



सत्यमेव जयते

Department of Telecommunications
Ministry of Communications
Government of India
New Delhi

Quarterly Newsletter

(April- June 2020)

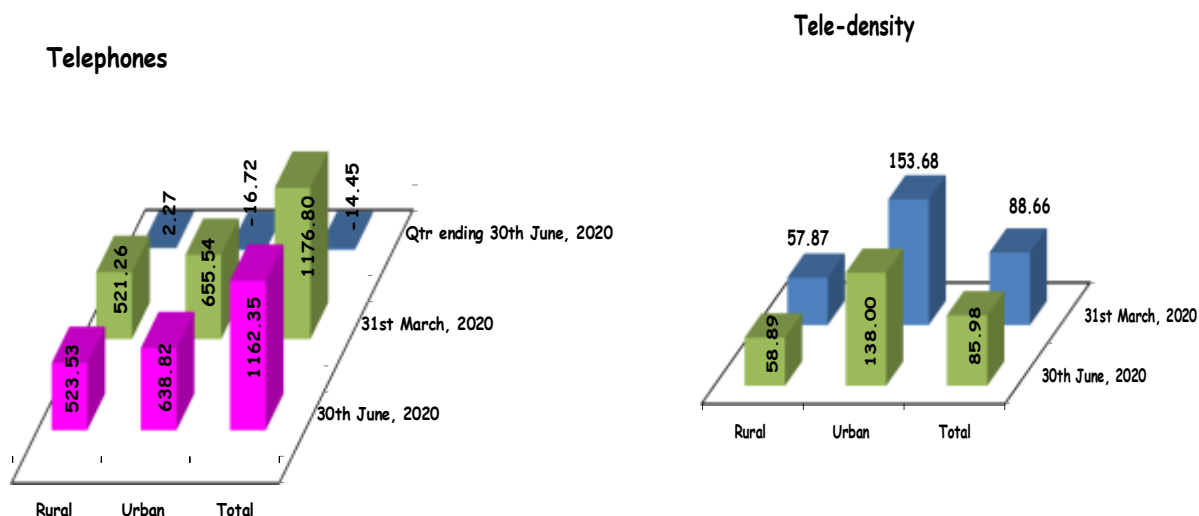


Highlights of major developments in the Telecom sector as well as initiatives by the DoT, during the quarter ending **June, 2020**, are given in the following sections.

I. Telephone connections and teledensity

- (i) The number of telephones decreased by 14.45 million from 1176.80 million to 1162.35 million for quarter ending June, 2020. The decrease in number of telephones is mainly due to fall in telephone connections of private sector (14.25 million).

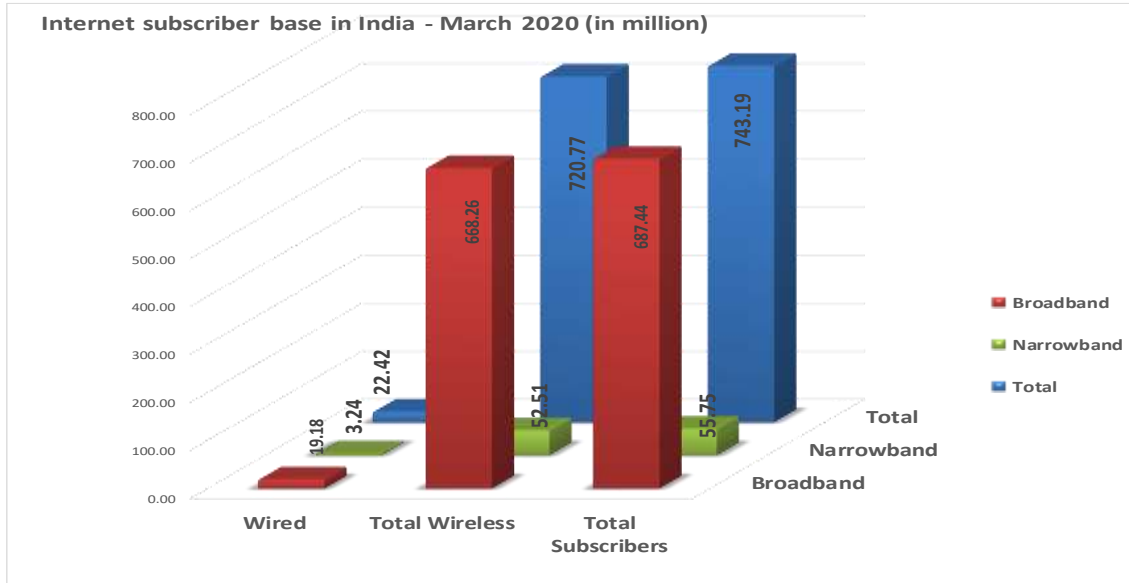
The tele-density decreased to 85.98% from 88.66% by the end of the June, 2020.



