# THE WEEKLY NEWS SUMMARY

## IAFI News

**25th Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council (SATRC-25)**




The 25th Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council (SATRC-25) was held at New Delhi, India from 11th to 13thNovember, 2024, gathering regulators, industry leaders, and experts from across South Asia. Hosted by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) India and organized by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), Spanning three days, SATRC-25's program features key discussions that emphasize the theme of "Accelerating Telecommunication and ICT Development for Growth and Inclusiveness," promoting digital transformation for economic and social prosperity in the region. The Meeting was inaugurated by the Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Hon'ble Minister of Communications in the presence of Dr Peemsaani Chandra Sekhar, Minister of State in the Ministry of Communications. SATRC-25 elected Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti, Chairman, TRAI, India as the Chair of SATRC. Shri Bharat Bhatia, President, IAFI was invited as guest speaker for the session regarding Regulator-Industry Dialogue on Digital Connectivity, to deliver insights on issues like ensuring sufficient spectrum access and maintain the spectrum supply; fair, predictable and transparent policy; regulatory environments for accessing spectrum resources; and harmonized spectrum usage in the region. Shri Bhatia shared a study conducted by Prof Raul Katz, President, Telecom Advisory Services, LLP, USA that allocating full 6 GHz spectrum for the use of Wi-Fi could potentially contribute $ 4.030 Billion to Indian economy by 2034. He further informed that the DoT is currently evaluating various allocation approaches, including a division of 6 GHz band between Wi-Fi and IMT, wherein Wi-Fi would receive lower 500 MHz and IMT the upper 700 MHz.

**3rd Meeting of SG-1 of ITU-D**

Third Meeting of ITU-D Study Group 1 (SG-1) was held in hybrid mode, from 04th to 08th November, 2024 at Geneva, Switzerland. Total 239 participants attended the meeting.

- SG-1 is handling issues regarding Enabling Environment for Meaningful Connectivity and consists of seven Rapporteur Groups Q-1/1 to Q-7/1.
- Q-1/1 – is regarding Strategies and policies for the deployment of broadband in developing countries.
- Q-5/1 – is regarding Telecommunications/ICTs for rural and remote areas.

IAFI presented one contribution in the Q-1/1 on 06-11-2024 and same contribution in the Q-5/1 on 07-11-2024, regarding "Minimum basic broadband services for rural and remote areas in developing countries".

**BSNL launches India's first satellite-to-device service**


In a ground-breaking move for Indian telecommunications, BSNL has partnered with US-based Viasat to launch India's first satellite-to-device service, extending seamless connectivity to even the most remote corners of the country. This innovative service, successfully demonstrated at the India Mobile Congress in October, utilizes Viasat's geostationary L-band satellites to enable direct communication with standard consumer devices like smartphones and IoT gadgets.
This technology eliminates the need for specialized equipment and allows users to stay connected regardless of their location, effectively bridging the digital divide. By leveraging Viasat's robust satellite network, BSNL is bringing the power of satellite communication to the masses, offering a reliable solution for both everyday communication and emergency situations. This launch marks a significant step towards a truly connected India, where geographical barriers no longer hinder access to information and essential services.
In the trial, Viasat demonstrated two-way messaging and emergency messaging using a commercial Android smartphone enabled for non-terrestrial network (NTN) connectivity. The messages were sent nearly 36,000km to one of Viasat's geostationary L-band satellites. The outcome proves satellite services to cell phone connectivity are technically feasible for Indian consumers and businesses using Viasat's satellite network.
Direct-to-device connectivity is revolutionizing how we connect to the internet. Now, everyday devices like smartphones, smart-watches, and even vehicles can seamlessly access both terrestrial and satellite networks, ensuring uninterrupted connectivity no matter where you are. This breakthrough technology eliminates the need for bulky, specialized satellite equipment, allowing for truly mobile and ubiquitous connectivity.

**5G FWA subscribers are expected to boom**


India's 5G fixed wireless access (FWA) market is poised for rapid growth, with subscriber numbers expected to reach 5 million by the end of 2024 and double to 10 million in 2025, according to a recent Counterpoint Research report. This surge in adoption is largely attributed to FWA's ability to bridge the digital divide in India, where fiber deployment lags behind. While India boasts over 350 million households, the slower rollout of fiber infrastructure necessitates a complementary technology like FWA to ensure widespread broadband access. 5G FWA offers the necessary speed and capacity to cater to the masses, effectively serving as a catalyst in bringing high-speed internet to underserved areas. Reliance Jio is predicted to lead this market expansion, further solidifying its position in the Indian telecom sector.

