

Chapter 10 : TELECOMMUNICATION

10.1 Background

Telecommunications has emerged as one of the critical components of economic growth required for overall socio economic development of a region. The Indian telecom sector has registered a phenomenal growth during the past few years and has become second largest telephone network in the world, only after China.

The growth of world-class telecommunication infrastructure in the country has been driven by proactive policy initiatives. The National Telecom Policy (NTP)-1999 recognised that access to telecommunications is of utmost importance for achieving the social and economic goals and help in addressing the developmental challenges of the country. Availability of affordable and effective communications for the citizens was at the core of the vision and goal of the policy makers. Another important objective was to provide a balance between the provision of universal service to all uncovered areas, including the rural areas, and the provision of high-level services capable.

During the past ten years or so, large-scale developmental and technological changes have taken place, particularly in the telecommunication sector. This contributed to rise in the living standard of the people, awareness of its importance and personal conveniences. Thus, a rapid increase in demand for telephones has been generated in Metro centres, Regional centres and other smaller towns and villages in Haryana Sub-Region of the NCR.

10.2 Existing Status

The National Telecom Policy-2012 is designed to ensure that India plays this role effectively and transforms the socio-economic scenario through accelerated equitable and inclusive economic growth by laying special emphasis on providing affordable and quality telecommunication services in rural and remote areas.

The telecommunications sector has witnessed phenomenal growth during the last decade. Growth of mobile telephony has been the most visible indicator and catalyst to economic growth. Coverage in terms of number of subscribers has reached 951.34 million in March 2012. The most encouraging feature has been the growth in coverage and increase in the number of subscribers in rural areas powered by low tariffs. More than 555000 villages out of more than 600000 villages in the country have the benefit of mobile coverage and the remaining villages are likely to be covered very soon, either by the Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) on their own, or with support from the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

As per the status provided by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the switch capacity in NCR has increased from 9,95,248 on 31.07.2001 to 14,11,650 on 30.08.2003. Similarly, the capacity of Direct Extension Lines (DEL) has increased from 8,46,628 to 18,88,067 and Wait List (WL) has reduced from 34,912 to 10,411 during the same period. Various value added services, relevant to growth, like pagers, cellular, digital network and internet are available in most of the region.

Table 10-1: District wise telecommunication facilities

Districts	Television	Radio/Transistors	Computer/Laptop	Telephone/Mobile Phone
Faridabad	279,652	67,341	82,673	302,937
Gurgaon	248,024	83,772	102,343	274,931
Jhajjar	128,007	40,791	19,241	145,032
Mewat	27,367	14,156	10,499	111,968
Palwal	93,313	15,928	16,736	121,222
Panipat	162,321	26,625	26,719	172,677
Rewari	108,753	28,534	18,092	137,152
Rohtak	150,160	39,834	27,225	160,621
Sonipat	192,317	44,589	30,697	207,285
Sub-Region	138,9914	361,570	334,225	1,633,825
Haryana	320,3191	821,525	622,942	3,743,361

Source: Census of India, 2011

The above table reveals that Faridabad & Gurgaon are the leading district in number of households having Television, Radio/Transistors, Computer/Laptop and Telephone/Mobile Phone. Mewat and Palwal are the districts with least number of households having such facilities in the sub-region. Out of the entire State, the Sub-region occupies 43.4% in Television, 44% in Radio/Transistors, 53.7% in Computer/Laptop and 43.6 % in Telephone/Mobile Phone. Hence the Sub-Region dominates in the Telecom development status.

10.3 Issues

- Inability of Department of telecommunication to extend the MTNL lines to entire NCR region.
- Financial support is the major issue, while expansion of telecommunication web in the Sub-Region.
- Many villages in the Sub-Region are not connected through communication lines.
- The goal to balance demand and supply ratio of telecommunication infrastructure is yet to be achieved.

10.4 Policies and Proposals

- a) Information Technology (IT) Policy 2000 and development of communication backbone infrastructure in the state: The State Government recognizes the role of Information Technology as an effective tool in catalyzing economic activity, providing good governance, improving the State economy, enhancing the quality of life and ensuring development with equity. Accordingly the Government of Haryana has recently announced its comprehensive information technology policy, for an all-round transformation of the State's economy.
- b) The State has policy for regulating the locations of the telecommunication towers, which needs to be taken care of while installing these structures.
- c) Service providers (private sector and BSNL) should be allowed to have a common interlinked system of basic services for the entire NCR treating it as a single telecom circle and should be encouraged to supplement the efforts of DoT in achieving the goals. Further, efficient telecommunication system will reduce number of trips and load on the transport corridors.
- d) The proposal of the 12th five year plan is to increase rural tele-density from the current level of around 39 to 70 by the year 2017 and 100 by the year 2020 as per prevailing National Telecom Policy.
- e) Provide affordable and reliable broadband on demand by the year 2015.

- f) The State will provide land, building and other facilities to the telecom service providers for setting up of telephone exchange, mobile relay towers and other installations for which the State will frame required policies. The State has already finalized the RoW policy.
- g) Integration of the telecommunication service network with power distribution network will be explored wherever it is technically feasible and commercially viable.
- h) Simplification of Sectoral Policy for Right of Way for laying Cable Network and installation of towers, etc. for facilitating smooth coordination between the Telecom Service Providers and the State Governments has already been finalised.
- i) Provision of high-speed data and multimedia capability using technologies including ISDN to all towns with a population of more than 1 lakhs.
- j) Reliable media should be provided through adequate band-width, convergence of technology for voice, data and video, and connectivity through OFC up to the last mile. The rural exchanges should be synchronized to enable data transmission in a time bound programme.
- k) All the villages in the region should be covered with telecom facilities. Telecommunications services in rural areas should be made more affordable by providing suitable tariff structure and making rural communications mandatory for all fixed service providers.
- l) Use of non-conventional sources of energy for rural communication should be encouraged in coordination with the Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources and concerned State Governments, as the availability of dependable power supply is a major problem in running telecommunications services in rural areas.

10.5 Strategies

On the basis of Right of Way (row) policy for laying of communication backbone in Haryana and National Telecom Policy – 2012, some strategies have been derived:

- To develop an eco-system for broadband in close coordination with all stakeholders, including Ministries/ Government Departments/ Agencies to ensure availability of media for last mile access, aggregation layer, core network of adequate capacity, affordable equipment including user devices, terminals and Customer Premise Equipment and an environment for development of relevant applications.
- To promote the use of energy efficient equipment including low power wireless devices in telecom networks and adopt measures for the reduction of carbon footprint in the telecom sector.