IAFI News

India Spectrum Management Conference (ISMC-2025): Day-1

The ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) successfully organized the two-days, 5th India Spectrum Management Conference (ISMC-2025) from December 15–16, 2025, at Hotel-The Claridges, New Delhi. This landmark event served as a high-level forum for industry leaders, government officials, and international experts to align India's digital trajectory with global standards. The conference was attended by over 150 national and international experts representing government bodies, academia, and the private sector. Discussions centered on critical themes including India's Spectrum Policies and preparations for WRC-27, The roadmap for 6G and IMT Spectrum, Satellite Communication and regulations regarding unauthorized satellite transmissions and AI-driven spectrum management. The Inaugural Session featured a distinguished panel of guests, including Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti, Chairman, TRAI; Shri Rudra Narayan Palai, Member (Technology), DoT; Shri Rajkumar Upadhyay, CEO and Chairman, C-DOT Board; Mr. Mario Maniewicz, Director, BR, ITU and Mr. Charles Cooper, Associate Administrator, NTIA, USA. In his keynote address, Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti emphasized that the true value of spectrum is only realized when policy, technology, and services converge to deliver meaningful outcomes for citizens and the industry.

Day 1 provided deep insights into the intrinsic value of spectrum across various services through several focused sessions on Spectrum Policy - moderated by Shri Vikram Tiwathia, Sr DDG, COAI; Terrestrial Services Roadmap -chaired by Shri S.T. Abbas, Sr DDG and Head, TEC, focusing on spectrum requirements for terrestrial growth; regarding Satellite Networks - by Shri P.K. Jain, Director, IN-SPACe, detailed the spectrum roadmap for satellite communication and Wi-Fi Spectrum - chaired by Shri Munesh Kumar, Joint Wireless Advisor, WPC/DoT. The first day of ISMC-2025 successfully bridged the gap between global regulatory vision and local implementation strategies. By bringing together key stakeholders from the ITU and NTIA alongside Indian regulators, the conference established a robust foundation for India's 6G and satellite-ready future.

