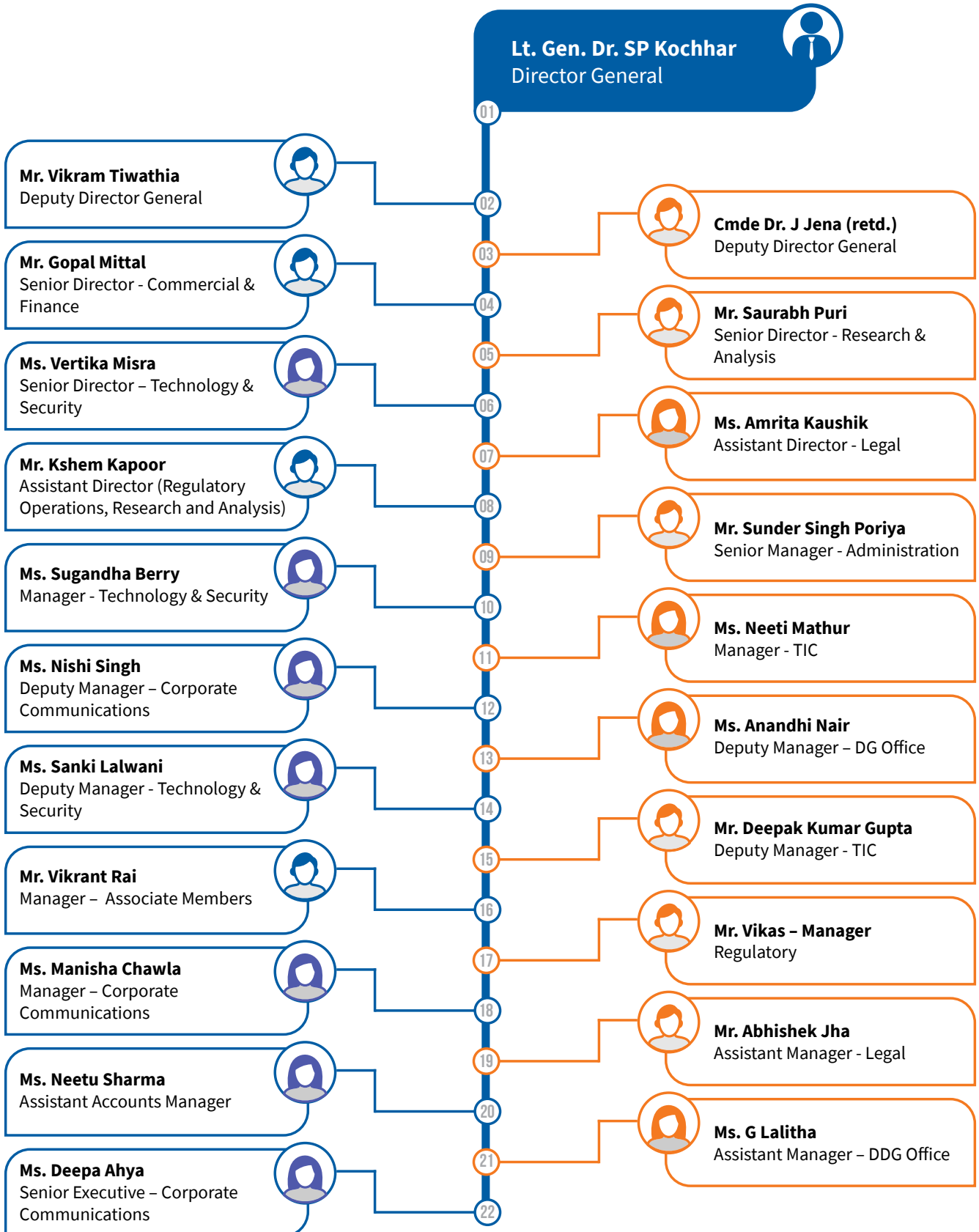
COAI is determined to encourage the confluence of technologies to facilitate the move towards complete convergence in communications as this could greatly help India mitigate the problems of low fixed line penetration and help realize country's vision of becoming an Information Society.

Thought Leadership



COAI aims to dispense information and spread awareness among the national and international entities and consumers on issues pertaining to service quality and other value-added services provided by the operators to their subscribers.

COAI Secretariat





Management

The COAI secretariat comprises of a Director General at the helm of Deputy Director General to support him. There are five departments of teams in the association that ensure that COAI is one of the most credible and reputed industry bodies, solely dedicated towards advancement of mobile communication.

There are currently 22 people working in the COAI secretariat bringing talent and skills from various areas of work, such as regulatory, legal, finance, technology and infrastructure.



Ajai Puri

Chairperson

Mr. Ajai Puri is the Chief Operating Officer (India and South Asia) at Bharti Airtel Limited. He has been with Bharti Airtel since 2004 and has held several senior leadership positions including Director – Market Operations, Director and CEO – DTH, and CEO – Kolkata & West Bengal, Odisha. Prior to joining Bharti Airtel, Mr. Puri served as the Business Head - Foods at Cargill Foods India. He began his career with VST India Ltd, an associate company of British American Tobacco (UK).



Pramod K Mittal

Vice Chairperson

Mr. Pramod Kumar Mittal comes with a rich experience of 42 years in telecommunications. Before joining India's largest telecom operator, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. as President, Mr. Mittal served in the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, for over 37 years. Since the year 2000, he served as Deputy Director General (DDG) and then as Senior DDG, working in the telecommunication policy formulation and implementation, licensing and regulatory wings of the DoT. During his tenure, he was responsible for the liberalization of Basic services, opening of National Long-Distance Services and International Long-Distance Services, introduction and implementation of Unified Access Service Licence and the Unified Licence regime.



