



JSA Prism Telecommunications

September 2022

Recent Updates in the 5G Tech Space in India

Completion of the 5G spectrum auction

According to reports, the government has mopped up a record over INR 1.5 lakh crore from India's first auction of 5G spectrum which ended on August 1, 2022, with Reliance Jio emerging as the largest bidder. After 40 (forty) rounds over 7 (seven) straight days, Reliance Jio acquired 24,740 (twenty four thousand seven hundred forty) MHz of 5G airwaves which offers mobile internet speed 10 (ten) times faster than 4G worth INR 8,80,78,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees eighty eight thousand seventy eight crore). Bharti Airtel bought 19,867.8 (nineteen thousand eight hundred sixty seven point eight) MHz of band-width worth INR 4,30,84 00,00,000 (Indian Rupees forty three thousand eighty four crore) while Vodafone Idea spent INR 1,87,99,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees eighteen thousand seven hundred ninety nine crore) to buy 6,228 (six thousand two hundred twenty eight) MHz of airwaves. New entrant, Adani Data Networks which is a unit of the diversified Adani Group made purchases of INR 2,12,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees two hundred twelve crore) for 400 (four hundred) MHz of spectrum across 6 (six) cities in only the 26 (twenty six) GHz band, purely for its captive private network needs.

Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Communications and Electronics & Information Technology stated that the result of the auction was better than what was anticipated by the stakeholders, the industry, and the investors.

5G services likely to begin by October 2022

Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Communications and Electronics & Information Technology stated that India is expected to roll out 5G services by October 12, 2022. He also stated that the government will ensure that the prices of 5G are affordable for the users.

In the first phase of rollout, it is expected that 13 (thirteen) cities would get the 5G internet services. The cities are Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Delhi, Gandhinagar, Gurugram, Hyderabad, Jamnagar, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai, and Pune.

Government offers use of indigenous 5G test bed free of cost

With an objective to boost 5G ecosystem within India, the government has decided to offer the use of indigenous 5G test bed free of cost to government recognized start-ups and micro, small & medium enterprises up to January 2023. The department of telecommunications ("DoT") has strongly urged all 5G stakeholders to utilise the 5G test bed facilities and expertise to test and facilitate the speedy development and deployment of their products in the network.

The indigenous 5G test bed provides an open 5G test bed that enables research and development teams of Indian academia and industry to validate their products, prototypes, algorithms and demonstrate various services. Further, it provides complete access for research teams to work on novel concepts or ideas holding potential for standardization in India and on a global scale. It provides the facilities of 5G networks for experimenting and demonstrating applications or use cases of importance to Indian society like rural broadband, smart city applications and intelligent transport system and helps Indian operators understand the working of 5G technologies and plan their future networks.

DoT to undertake demand studies for direct assignments of spectrum to enterprises setting up captive non-public networks

DoT has invited stakeholders to participate in a demand study for direct assignment of spectrum for setting up captive non-public networks (“CNPNS”), also known as private 5G networks. Enterprises having a net worth of more than INR 100,00,00,000 (Indian Rupees one hundred crore) and which are willing to set up CNPNs by obtaining spectrum directly from DoT are invited to participate in this exercise. DoT has launched a module on SaralSanchar portal for carrying out demand studies.

Amendment in the Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016

DoT vide its notification dated August 25, 2022, released an amendment in the Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules, 2016 (“**Amendment**”). The Amendment has been introduced to facilitate faster and easier deployment of telecom infrastructure to enable faster 5G rollout in India. For a detailed analysis, please refer to the [JSA Prism of August 29, 2022](#).

Government gives target to have 80% 5G coverage

Addressing an industry event in Delhi, Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Communications and Electronics & Information Technology stated that the journey of 5G is going to be very exciting and noted that many countries took multiple years to reach 40% to 50% coverage. He further stated that India is targeting a very aggressive timeline of 80% coverage in a short time frame and is confident of achieving the target.

India to see rapid uptake of 5G services

According to reports, telecom operators could quickly gain subscribers by prioritizing the roll out of next-generation services in cities or circles with a higher proportion of users that own a 5G-capable smartphone.

Reports also suggest that India already has a large addressable market for 5G as about 9.7% of smartphones that are in use are 5G-capable which could drive an explosive uptake in 5G services as these users do not need to buy a new smartphone.

Telecommunications & Broadcasting Practise

Our Communications practice is handled by a team with specific domain-expertise, and we advise various stakeholders in both Telecom & Broadcasting sectors on a wide range of transactions and assignments that involve constitutional, legal, contractual, commercial, regulatory and policy advice. The practice is led by an expert who has over 35 years of experience, and with the team having expertise in handling diverse aspects of the Telecom sector (financial reform, spectrum management, legal and strategic change). We advise broadcasters, BPOs, internet service providers (ISP), operators and investors in the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and the Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) technologies, and new investors on diverse licensing issues, entry strategies, structuring, national security challenges, and other regulatory issues. We represent the interests of licensees and other stakeholders in interacting with the licensor and regulators with respect to reforms in the regulatory and policy framework to facilitate business growth drawing upon international best practices. We advise and represent investors, broadcasters, and telecom licensees on commercial transactions in this sector, including mergers, acquisitions, restructuring, divestment, licensing, and project financing. We advise telecom service providers and other corporate houses on all aspects of spectrum licensing and allocation, including fundamental issues relating to the scope of spectrum bands, the regulatory framework governing their allocation in India, and planning, strategising and following up on their application to the Government.

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