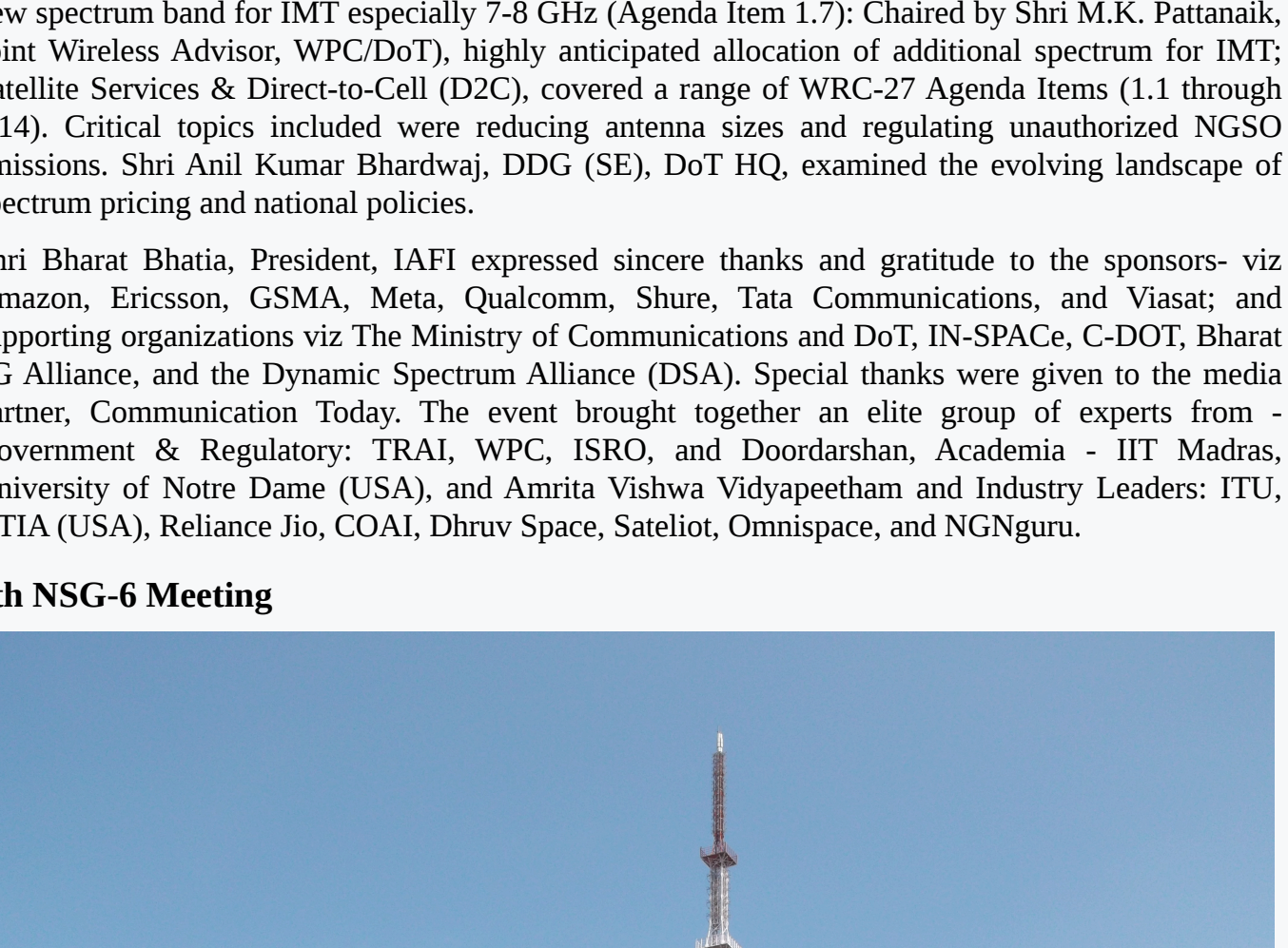
Read More: https://www.communicationstoday.co.in/ismc25-a-review/

India Spectrum Management Conference (ISMC-2025)- Day-2

The second day of the conference offered a deep dive into the future of global connectivity, featuring high-level discussions on regulatory frameworks and emerging technologies. The day's proceedings were graced by Shri Deb Kumar Chakrabarti, Member (Services), DCC, DoT, who served as the Chief Guest. Key Sessions & Technical Discussions were regarding AI in Spectrum Management, new spectrum band for IMT especially 7-8 GHz (Agenda Item 1.7): Chaired by Shri M.K. Pattanaik, Joint Wireless Advisor, WPC/DoT), highly anticipated allocation of additional spectrum for IMT; Satellite Services & Direct-to-Cell (D2C), covered a range of WRC-27 Agenda Items (1.1 through 1.14). Critical topics included were reducing antenna sizes and regulating unauthorized NGSO emissions. Shri Anil Kumar Bhardwaj, DDG (SE), DoT HQ, examined the evolving landscape of spectrum pricing and national policies.

Shri Bharat Bhatia, President, IAFI expressed sincere thanks and gratitude to the sponsors- viz Amazon, Ericsson, GSMA, Meta, Qualcomm, Shure, Tata Communications, and Viasat; and supporting organizations viz The Ministry of Communications and DoT, IN-SPACe, C-DOT, Bharat 6G Alliance, and the Dynamic Spectrum Alliance (DSA). Special thanks were given to the media partner, Communication Today. The event brought together an elite group of experts from - Government & Regulatory: TRAI, WPC, ISRO, and Doordarshan, Academia - IIT Madras, University of Notre Dame (USA), and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and Industry Leaders: ITU, NTIA (USA), Reliance Jio, COAI, Dhruv Space, Sateliot, Omnispace, and NGNguru.