## TRAI Consultation Papers

| Consultation Papers | Submission Dates | Status | Submission |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Terms and Conditions of Network Authorisations to be Granted Under the Telecommunications Act, 2023 | 19th Nov 2024 | - | - |

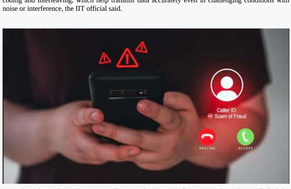
## Important Meeting that IAFI will attend

| Meeting | Dates | Submission Dates | IAFI Preparatory Meetings |
|---|---|---|---|
| ITU:R Working Party 5B (WP 5B) | 19th - 28th Nov 2024 | 07th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:R Working Party 5C (WP 5C) | 19th - 28th Nov 2024 | 07th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:R Working Party 5A (WP 5A) | 19th - 29th Nov 2024 | 07th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:T Costing Models for Affordable Data Services | 26th Nov 2024 | 14th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:D TDAG Working Group on the Declaration (TDAG-WG-DEC) | 02nd Dec 2024 | 20th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:R Study Group 5 (SG 5) | 02nd - 03rd Dec 2024 | 20th Nov 2024 | 20th Nov 2024 |
| ITU:R ITU World Radiocommunication Seminar 2024 (WRS-24) | 02nd - 06th Dec 2024 | 20th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:D TDAG Working Group on the Future of Study Group Questions (TDAG-WG-futureSGQ) | 03nd Dec 2024 | 21st Nov 2024 | - |
| APT: The 2nd Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC-25 (APT WTDC25-2) | 10th - 11th Dec 2024 | 30th Nov 2024 | - |
| ITU:D Extra-ordinary Meeting of the TDAG | 23rd Jan 2025 | 11th Jan 2025 | - |
| APT: SATRC Workshop on Spectrum | 21st - 23rd Jan 2025 | 11th Jan 2025 | - |
| ITU:R Working Party 5D (WP 5D) | 04th - 13nd Feb 2025 | 24th Jan 2025 | 27th Nov 2024 |
| APT: The 3rd Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC-25 (APT WTDC25-3) | 17th - 18th Mar 2025 | 07th Mar 2025 | - |
| ITU:D Regional Preparatory Meeting for Asia & Pacific for WTDC-25 | 20th - 21st Feb 2025 | 08th Feb 2024 | - |
| APT: The 2nd Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for WTDC-25 (APT WTDC25-2) | 10th - 11th Dec 2024 | 30th Nov 2024 | - |

## Telecom Stories:

Reliance Jio chairman, Akash Ambani; managing director, Pankaj Pawar; vice chairman of Bharti Enterprises, Rajan Mittal; and Vodafone Idea MD Akshaya Moondra, among others met up with Jyotiraditya Scindia. Union Minister of Communications in the Capital.
Telcos to get a fair share in the revenues from large OTT platforms;
Telcos need for a level-playing field for satellite comm services;
Telecom industry highlighted issues under the GST regime. One of the most pressing issues is the non-availability of input tax credit (ITC) on the procurement of petroleum products, which has created a cascading effect. Under GST, telecom operators are unable to offset the Central Excise and VAT paid on the procurement of petroleum products, leading to increased operational costs and reduced competitiveness in the global market. Another critical challenge stems from restrictions on claiming ITC for goods and services used in the construction of telecommunication towers. This restriction has imposed a substantial financial burden on industry players, hindering infrastructure expansion and modernisation efforts, which are crucial for meeting growing consumer demands. Inconsistencies between telecom regulations prescribed by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and GST provisions have exacerbated compliance complexities.


As the country is moving towards introducing 6G technology, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore is developing intelligent receivers that will prove to be a big help in the field of military communication, an official said on Thursday. IIT Indore is developing intelligent receivers that can automatically detect and decode key communication methods, such as modulation, channel coding and interleaving, which help transmit data accurately even in challenging conditions with noise or interference, the IIT official said.




Any telemarketer that makes spam calls or sends spam text from personal numbers will find the numbers disconnected. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has launched a major crackdown against those engaged in spam calls and text. TRAI Chairman Anil Kumar Lahoti said entities connected to numbers that send spam will be blacklisted. At least 18 lakh numbers have been disconnected and over 800 entities have been blacklisted in the last three months, Lahoti said.

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