

Move to allow load aggregation for Green Energy Access positive for Indian Telecom: COAI

- *Industry remains committed to help meet Nation's Green Energy goals, while also proliferating digital connectivity across India*
- *Latest amendment by Ministry of Power to facilitate the telecom sector to aggregate the electricity consumption of telecom sites and offset the same*

New Delhi, 25 May 2023: Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), the apex industry body representing the digital communications sector in the country, welcomed the gazette notification on the Second Amendment of the Electricity Rules, 2023 (Promoting Renewable Energy Through Green Energy Open Access) by the Ministry of Power, which has allowed for aggregation of load by multiple connections served by the same electricity division of a Discom to avail the services of renewable energy under the open access route. This long-awaited development enables the telecom sector to actively participate in India's commitment towards green energy and sustainable growth, while also enabling proliferation of services.

The Ministry of Power had taken a commendable step last year by reducing the consumption requirement limit for green energy from 1 MW to 100 kW. However, telecom towers, which serve as the backbone of the network, have individual power energy load requirements of ~10 kW each. Therefore, being treated as separate entities, telecom towers were unable to reap the benefits of green energy open access. With the issuance of the second amendment by the Ministry of Power, any "entity" (meaning consumer) with a contracted demand or sanctioned load of 100 kW or more, either through a single connection or multiple connections aggregating 100 kW or more within the same electricity division of a distribution licensee, shall be eligible to take power through Green Energy Open Access. This will make it cost-effective for the telecom sector to fulfil its energy needs, while also contributing to the green energy aspirations and renewable energy use targets of the nation.

Appreciating the directions, **Lt. Gen. Dr. S.P. Kochhar, Director General, COAI** stated, *"We laud the Ministry of Power for introducing this much required progressive measure and also thank the Secretary, Ministry of Power; TRAI Chairman and DoT for the continuous support on this important aspect of power supply requirements for telecom infrastructure. This positive step acknowledges the importance of telecom as an essential infrastructure industry and its manifold benefits for the nation and our citizens. The telecom industry remains committed to fostering sustainability and contributing to the country's renewable energy goals"*.

The telecom players have been diligently striving to reduce their carbon footprint by deploying renewable energy solutions. This positive step would further enhance their efforts to achieve energy sustainability and reduce carbon emissions. COAI remains committed to working closely with all stakeholders to facilitate the growth of the sector to keep the nation connected, while prioritizing environmental sustainability as a vital part of this endeavour.