7th NSG-6 Meeting



The 7th meeting of the NSG-6 was held on 10-12-2025, in the Spectrum Room, Sanchar Bhawan, DoT, New Delhi. Shri N. K. Bhola, Chairman, NSG-6, opened the meeting by welcoming members and emphasizing the strategic importance of increasing India's contributions to ITU-R Study Group 6 and its associated Working Parties. He urged stakeholders to submit proposals to NSG-6 in a timely manner to allow for robust domestic deliberation before international submission. Shri Manoj Gupta, Coordinator, NWP-6, presented a comprehensive summary of the last ITU-R SG-6 meetings held in Geneva in September 2025, presented key outcomes and critical matters requiring immediate attention and follow-up from NSG-6 members. Shri Rajeev Kumar, DDG, Doordarshan and chairman, NWP-6, reviewed India's recent contributions BT.1877-3, regarding error-correction and modulation methods for digital terrestrial television and Recommendation BT.1306-8, inviting Indian perspectives on the standardization of digital television systems. Shri Prakash Sonkamble, Rapporteur, NSG-6, briefed the group on multimedia services for handheld receivers in VHF/UHF bands. He highlighted how this standard aligns with the evolution of India's terrestrial broadcasting ecosystem. Shri Vaibhav Chhabra presented updates on Report ITU-R BT.2343. He noted that on-going D2M (Mobile Multimedia Broadcasting (BT.2016-4)), trials conducted by Prasar Bharati and IIT Kanpur provide a vital data foundation for future Indian contributions to this global report. The Chairman concluded the session by urging all members and stakeholders to adopt at least one specific work item to lead, ensuring that India remains a proactive participant in shaping international broadcasting standards.

TRAI Open House Discussion (OHD) regardimg Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) conducted an Open House Discussion (OHD) on 12-12-2025, regarding the TRAI Consultation Paper on the Auction of Radio Frequency Spectrum identified for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT). This pivotal session serves as the final step in the consultation process that will shape the recommendations for India's next major spectrum auction, anticipated in mid-2026. The session was chaired by Shri Anil Kumar Lahoti, Chairman, TRAI, alongside two TRAI Members and Principal Advisors from both the Technical and Finance wings. Key discussion highlights were a unified view was presented by Tlecom Service Providers (TSPs) and the IAFI, advocating for a drastic reduction in the spectrum reserve prices. The argument centered on the massive capital expenditure (CAPEX) required for nationwide 5G rollout and the current challenges in spectrum monetization. Regarding 6 GHz band (6425–7125 MHz), IAFI suggested that the entire upper 6 GHz band must be reserved for IMT/6G to ensure long-term network capacity and global harmonization. It was proposed for delicensing of the lower 6 GHz band for Wi-Fi 6E/7, emphasizing its necessity for indoor data offloading. Regarding Payment Terms & Moratorium - IAFI proposed a more flexible payment structure, a 6-year moratorium on spectrum payments, post-moratorium, payments should be spread over 14 equal annual installments and zero upfront payments to encourage broader participation. IAFI suggested for inclusion of 600 MHz band in the upcoming auction, as the device ecosystem for this frequency is now mature.