- (ii) The wireless connections have captured the dominating share of 98.30% (1142.54 million) in total telephone connections as on 30th June, 2020.
- (iii) As on 30th June, 2020, the share of urban connections was 54.96% (638.83 million) compared to 45.04% (523.53 million) in rural areas. The rural tele-density stands at 58.89% as compared to the urban tele-density of 138.00%.

II. INTERNET PENETRATION

- (i) There has been an increase in Internet subscribers (both broadband and narrowband put together) from 718.75 million in December, 2019 to 743.19 million in March, 2020, registering a quarterly growth of 3.40%.
- (ii) The number of subscribers accessing internet via wireless phones etc. was 720.77 million and there were 22.42 million wired internet subscribers in March, 2020. Wireless internet subscribers constitute 96.98% of the total internet subscribers.



- (iii) The number of Broadband subscribers has marginally decreased from 687.44 million at the end of March'20 to 683.77 million in May'20.

III. Activities of DoT (April- June, 2020)

- a) On 28th April, 2020, Hon'ble Minister of Communications interacted with the IT ministers of all the states of India. A very meaningful discussion was held on Covid-19 challenges, tech innovations, future of IT & Electronics sector etc.

All the IT Ministers of State Governments expressed solidarity and commitment to work together as team India in the collective fight against Covid-19.



- b) Hon'ble MoC and Hon'ble CM/Tamil Nadu jointly inaugurated (through VC) on 9th April, 2020 an IVRS App for Aarogya Setu which can be used by non-smartphone users on a voluntary basis. The App, developed by IIT Madras and the State Government of Tamil Nadu, has been facilitated by BSNL.
- c) Provisioning of short code '1075' to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for managing of COVID-19 related public queries has been made.
- d) New ring back tones/ Pre call announcements on instructions on COVID-19 are made operational across all Telecom Service Providers in all States/UTs w.e.f. 19.06.2020.

IV. C-DoT

1. Launch of C-DOT Video Conferencing Tool

In line with the push towards greater self-reliance, C-DOT has developed a secure video-conferencing platform for use by the government and other strategic sectors. The need for an indigenous platform was felt during the Covid-19 outbreak, which resulted in a nationwide lockdown.

The VC solution was officially launched by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Hon'ble Minister of Communications and Shri Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre, Minister of State (communications) on 22nd May 2020. The solution was officially inaugurated by holding a Video Conference meeting with 23 Chief Post Masters General (CPMsG) from Department of Posts across India.



2. C-DOT's Contribution during COVID-19

a) COVID-19 Savdhaan

Covid Savdhan application enables authorities to reach out to all mobile subscribers in any particular containment zone up to the level of individual mobile tower and convey targeted messages about health, well-being, water supply etc. by means of SMS in local language.

b) Arogya Setu IVRS

The government launched the **Aarogya Setu Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS)** developed by C-DOT, to cover feature phone and landline users. Initially only smartphone users were able to use the Arogya Setu application and get updates on whether they have unknowingly come in contact with a COVID-19 positive person and can contract the virus.

The IVRS service is available across India. This is a toll-free service, where a feature phone and landline user will need to give a missed call to the number 1921 and will get a call back requesting for inputs regarding their health. The questions asked are aligned with Aarogya Setu app, and based on the responses given by the person. The person will get an SMS indicating their health status and alerts.

c) Covid-19 Quarantine Alert System (CQAS)

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has shared a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) with all telecom service providers regarding the application called **COVID-19 Quarantine Alert System (CQAS)** developed by C-DOT. CQAS collects phone data, including the device's location, on a common secure platform and alerts the local agencies in case of a violation by COVID patients under watch or in isolation.

The CQAS prepares a list of mobile numbers, segregates them on the basis of telecom service providers, and the location data provided by the telecom companies is run on the application to create geo-fencing. The location information is received periodically over a secure network for the authorised cases with "due protection of the data received". The System triggers e-mails and SMS alerts to an authorised government agency if a person has jumped quarantine or escaped from isolation, based on the person's mobile phone's cell tower location. The "geo-fencing" is accurate by up to 300 m.