Lt. Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar

Director General

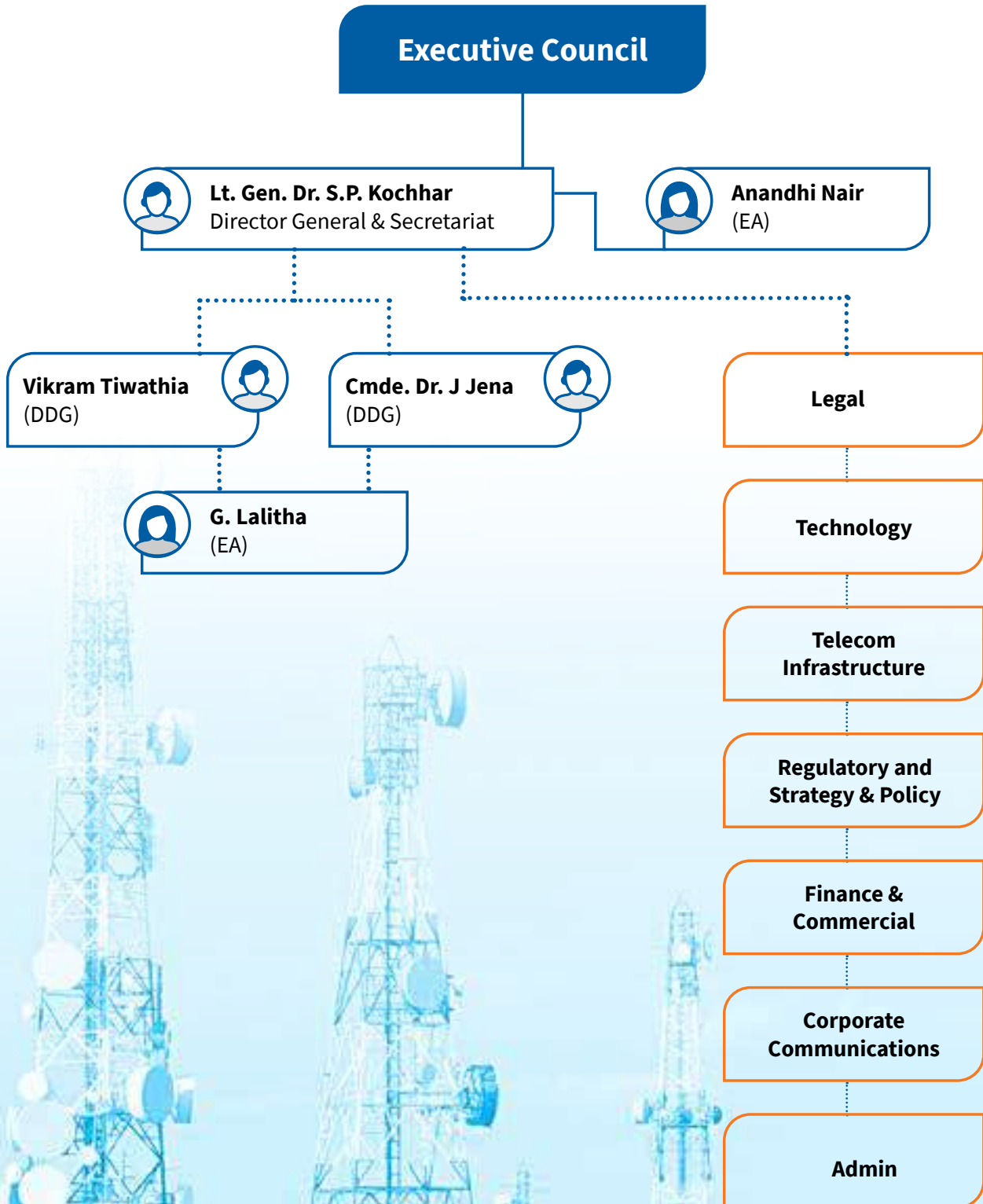
Lt. Gen Dr. SP Kochhar, a decorated military veteran, retired as Signal Officer in Chief, the head of the ICT wing of the Indian Army, where he was responsible for planning, executing and operating all Telecom and IT networks of the Army. Experienced business leader, prolific speaker and a decorated military veteran with a forward-thinking vision. New technology and change-management evangelist with a passion for developing organizations for sustainable growth.

PhD in Leadership Management; Author of the book 'Trained Soldier to a Skilled Citizen'.

Board and Governing Council Memberships- was a Director on the Board of BEL, ECIL, ITI, ARTHF, ASADEL.



COAI Structure 2020-21



COAI Members



COAI Core Members



COAI Associate Members



Team COAI



The COAI team includes dynamic, experienced and highly skilled professionals with a must-do attitude and remarkable proficiency in their respective verticals. Lean and yet highly competent, the Secretariat is committed towards the successful implementation of every activity undertaken towards the cause of the industry.

Regular coordination with the Government, the Regulator, relevant State Government departments, and other stakeholders, have established appreciation and recognition of the

Secretariat's efficiency and professional prowess, both within, and outside the industry.

This year Ms. Manisha Chawla Gulati, Manager Corporate Communications, Mr. Vikas Singh, Manager Regulatory, Mr. Rai Vikrant, Manager Associate Members, joined COAI adding to the Secretariat's strength.

The Secretariat is thankful to all its members and highly appreciates their valuable guidance, mentoring and constant support towards its efficient functioning and productivity.





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