IAFI comments to TRAI on Consultation Paper regarding Interconnection Matters

The ITU-APT Foundation of India (IAFI) recently provided comments on the TRAI Consultation Paper regarding "Review of existing TRAI Regulations on Interconnection matters," released on November 10, 2025. This review is now critical as it seeks to overhaul nine different regulations that have governed Indian telecom interconnection for over two decades. The primary focus of IAFI's position is to modernize the framework to accommodate IP-based (Internet Protocol) networks, 5G technology, and Satellite-based communication. Key highlights of IAFI's comments were (a) Because of the rapid rollout of 4G and 5G, the traditional circuit-switched interconnection is becoming obsolete. IAFI advocate for a mandatory shift toward IP-based interconnection, to ensure better service quality and technical efficiency. (b) Satellite Interconnection Framework - major portion of their submission focuses on the need for clear guidelines for Satellite-based telecommunications. IAFI suggested for establishing specific Points of Interconnect (PoIs) between satellite gateways and terrestrial networks (mobile/fixed). (c) IAFI supported reviewing the RIO framework to ensure that new entrants and smaller players are not discriminated and advocate for transparent, cost-based pricing for interconnection charges. (d) Regarding existing 2018 regulations on interconnection agreements, IAFI suggested that same must be finalized within 30 days. IAFI highlighted that delays still occur and suggested stricter monitoring or automated processes to prevent these delays from hindering service rollouts. (d) IAFI suggested the need to balance the International Termination Charge (ITC), to ensure that incoming international traffic is handled fairly without making Indian operators uncompetitive or encouraging "grey market" traffic. Similarly, under Telecommunications Act, 2023 regime, the interconnection rules must be "future-proofed" to support emerging technologies like M2M (Machine-to-Machine) and IoT connectivity.

IEEE International Conference on Advanced Networks and Telecommunications Systems

The 19th IEEE International Conference on Advanced Networks and Telecommunications Systems (IEEE ANTS 2025) was held from December 15–18, 2025, at the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Delhi, India. Under the theme "Smart, Sustainable, and Secure Networks towards 6G," the conference served as a premier forum for fostering dialogue between academia, industry, and government to align research with global policy and commercial initiatives. Main aim of the conference was to promote an intense dialogue between academic and industry, to bridge the gap between academic research, industry initiatives, and governmental policies. The conference centered on four major areas - Wireless Communication, Wired Communication, Network Technologies, and Emerging Applications. Key discussions focused on (a) The Road to 6G-exploring 6G standardization, intelligent meta-surfaces, and integrated sensing and communication (ISAC) (b) Security and Resilience -AI-driven intrusion detection, Quantum Key Distribution (QKD), and post-quantum cryptography (c) Emerging Technologies - Satellite Internet, Haptic/Holographic technologies, and Open RAN (O-RAN) paradigms (d) Sustainability - Green communications and energy-efficient networking. Shri Bharat Bhatia, President, IAFI and Shri Jitendra Singh, Sr Director, Qualcomm India participated in the expert panel discussion regarding "Status of the 5G deployment in India and the world, and India's Role in the road to 6G". The panel underscored India's emerging leadership in the Bharat 6G Alliance and the importance of localized standardization through the TSDSI.

DoT Strategic Orientation Workshop on ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26)

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), through the Haryana LSA successfully conducted a two-day strategic workshop titled "Orientation of LSA Officers for the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026 (PP-26)". The event took place on 16–17 December 2025 at Suraj Kund, Faridabad, Haryana. Led by Shri R. Shakya, DDG, the workshop served as a critical preparatory platform for India's engagement with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). As the ITU's supreme policy-making body, the Plenipotentiary Conference (scheduled for November 2026 in Doha, Qatar) will determine the global direction of ICT for the coming years. Primary objective of the workshop was to identify and finalize India's priority areas for the upcoming PP-26. This includes developing Common Proposals that represent India's interests in the Asia-Pacific region. Key focus area were (a) Strategy for India's candidacy for the ITU Council and the Radio Regulations Board (RRB) (b) Formulating positions on Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance, 6G development, and satellite communications (c) Promoting India's success stories like Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and the "India Stack" as global models (d) Reviewing the ITU's roadmap for 2028–2031 to ensure it aligns with the needs of developing nations. A significant highlight of the event was the panel discussion on "Industry Expectations from PP-26". Shri Bharat Bhatia, President of IAFI, joined other eminent industry leaders to share insights on global ICT priorities. The panel emphasized the need for a collaborative approach between the government and private sector to strengthen India's influential role at the ITU.

