



APRIL 2022



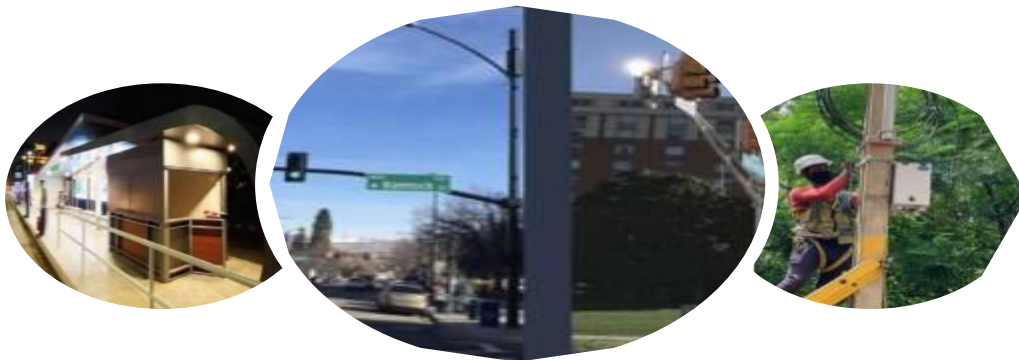
A bilateral meeting between TRAI delegation headed by Dr. P.D. Vaghela, Chairman and Ms. Jessica Rosenworcel, Chairwoman, Federal Communications Commission (FCC), USA at the GSMA Mobile World Congress 2022 at Barcelona, Spain on 2nd March 2022.

1. Consultation Papers

1.1 Consultation Paper on “Use of street furniture for small cell and aerial fiber deployment”

TRAI issued a Consultation Paper on “Use of street furniture for small cell and aerial fiber deployment” on 23rd March 2022.

Street furniture like utility poles, billboards, lamp posts, traffic signals, and public structures like gazebos (huts), bus stops etc. provide utility services to city dwellers but with little or no change, they can also be utilized to mount small cells and aerial fibers for providing telecom services as well.



Street furniture is under various public and private authorities that have administrative jurisdictions in municipal bodies, smart city administrations, government departments, railways, airports, ports and metro train systems, stadia (grounds) etc. Granting access to street furniture by the controlling authorities could remove a significant hurdle in 5G small cell deployment in the country.

In turn, 5G when deployed on infrastructure owned by these authorities would create a win-win situation, where the authorities can be benefited from 5G use cases like smart waste disposal, smart traffic lights, smart metering, smart grid monitoring, disaster management, automation, energy management, new streams of revenue generation, etc. Facilitating high-quality internet-based services for education, health care, citizen services, entertainment, work from anywhere, financial services, etc. by way of small cell and aerial fiber deployment on the street furniture would be a right step towards building a digitally inclusive society. The use of public street furniture will obviate the need to have greenfield deployment of towers or poles for small cells and fiber thus bringing down the capital expenditure and time involved in rolling out the networks and services. This sharing of infrastructure amongst various entities is also in sync with PM Gati Shakti initiative.

The aspects that need to be considered for the deployment of small cells on street furniture, inter alia, include identifying the suitable street furniture based on

the availability of backhaul and power, deployment heights, load-bearing capabilities of street furniture for mounting suitable equipment, scalability, and concerns related to local approvals. Further, some other issues like sharing of the street furniture amongst various users, permissions needed for power supply under state electricity laws, exemptions or bulk permissions for small cell deployment etc. will also require to be addressed.

With this background, the Authority issued the Consultation Paper seeking inputs of stakeholders on issues related to outdoor small cell and aerial fiber deployment using street furniture for the successful rollout of next-generation networks in the country.

