

According to the Tower and Infrastructure Providers Association (TAIPA), the telecom industry is committed towards developing green sustainable telecommunication ecosystem and has already deployed around 1,15,000 diesel free sites by using innovative energy efficient solutions like li-ion batteries, advanced VRLA batteries, and other innovative solutions such as diesel free sites, outdoor sites, free cooling units etc.

In line with its commitment, TAIPA, the industry association for telecommunication infrastructure providers such as Bharti Infratel, Indus Towers, ATC Towers, GTL Infrastructure, Reliance Infratel, Tower Vision, Space Tele Infra, Sterlite Technologies, Applied Solar and Coslight India, recently concluded its Green Energy Conclave on the theme 'Developing Sustainable Telecom Eco System: Being future ready'. The event deliberated on the burgeoning energy requirements and synergising the infrastructure requirements for emerging technologies such as 5G, internet of things (IoT), machine-to-machine (M2M) communications, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) etc.

Speaking at the event, Tilak Raj Dua, Director General, TAIPA said, "In the near future, with emerging technologies such as 5G and flagship programmes such as Smart Cities, Digital India and financial inclusion etc., India is poised to witness multi-fold data growth and will leapfrog towards advanced digital era. To match the data demand, a robust telecom infrastructure needs to be developed and will have to remain operational through an uninterrupted power supply. Telecom infrastructure industry is committed to develop a sustainable telecommunication ecosystem having minimum impact on the environment ensuring environment safety by using efficient energy solutions such as li-ion batteries, simple power panels, fuel cells, solar cooling units and FCUs etc. Today, more than 1,15,000 towers sites have already been converted as diesel free sites by the telecom infrastructure industry and many more such initiatives are expected soon."

It witnessed eminent presence of Dr. R. S. Sharma, Chairman, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), Aruna Sundararajan, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Chairperson, Digital Communications Commission, G. K. Gupta, Joint Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) with other senior government officials like Anshu Prakash, Additional Secretary, DoT, Amit Yadav, Joint Secretary (T), DoT, S.K. Gupta, Secretary, TRAI, U.K. Srivastava, Principal Advisor, TRAI, Archana Aggarwal, Joint Secretary, MNRE, R.M. Chaturverdi, Sr. DDG, DoT and representatives of leading alternate energy solution providers such as Cos Light, Powerol by Mahindra, Panasonic, OMC Power, OKAYA Power, telecom equipment manufacturers such as Ericsson and Huawei, telecom service providers and telecom infrastructure providers i.e. Bharti Airtel, RailTel, Bharti Infratel, etc.

CRISIL had collaborated with TAIPA as the knowledge partner for providing insights into green energy technology solutions for telecom sector. The panellists discussed a range of significant topics such as sustainability of telecommunication with technology evolution of 5G, sustainable growth for smart cities with telecom as core infrastructure and 5G evolution and smart cities.

In India power supply and grid connectivity in many parts of the country has improved in the last few years. In absence of uninterrupted quality power supply, the telecom industry is forced to look upon other viable alternate sources of energy such as diesel generator (DG) sets and energy storage solutions. Though as per the 2014 study conducted by PPAC Nielsen, mobile towers diesel consumption is only 1.77 per cent out of the total 12 identified sectors such as agriculture, transportation and manufacturing sector etc.

At present, the telecommunication sector is the major growth driver for li-on energy storage solutions. Currently, energy storage solutions contribute upto 5GWh towards power consumption by the telecom sector. This is expected to grow upto 25GWh by 2022. Technological innovations in the energy storage domain will help reach this goal even earlier.

In the last two decades, telecommunication has emerged as a key driver of economic and social development in an increasingly knowledge intensive global scenarios. The Indian telecommunication sector has undergone a revolutionary transition in the last two decades to become the world's second largest telecommunication market with more than 1.2 billion subscribers connected through 5,00,000 mobile towers with more than 20,00,000 base transceiver stations (BTSs). As per a government report, the mobile sector's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), which is presently 6.5 percent will increase to 8.2 percent by 2020.

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