2025 Year End Review for Department of Telecommunications

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in a press release announced transformative growth in India's digital infrastructure as of late 2025. These achievements underscore a decade of aggressive expansion in connectivity, particularly in rural sectors and next-generation mobile services. Internet connections crossed the milestone of 100 crore to reach 100.29 crore, as against 25.15 crore in March 2014, registering growth of 298.77%. Broadband connections rose from 6.1 crore in March 2014 to 99.56 crore in 2025, growing by 1,532.13%. Average monthly data consumption per wireless data subscriber increased by 399 times to 24.01 GB in 2025, up from 61.66 MB in March 2014, one of the highest in the world. Overall tele-density in India rose to 86.65% in September 2025. Rural telephone connections grew 42.9%; nearly double of urban increase, rising from 377.78 million in March 2014 to 539.83 million in September 2025. 5G services rolled out in all States/ UTs across the country and are available in 99.9% of the districts in the country with population coverage of 85%. 5.08 lakh 5G Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) installed by Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) across the country. DoT re-farmed 687 MHz of spectrum in various frequency bands viz. 6425-7025 MHz, 2500-2690 MHz and 1427-1518 MHz, for IMT based services.

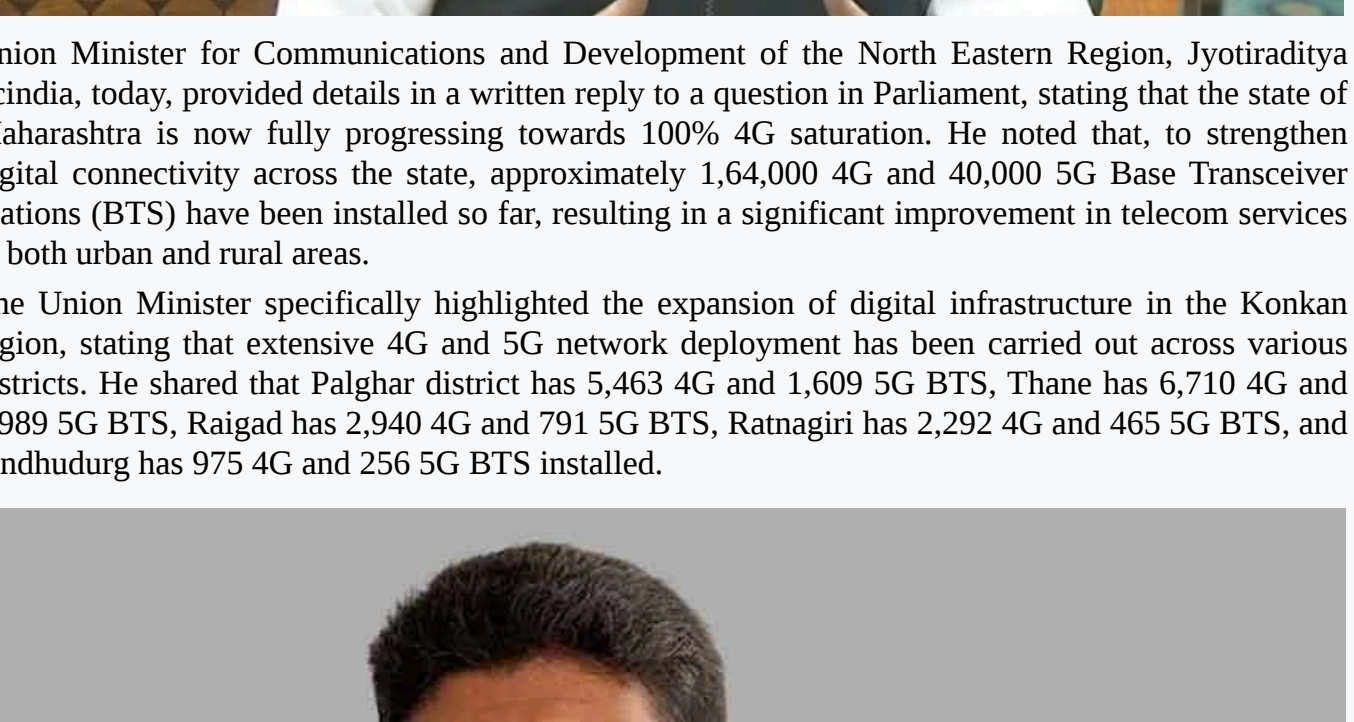
DoT Consultation Paper

Consultation Paper	Submission Dates	Status
These rules may be called the Use of ShortRange Automotive Radar System in the 77 to 81 GHz band (Exemption from Assignment Requirement) Rules, 2025.	24th Dec 2025	-
These rules may be called the Telecommunications (Sharing, Trading, and Leasing of Spectrum) Rules, 2025.	27th Dec 2025	-

Important Meeting that IAFI will attend

Meeting	Dates	Submission Dates
APT: The 2nd Meeting of the APT Preparatory Group for the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026	28th - 29th Jan 2026	18th Jan 2026
ITU: Working Party 5D (WP 5D) - IMT Systems	03rd Feb - 12th Fab 2026	21s Jan 2026
ITU: Collaboration on ITS Communication Standards	16th March 2026	03rd March 2026
APT: The 36th Meeting of the APT Wireless Group (AWG-36)	06th - 19th April 2026	28th Mar 2026
APT: The 38th APT Standardization Program Forum (ASTAP-38)	20th - 24th April 2026	20th April 2026

Telecom Stories:



Union Minister for Communications and Development of the North Eastern Region, Jyotiraditya Scindia, today, provided details in a written reply to a question in Parliament, stating that the state of Maharashtra is now fully progressing towards 100% 4G saturation. He noted that, to strengthen digital connectivity across the state, approximately 1,64,000 4G and 40,000 5G Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) have been installed so far, resulting in a significant improvement in telecom services in both urban and rural areas.

