

Successful completion of the Working Party – 4A Meeting



The 57th Meeting of ITU-R Working Party 4A (WP 4A) was successfully held from October 27 to November 6, 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland. WP 4A manages the efficient orbit/spectrum utilization for the Fixed-Satellite Service (FSS) and Broadcasting-Satellite Service (BSS). Shri Bharat Bhatia, President, IAFI, physically led the Indian delegation, alongwith with numerous other IAFI members joining the proceedings physically as well as virtually. The meeting achieved a record level of participation, deliberating on 258 documents, the highest number of contributions received since the formation of WP 4A. The agenda was heavily focused on preparatory work for the World Radiocommunication Conference 2027 (WRC-27). Two specific WRC-27 agenda items garnered the most intense focus; (a) WRC-27 Agenda Item 1.2 (Small Earth Station Antennas) - This item, concerning regulatory provisions for small earth station antennas operating in the 13.75-14.0 GHz band, drew the highest level of engagement with 30 dedicated contributions. The high attention underscores the industry's critical need for clear, harmonized international rules to support the widespread deployment of ubiquitous, small-terminal satellite systems (b) Agenda Item 1.5 (Unauthorized Non-GSO Uplinks) - Discussions regarding unauthorized non-GSO FSS/MSS uplink operations necessitated multiple extra sessions. This reflects the paramount importance members place on maintaining the integrity and compliance of satellite operations. In addition, extensive deliberation was also held on Agenda Items 1.1, 1.3, and 1.4. Similarly, despite numerous dedicated sessions, WRC-27 Agenda Item 7 remained a point of high controversy, highlighting the ongoing challenges in achieving consensus on various crucial regulatory and technical issues. The meeting concluded with substantial achievements, marking significant progress on key preparatory agenda items and demonstrating the global satellite community's heightened focus on future spectrum sharing and operational integrity ahead of WRC-27.

IAFI submits comments on TRAI spectrum auction consultation paper



The ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) submitted its response to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Consultation Paper on the auction of radio frequency spectrum for 4G/5G/6G. IAFI has urged TRAI to modernize its approach by moving away from high auction reserve prices that hinder network expansion and instead adopting forward-looking reforms: eliminating or minimizing reserve prices, implementing revenue-sharing and use- based payment models, and directly assigning spectrum for private, captive, and strategic uses. The note emphasizes that spectrum should be treated as a public good and critical enabler of societal and economic progress rather than a short-term revenue source, advocating for policies that strengthen open access, affordable connectivity, and inclusive national growth. By embracing these principles, TRAI and the Government of India can position the country to lead in next-generation wireless technologies, accelerate digital transformation, and foster a more dynamic, innovative, and inclusive telecommunications ecosystem. In specific proposals IAFI has asked TRAI to:

- align the Reserve price with the current demand and market valuation and recommended ZERO reserve price for all frequency bands;
- move away from the current Simultaneous Multiple Round Auction (SMRA) to a more modern, package-centric format like the Combinatorial Clock Auction (CCA), complemented by procedural reforms;
- supported the inclusion of the 600 MHz band (612–652 MHz / 663–703 MHz) in this round, aligned with the APT 600 MHz Band Plan (3GPP Band n105);
- supported the IMT in the upper 6GHz band and its timely auction;
- linking the future 7 -8 GHz spectrum likely to be allocated for 6G at WRC-27 with upper 6GHz to provide up to 4 contiguous Blocks of 400 MHz each to meet the future needs ultra broadband;
- Supported the L Band (1427–1518 MHz) for Supplemental Uplink (SUL) in 5G network.

SATRC-26



The 26th Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council (SATRC-26) was held virtually from November 5 to 7, 2025, in Islamabad, Pakistan. Organized by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and hosted by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the event drew 121 participants, including representatives from 12 Member States and 7 Affiliate Members. IAFI and all Indian delegates participated in the meeting virtually. Delegates addressed key policy and regulatory issues affecting SATRC countries, culminating in the approval of the outcomes of SATRC Action Plan Phase IX and the adoption of the new SATRC Action Plan Phase X. To facilitate the development of the telecom and ICT sector in South Asia, SATRC-26 incorporated special interactive sessions, including a Regulators' Roundtable, an Industry-Regulator Dialogue, and Sharing Regulatory Experiences Sessions. The Regulators' Roundtable was an exclusive forum for Heads of Regulators to strategize on critical regulatory issues requiring regional collaboration, both within the SATRC Member countries and across the broader Asia-Pacific region. The event was inaugurated by Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti, Chairman, APT, in his capacity as the outgoing Chair of SATRC-25. Dr. Masanori Kondo, Secretary General, APT, delivered the welcome address and officially announced Major General (R) Hafeezur Rehman, Chairman, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, as the new SATRC-26 Chair. Next meeting of the SATRC (SATRC-27) will be held at Colombo, Sri Lanka and exact dates will be announced in due course.

