

TOPIC OF THE WEEK

OCT'18 (29 to 05)

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Topic: Union Cabinet Approves New Telecom Policy

The Union Cabinet on September 26, 2018 approved the National Digital Communications Policy 2018 (NDCP-2018), the new telecom policy of the country that aims to provide broadband access to every citizen at 50 Mbps speed by the year 2022.

The National Digital Communications Policy 2018, which envisions attracting \$100 billion investments into the country's digital communications sector, aims at creating at least 40 lakh new jobs in the sector in the next four years.

The cabinet also accorded approval to the re-designation of the Telecom Commission as the Digital Communications Commission.

Background:

The last telecom policy was announced in 2012. The NDCCP-2018 envisions supporting India's transition to a

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digitally empowered economy and society by fulfilling the information and communications needs of citizens and enterprises by establishing a resilient and affordable digital communications infrastructure and services.

This customer focused and application driven policy will lead to new ideas and innovations after the launch of advanced technology such as 5G, IOT, and M2M which will govern the telecom sector.

Key features:

- Provide universal broadband connectivity at 50 Mbps to every citizen
- Provide 1 Gbps connectivity to all Gram Panchayats by 2020 and 10 Gbps by 2022
- Ensure connectivity to all uncovered areas
- Attract investments of USD 100 billion in the Digital Communications Sector
- Train 1 million manpower for building New Age Skill
- Expand IoT ecosystem to 5 billion connected devices

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- Establish a comprehensive data protection regime for digital communications that safeguards the privacy, autonomy and choice of individuals
- Facilitate India's effective participation in the global digital economy
- Enforce accountability through appropriate institutional mechanisms
- Secure digital communications infrastructure and services

Significance:

The National Digital Communications Policy will at end result in broadband for all, creation of four million additional jobs in the Digital Communications sector. It will enhance the contribution of the Digital Communications sector to 8 percent of India's GDP from around 6 percent in 2017.

It will propel India to the Top 50 Nations in the ICT Development Index of ITU (International Telecom Union) from 134 in 2017. It will enhance India's contribution to

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Global Value Chains and ensure Digital Sovereignty. The government targets to achieve these objectives by 2022.

Conclusion:

The communication sector has been evolving at a rapid pace globally, especially with technologies such as 5G, Internet of Things and Machine to machine (M2M) communication. Considering this transformation, the government felt a need to introduce a policy for the Indian Telecom Sector which can form the main pillar of Digital India by addressing emerging opportunities.

Accordingly, the National Digital Communications Policy 2018 was formulated in place of the existing National Telecom Policy 2012. It also pitches for leveraging Artificial Intelligence and Big Data to enhance the quality of services offered, spectrum management and network security while also establishing India as a global hub for cloud computing.

Its timely implementation will be important so that the telecom industry can recuperate from the deepening financial stress. This policy will surely help the debt-laden telecom sector.

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Suggested Reading:

- ✓ <https://edition.cnn.com/asia/live-news/north-korea-south-korea-summit-intl/index.html>
- ✓ <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/new-telecom-policy-aims-to-provide-broadband-access-to-all-citizens-by-2022/article25047394.ece>
- ✓ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/cabinet-approves-new-telecom-policy/articleshow/65962962.cms>
- ✓ <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/what-is-new-telecom-policy-2018-digital-connectivity-communications-5375761/>