

Over 125 delegates attended *tele.net*'s two-day conference on “**Telecom Infrastructure In India**”, held at The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi.

The telecom infrastructure industry has played a key role in the growth of the telecom services sector. The telecom tower base has more than quadrupled since 2006 to reach about 450,000.

However, over the past two years, tower companies have been impacted by developments such as the cancellation of 122 telecom licences by the Supreme Court, and the increasing cost pressure on telecom operators. Other challenges include the growing regulatory uncertainty and energy demand, the high cost of spectrum, multiple levies, right-of-way hurdles, and the high cost high cost of rural network roll-out.

To resolve some of these issues, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has already provided its recommendations to formulate a telecom infrastructure policy, which is currently being finalised.

TRAI has also given its recommendations on green telecom, which will have major implications for the telecom infrastructure industry. While industry players are taking initiatives to move towards greener solutions, the targets set under the policy are considered to be ambitious by most companies.

Meanwhile, tower companies have become more disciplined in terms of new roll-outs in order to avoid an oversupply situation. The focus has shifted towards increasing tenancies and infrastructure upgradation to support the growing data usage.

Also, the telecom tower industry has been granted infrastructure status by the government. This will help tower companies access higher of external commercial borrowings, pay lower import duties, and avail of the accelerated depreciation benefit.

Therefore, the mission of this conference was to examine the key growth trends, the new requirements (with 3G and 4G), and the impact of recent policy/regulatory developments; to discuss the key challenges and the way forward; and to showcase the most relevant and promising technologies and solutions.

This is the seventh annual conference on the subject. Key sessions of the conference included-Key Trends and Market Outlook; Infrastructure Providers’ Perspective; Operators’ Viewpoint; Policy Road Map; Impact of Recent Developments; Economics and Financing Requirements; Active Infrastructure Sharing; Focus on 3G; Technology Viewpoint: 4G network Rollout Strategies; Managing Cost of Energy: Strategies/Solutions; Renewable Energy Solutions for Telecom; Update on “Local Issues” and Update on the NOFN.

The conference saw industry leaders focusing on new requirements and challenges; strategies and solutions for the industry. The key speakers at the conference included Umang Das, chief mentor, Viom Networks and director-general, tower and Infrastructure Providers Association, T.R. Dua, senior director, Taipa, Amit Marwah, chief technology officer, India region, Nokia Siemens Networks, Parag Kar, vice-president, government affairs, India and South Asia, Qualcomm, A.K. Bhargava, director, operations, Bharat Broadband network Limited, Colonel Gyanendra Kumar, vice-president, regulatory and corporate affairs, ATC Tower Company of India, Amit Sharma, executive vice-president and president, Asia, ATC Tower Company, Milind Bengali, chief operating officer, GTL Infrastructure, Sai Ram Prasad, chief technology officer, Bharti Infratel, Satish Laghate, Aircel, Ruza Sabanovic, head, development and delivery, Uninor, Sudhir Bhandari, general manager – infrastructure, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, Satish Laghate, assistant vice-president, network, Aircel, Akshay Grover, vice-president, transaction advisory practices, Ernst & Young, Shubham Majumdar, executive director, Kotak Mahindra Capital Company, Ravi Kuppan, chief executive officer, Tarantula.Net, Ankur Lal, chief executive officer, Infozech, Pankaj Agrawal, director, Capitel Partners, Sharat Chandra, managing director, TelEnergy Technologies, Manoj Kumar Singh, vice-president, energy technology and regulatory affairs, Indus Towers, Kunal Walia, engagement manager, Analysis Mason, Rohit Pandharkar, head, business development (solarisation of telecom towers), Mahindra and Ajit Shankar, managing director and chief technology officer, Ardcom Telecom.

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