WTDC-25



The World Telecommunication Development Conference 2025 (WTDC-25) is going to take place from 17 to 28 November 2025, at Baku, Azerbaijan. Conference will be hosted by the Government of Azerbaijan under the theme "Universal, meaningful, and affordable connectivity for an inclusive and sustainable digital future". The WTDC-25 is a global platform dedicated to advancing digital connectivity, fostering innovation, and shaping policies for a more inclusive digital future. Bringing together industry leaders, policymakers, and technology experts, WTDC serves as a catalyst for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and strategic decision-making in the telecommunications sector.

BSNL's Strategic 4G Expansion and 5G Plans in Delhi



According to the BSNL Chairman A. Robert J. Ravi, BSNL is pushing forward with a significant network expansion in Delhi. He informed the media that BSNL has initiated a new tender to deploy up to 10,000 new 4G sites in Delhi. This expansion will utilize an Operational Expenditure (OpEx) model. The Chairman provided an update on BSNL's next- generation services, stating that the 5G network-as-a-service (NaaS) deployment in Delhi, to deliver commercial 5G services early next year. Further elaborating on the OpEx tender for the 10,000 sites, Mr. Ravi explained the shift in procurement strategy. BSNL will not buy the equipment and will keep paying monthly rent for 10 years. This strategic model, BSNL is introducing, if successful, it will put this model across the country. This strategic move aims to accelerate deployment while converting what would be a large capital investment into manageable operational costs.

TRAI Consultation Paper

Consultation Paper	Submission Dates	Status	Submission
The Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum in the Frequency Bands Identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT)	04th Nov 2025	SUBMITTED	FILE1

Important Meeting that IAFI will attend

Meeting	Dates	Submission Dates
ITU-R: Working Party 5C (WP 5C) - Fixed wireless systems; HF systems in the fixed and land mobile services	17th - 28th Nov 2025	05th Nov 2025
ITU-R: ITU-R Working Party 5B	18th - 27th Nov 2025	06th Nov 2025
ITU-R: Working Party 5A (WP 5A) Land mobile service excluding IMT; amateur and amateur-satellite service	19th - 28th Nov 2025	07th Nov 2025
ITU-R: 1st Inter-regional Information Session on WRC-27 Preparation	03rd - 05th Dec 2025	21st Nov 2025
APT: The 2nd Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026	28th - 29th Jan 2026	18th Jan 2026

Telecom Stories:



NEW DELHI: Indian telecom operators are fully capable of introducing generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in their operations, however, deployments would be guided by business decisions, according to Irish-American IT and consulting services firm Accenture.

Lately, discussions around the implementation of autonomous software – called AI agents – have gained traction in several verticals, including telecom, government, and healthcare, to improve the efficiency of workers and create new revenue streams, despite concerns that agentic AI may cause systems to go haywire.

“Telcos in India have the base capability that, if they want, agentic AI can come into force in a lot of places. It is just a business decision as to how much you can let a machine control compared to a human being,” Berjesh Chawla, managing director (MD) & lead (communications, media & technology), Accenture in India, told ETTelecom.



Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has invited bids to deploy 10,000 new 4G sites in Delhi under a 10-year operational expenditure (OpEx) model, marking a departure from traditional CapEx procurement. If successful, BSNL aims to replicate the model nationwide. The new tender requires bidders to use trusted products approved by the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), and mandates a consortium led by an OEM or a qualified system integrator with ₹300 crore average turnover over three years.

The bidder or a consortium lead shall have a minimum average turnover of Rs 300 crores during the last three financial years, according to the tender document.



The telcos, Reliance Jio, Airtel, and Vodafone Idea, have made a pitch to the government, demanding that the entire 6GHz band, with 1200MHz of spectrum, be allocated through auction for mobile communications, and not be divided with others for low-powered delicensed Wi-Fi use.

This, they say, will help the government in fulfilling its vision of taking a global lead in terms of an early rollout of world-class networks and indigenous technology development.

They are also pushing for doubling the period of validity of spectrum not only in the case of future auction but also for the spectrum they currently hold — from 20 years to up to 40 years — justifying the move on the basis of the capital-intensive nature of telecom infrastructure, the evolving technology landscape, and the long-term investment horizon required to develop and monetise the business.

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