

## Executive Summary

This week, the ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) advanced key policy, regulatory, and technology initiatives across multiple national and international platforms. IAFI formally endorsed the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) spectrum recommendations supporting 5G expansion and future 6G leadership, participated in TRAI's 29th Foundation Day deliberations on digital transformation, submitted consolidated comments to NITI Aayog on regulatory simplification under the Jan Vishwas framework, and contributed to national preparations for ITU-T SG-20 through NWG-20. In addition, IAFI hosted the launch of How AI Will Shape Life in 2050, reinforcing its commitment to thought leadership at the intersection of technology, policy, and society.

## IAFI Endorses Telecom Regulatory Authority of India 5G Spectrum Recommendations



The ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) has formally endorsed the latest spectrum recommendations issued on 24 February 2026 by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for the upcoming 4G and 5G auctions.

IAFI President Shri Bharat Bhatia welcomed the policy shift from viewing spectrum primarily as a short-term fiscal resource to recognizing it as a strategic national asset that underpins long-term digital growth. Several technical and policy submissions made by IAFI have been reflected in the final recommendations, including:

- Securing 6G Leadership:** The upper 6 GHz band (6425–7125 MHz) has been reserved exclusively for Mobile Services, aligning with IAFI's advocacy. TRAI has recommended deferring its auction until after WRC-27 to ensure global harmonization and avoid spectrum fragmentation.
- Unlocking the 600 MHz Band:** Adoption of the APT 600 MHz band plan (Band n105) will strengthen rural and in-building coverage. The framework provides flexible block sizes, a four-year moratorium, and a reduced 5% upfront payment requirement.
- Incentivizing Rural Expansion:** Operators may receive up to a 10% spectrum cost reduction by deploying base stations in uncovered "coverage holes," directly advancing rural connectivity.
- Lowering Entry Barriers:** Net-worth requirements for new entrants have been reduced to ₹50 crore per LSA. Specific TDD spectrum has been earmarked for ISPs, M2M providers, and CNPNs to promote ecosystem diversification.
- Pragmatic L-Band Approach:** The auction of the L-Band (1427–1518 MHz) has been deferred pending further engagement with global standardization bodies on Supplementary Uplink (SUL) requirements.

IAFI reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with the Department of Telecommunications and TRAI to ensure that these measures enable robust 5G expansion and position India for global 6G leadership.

<https://www.communicationstoday.co.in/iafi-welcomes-trais-5g-spectrum-recommendations/>  
<https://www.communicationstoday.co.in/trai-backs-auction-eases-entry-norms-caps-holdings-at-35/>

## IAFI Hosts Book Launch at CSOI, New Delhi



On 27 February 2026, IAFI hosted the launch of How AI Will Shape Life in 2050 at CSOI, KG Marg, New Delhi. The book, authored by Shri A.K. Bhargava, former Member of TDSAT, explores the theme "Manifesto 2050 – Humans First" and examines the long-term societal implications of Artificial Intelligence.

The event commenced with a welcome address by Shri Bharat Bhatia, who outlined AI's transformative potential across healthcare, employment, governance, and society by 2050. Shri Bhargava then presented the core thesis of his work, emphasizing the need for a human-centric approach to technological advancement.

Distinguished speakers shared perspectives during the discussion, including:

- Shri Deepak Maheshwari, Senior Policy Advisor, CSEP
- Shri Jaideep Ghosh, technology and infrastructure expert
- Dr. Prabhat Kumar, Advocate, Supreme Court of India
- Shri B. S. Bassi, former Commissioner of Police, Delhi and former UPSC Member

The occasion also marked a formal farewell to Shri R. K. Goel, former Director General Telecom, and extended a welcome to Shri Anand Khare as the new DGT at DoT Headquarters.

## IAFI Submits Comments to NITI Aayog on Jan Vishwas Siddhant Draft



NITI Aayog constituted a committee to review provisions across multiple Acts, Rules, and Regulations — including those under the Department of Telecommunications — to align them with the Trust-Based Regulatory Framework (Jan Vishwas Siddhant).

The draft recommendations address:

- 45 issues under the Indian Telegraph Act/Telecom Act
- 19 issues under the TRAI Act

The objective is to simplify, consolidate, or rationalize regulatory instruments to enhance transparency, proportionality, and ease of compliance.

## Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Celebrates 29th Foundation Day



Shri Bharat Bhatia participated in TRAI's 29th Foundation Day celebrations on 25 February 2026. Established in 1997, TRAI used the occasion to reflect on its regulatory journey and outline priorities for the evolving digital ecosystem.

TRAI Chairman Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti underscored the need for adaptive and transparent regulation as AI, 5G, and emerging 6G technologies reshape networks and service delivery. The Hon'ble Minister of Communications, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, in a video address, highlighted TRAI's role in fostering innovation, maintaining a level playing field, and safeguarding public interest.

Two technical sessions were organized:

### 1. Inclusive Broadcasting – "Taking TV to All Homes"

The panel examined policy, technological, and business strategies to enhance television accessibility, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

### 2. Network Slicing & Net Neutrality

Experts from Reliance Jio, Ericsson, and the Broadband India Forum discussed balancing differentiated service provisioning in advanced networks with the principles of an open and non-discriminatory internet.

The celebrations reaffirmed TRAI's commitment to inclusive growth, fair competition, and a secure, future-ready communications ecosystem.

## NWG-20 Meeting Corresponding to ITU-T Study Group 20



On 27 February 2026, IAFI participated in a virtual meeting of National Working Group 20 (NWG-20), organized by the Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC). NWG-20 corresponds to ITU-T Study Group 20, which focuses on IoT, Digital Twins, and Smart Sustainable Cities & Communities for the 2025–2028 study period.

The session was chaired by Shri R. S. Singh, DDG (IoT), TEC, with participation from Shri Sushil Kumar, Chair of SG20RG-AP. The primary objective was to finalize contributions for the upcoming virtual meeting of the ITU-T SG-20 Regional Group for Asia and the Pacific, scheduled for 24–25 March 2026.

Thirteen contributions — including five from TEC — were presented and, after detailed deliberations, all were accepted for submission at the final NWG-20 stage.

## Important Meeting that IAFI will attend

Meeting	Dates	Submission Dates
ITU: Working Party 7B (WP 7B) - Space radiocommunication applications	2nd - 12th March 2026	18th Feb 2026
ITU: Working Party 7C (WP 7C) - Remote sensing systems	2nd - 12th March 2026	18th Feb 2026
ITU: Working Party 7D (WP 7D) - Radio astronomy	2nd - 12th March 2026	18th Feb 2026
ITU: Study Group 7 (SG 7)	13th March 2026	1st March 2026
ITU: Collaboration on ITS Communication Standards	16th March 2026	03rd March 2026
APT: The 3rd Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026	30th March - 2nd April 2026	20th March 2026
ITU: Telecommunication Development Advisory Group	07th - 10th April 2026	24th March 2026
APT: The 36th Meeting of the APT Wireless Group (AWG-36)	06th - 10th April 2026	26th Mar 2026
APT: The 38th APT Standardization Program Forum (ASTAP-38)	20th - 24th April 2026	10th April 2026

## Telecom Stories:



Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said India is now sitting at the global standard-setting table for 6G technology, marking what he described as a historic shift in the country's telecom journey. Speaking at the News18 Rising Bharat Summit 2026, Scindia underlined how India has moved from being a technology adopter to becoming a key participant in shaping next-generation telecom standards. "On 6G, the Prime Minister set the goal. The Bharat 6G Alliance, which is a group of companies across the entire value chain, has grown from 15 members to over 100," Scindia said. He added that India has forged partnerships with similar 6G alliances in 30 countries. "India is on that standard-setting table for the first time. We are on that table as 6G gets rolled out," he said.



Union Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw asserted that digital platforms must take responsibility for the content they host, stressing that ensuring the online safety of children and citizens is their obligation.

Addressing the Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) Conclave here, Vaishnaw said platforms need to "wake up" and understand the importance of reinforcing trust in the institutions that human society has built over thousands of years.



The Department of Telecommunication will finalise the timing and contours of the next spectrum auction after examining fresh recommendations submitted by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), said Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia. TRAI has proposed that the entire 11,790 MHz of available spectrum across nine bands – 600 MHz, 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz, 2500 MHz, 3300 MHz and 26 GHz – be put up for sale in the upcoming auction, with a total valuation of around ₹2.1 lakh crore at reserve prices. The regulator has recommended lower entry barriers for bidders, a 35 percent overall spectrum cap, and modest cuts in reserve prices in several bands to improve affordability for operators and support continued 5G roll-out.

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