The Union Minister specifically highlighted the expansion of digital infrastructure in the Konkan region, stating that extensive 4G and 5G network deployment has been carried out across various districts. He shared that Palghar district has 5,463 4G and 1,609 5G BTS, Thane has 6,710 4G and 1,989 5G BTS, Raigad has 2,940 4G and 791 5G BTS, Ratnagiri has 2,292 4G and 465 5G BTS, and Sindhudurg has 975 4G and 256 5G BTS installed.

Minister of State for Communications and Rural Development Dr. Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar, in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today, said that the communication cost in India is one of the lowest in world. The policies of the Government and regulatory framework notified by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has resulted into one of the lowest costs for subscribers of mobile services in India. The comparison of mobile services pricing, as published by International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in 2024 consisting of (140 min + 70 SMS + 2GB) for basket of mobile, voice, SMS and data basket in some of the neighboring countries and other countries is given in Annexure- "A".

As per the Provisions of TRAI Act 1997, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), an independent regulator for telecommunication services, regulates the rates of telecommunication services in the country. As per the existing regulatory tariff framework, tariff for telecommunication service is under forbearance except for services such as National Roaming, Rural Fixed Line Services, mobile number portability charges, leased circuits and USSD. Subject to compliance with extant regulatory provisions, service providers are free to design and offer tariffs based on their understanding of the market situation and in their best commercial interest. Service providers have the flexibility to decide various tariff components like the rates for different types of calls, SMS, data offers etc. with multiple combinations including recharge value and validity for different service areas of their operation. Tariffs are offered by service providers taking into account several factors including input costs, level of competition and other commercial considerations.

The government will not regulate the pricing of satellite internet services in India, with companies free to decide what they charge customers, Union communications minister Jyotiraditya Scindia told the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, even as he expressed confidence that India's low cost telecom model could eventually push satcom players towards more affordable plans.

In regards to pricing, it is not something that the government can dictate. Pricing is something that the firms can dictate," Scindia said, responding to questions on the affordability of satellite broadband, especially for rural and remote areas.

The minister pointed towards India's telecom history and argued that competition and scale have consistently driven prices down. "India has had a very strong track record of showing the world how high volumes and low pricing can not only lead to great penetration but also great amount of revenue for firms," he said.

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