IAFI News

IAFI letter to Secretary, Telecom regarding reduction of GST on subsea cable
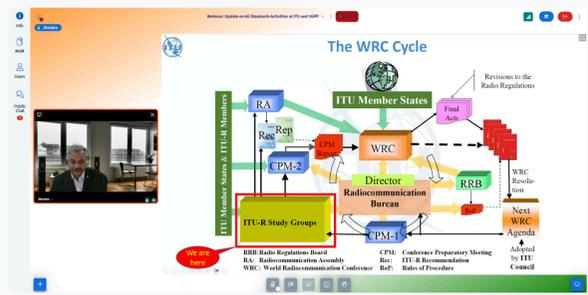

The ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) has urged the Department of Telecommunications to reduce GST on submarine cable maintenance and repair services. It argues that the current 18% rate raises operational costs and risks delays in restoring critical connectivity, through which over 99% of India's international internet traffic flows. IAFI proposes a 5% GST within Indian Territorial Waters and exemption in the Exclusive Economic Zone, citing SLTE's critical infrastructure status, TRAI recommendations, and the need for tax parity with maritime MRO services.

IAFI comments/suggestions to TEC regarding , MTCTE

The ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) has submitted recommendations to the Telecommunication Engineering Centre on revising the MTCTE Procedure v3.0 to align with the Telecommunications Rules, 2025 and emerging technologies such as 6G and satellite networks. Key proposals include separating software updates from hardware certification, exempting indigenous R&D prototypes, introducing fast-track provisional certification for PPDR equipment during emergencies, and streamlining testing for converged terrestrial–satellite radio units to avoid duplication while supporting innovation and network security.

TCOE Webinar regarding 6G Standards Activities at ITU and 3GPP

The Telecom Centres of Excellence (TCOE) India organized a webinar for beneficiaries of the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF) and Digital Communication Innovation Square (DCIS) focusing on global 6G standardization and IMT-2030 developments at the ITU and 3GPP. IAFI members including Shri Jitendra Singh, Head of Govt. Affairs, Qualcomm India & South Asia, Dr. Sendil Devar, Director, Standardization and Spectrum, Ericsson and Mr. Puneet Rathod, Senior Engineer, Standards, Qualcomm, as well as speakers TSDSI, and TCOE shared updates on standards, spectrum studies, and international coordination. The session emphasized aligning India's innovation ecosystem with global standards and highlighted the vision of developing an indigenous 6G prototype system by 2029.

IAFI attended NWP-4C meeting regarding WP-4C

NWP-4C Meeting corresponding to Working Party-4C regarding "Efficient orbit/spectrum utilization for MSS and RDSS" was held on 06-03-2026 in the virtual mode. The meeting considered IAFI contribution on draft CPM text for agenda item 1.13. Some members advocated for only NOC for 2.3 and 2.5 GHz bands. Meeting also discussed the contributions submitted by ISRO regarding Agenda Item -1.11 and 1.13. including "initial sharing and compatibility studies between the systems operating in India under the existing MSS allocations in Region 3 and the envisaged MSS systems for direct connectivity (DC-MSS-IMT) in the 2.5/2.6 GHz frequency bands". Consequently, it is proposed not to recommend this band for DC MSS IMT. for the removal of the entire row pertaining to these studies under the 2 500–2 690 MHz band to protect existing services. Further technical discussions are scheduled for the next meeting, tentatively set for 13-03-2026.

Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2026

Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2026 was held from March 2–5, 2026, in Barcelona, Spain, officially launched in what the GSMA dubbed "The IQ Era." This year, the industry shifted its focus from raw hardware specifications to the deep integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across networks, devices, and enterprise ecosystems. The Indian delegation, led by Hon'ble Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia, played a pivotal role at the event. A major highlight was the Bharat Pavilion, which featured 40 Indian companies showcasing indigenous telecom manufacturing, 5G stacks, and 6G research capabilities. In his keynote address, "Breaking the Cost Barrier," Shri Scindia articulated India's vision for making digital connectivity universally affordable and inclusive. He emphasized that India is no longer just a consumer of technology but a "builder" of secure, cloud-native stacks. On the global stage, India announced that the 10th edition of India Mobile Congress (IMC-26) will be held from October 7–10, 2026, at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. This milestone edition is expected to further cement India's position as a global hub for AI-native networks and future-ready digital ecosystems.

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	28th Mar 2026
APT: The 38th APT Standardization Program Forum (ASTAP-38)	20th - 24th April 2026	10th April 2026

Telecom Stories:

India's big telcos and global tech firms are sparring over how India's enterprise internet backbone should be priced and regulated, with TRAI's first review of Domestic Leased Circuit tariffs in over a decade set to decide whether these high-security lines are treated as a lightly regulated commercial service or a more tightly controlled utility. Telcos argue that deep investments in fibre and spectrum, rising DLC revenues and heavy discounting versus existing price ceilings prove the market is competitive and does not need fresh intervention. On the other side, tech companies and smaller ISPs say outdated caps, opaque contracts and steep last-mile "local lead" charges allow near-monopoly pricing in remote geographies and demand stricter tariff ceilings plus transparent, non-discriminatory publication of both recurring and one-time charges.

Government of India's initiative for prioritizing talent development through Training, Up-skilling and Workforce Development Programs under Chips to Startups (C2S) initiative of India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting, and Electronics & IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw, stated that India has made significant progress in last 04 years itself for its 10-year target of training 85,000 engineers in semiconductor design.

TRAI has tightened its anti-spam regime, directing telecom operators to act on artificial intelligence-generated spam alerts within hours and share this data across networks through the industry's blockchain-based platform. The move is aimed at closing enforcement gaps in the existing unsolicited commercial communication (UCC) framework, where operators have so far relied largely on customer complaints and passive spam warnings, despite deploying AI/ML filters at the network level. The regulator's latest direction requires telcos to operationalise near real-time data sharing and coordinated follow-up whenever their AI systems flag a number as a suspected spammer, especially in cases involving unregistered telemarketers.