

DRAFT NATIONAL DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY 2018



The Department of Telecommunications, India has recently published a draft of National Digital Communications Policy 2018 thereby inviting public comments on the same by 25.05.2018.

The said Policy is said to be investor friendly and to have reduced the cost of compliances. It also focuses on facilitating domestic manufacturing to curb dependence on imports.

It aims to create a robust digital communication infrastructure so that internet connectivity reaches to every citizen of India by 2022. The Government has also made the following plans and strategies to provide secure and affordable digital communications infrastructure and services to individuals and enterprises in India:

- (1) To make broadband connection accessible to every gram panchayat and key rural development institutions,
- (2) To make fibre connectivity accessible to every household, enterprises and to key development institutions in Tier I, II and III towns and rural areas,
- (3) To extend incentives and exemptions for construction of telecom towers and use of solar and green energy for telecom towers,
- (4) To establish a cohesive policy framework and spectrum management regime for broadcast and broadband technologies,
- (5) To provide incentives to potential investors in broadband infrastructure,
- (6) To identify and make available new spectrum bands for eventual growth of 5G and next generation networks such as artificial intelligence, robotics, internet of things, cloud computing in India
- (7) To ensure optimal pricing of spectrum so that there is sustainable and affordable access to digital communications
- (8) To develop transparent method for spectrum allocation

- (9) To review and strengthen the satellite communication technologies
- (10) To enable connectivity and access to uncovered areas in the North Eastern States, etc and to marginalized communities
- (11) To establish Telecom Ombudsman and a centralized web based complaint redressal system to protect consumers' interests
- (12) To encourage the use of renewable energy technologies in the communications sector such as small cell fuel batteries, lithium-ion batteries, etc and rationalize taxes and levies on production of such technologies locally
- (13) To simplify and facilitate license and regulatory compliance obligations
- (14) To reduce entry barriers for startups by reducing the initial cost and compliance burden in this sector
- (15) To establish a robust legal framework including intellectual property regime to ensure data and innovation protection and security in digital communications sector
- (16) To create an institutional framework to promote rapid dissemination of early warning disaster notifications



Recently it has been reported that various government and corporate entities have shown interest in developing artificial intelligence-powered weapons and surveillance systems in the defence sector, artificial intelligence tools capable of handling routine tasks, artificial intelligence to improve audit and accounting systems, etc. These next generation networks would require high speed internet connectivity facilities which this draft Policy provides.

It is hoped that this Policy may facilitate in adopting improved technologies and regulatory framework to regulate the digital communications infrastructure and services provided to individuals and enterprises in India.