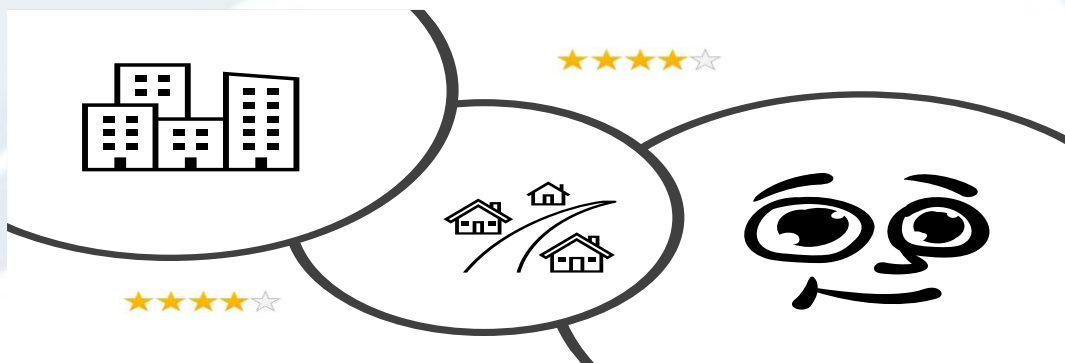
Written comments on the Consultation Paper were invited from the stakeholders by 20th April 2022 and counter-comments, if any, by 4th May 2022.



https://traf.gov.in/sites/default/files/CP_23032022.pdf

1.2 Consultation Paper on “Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity” on 25th March 2022

TRAI issued a Consultation Paper on “Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity” on 25th March 2022. In recent years, the demand for digital connectivity has increased drastically. COVID-19 pandemic gave a further boost to this demand, where everyone not only wanted to stay connected to his/her near and dear ones, but also got more extensively involved in online activities such as shopping, education, healthcare, or work from home, using the digital network.



To fulfill these demands, various policy interventions have been taken by TRAI so far. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has been monitoring the quality of service of telecom services across the country by conducting detailed studies and issuing suitable directions to the stakeholders, to improve the quality of service. While there have been significant improvements in coverage of telecom services on the street, there are still huge gaps in meeting the quality demands of the users inside and across the buildings in residential or commercial areas. These gaps are required to be bridged by implementing technological solutions in holistic ways by stakeholders, wherein end-users take a call on the quality of services needed inside their complexes, premises, or areas.

Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity creates an enabling environment for the creation of an ecosystem in designing, implementing, operating, maintaining,

and expanding connectivity through upgradations to meet the future challenges of digital connectivity inside buildings and areas. The paper highlights the importance of collaborative partnerships between all relevant stakeholders in co-designing and co-creation of the digital connectivity infrastructure inside the building/society or area. It also provides details on the provisions in various laws and guidelines for the development of telecom infrastructure in an area/building and suggests measures to include digital connectivity infrastructure as an essential component for the completion of a building and/or development of an area, with legal backing.

The consultation paper discusses how value addition to the buildings or areas can be made by introducing digital connectivity infrastructure evaluations and award ratings in terms of points or stars, based on the quality of experience assessed in a scientific way involving a combination of field measurements, user experience of digital connectivity provided in their buildings or premises.

The consultation paper describes various methodologies for measurement of quality parameters which include consumption profile, and building profile, for the “Rating of Buildings or Areas for Digital Connectivity”.

Written comments on the issues raised in the Consultation Paper were invited from the stakeholders by 4th May 2022 and counter-comments by 18th May 2022. The consultation paper is available at the below link:

https://traf.gov.in/sites/default/files/CP_25032022.pdf



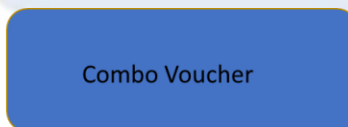
2. Telecom Tariff Order (TTO)

2.1 TRAI issued "Telecom Tariff (67th Amendment) Order, 2022

TRAI issued "Telecom Tariff (67th Amendment) Order, 2022 (02 of 2022) on 31st March 2022.



Available for monthly validity



In the earlier Order (66th Amendment), the Authority made a provision that every Telecom Service Provider shall offer at least one Plan Voucher, one Special Tariff Voucher and one Combo Voucher having a validity of 30 days. It is also provided that such Plan Voucher, Special Tariff Voucher and Combo Voucher shall be renewable on the same date of every month.

In response to said TTO (66th Amendment) Order, TRAI received the following key issues from Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) for consideration.

- The next date of recharge, in case subscriber recharges the voucher on 31st of the month
- The next date of recharge, in case subscriber recharges the voucher on any day between 29th January to 31st January.
- Timeline of two months provided by TRAI for the implementation of the Telecom Tariff Order dated 27th January 2022, is not adequate due to technical infeasibility hence it requires extra time for the implementation of TTO (66th Amendment) Order.

After due consideration of the above issues, the Authority issued (67th Amendment) Order, 2022 with the following provisions:

- ✓ Every Telecom Service Provider shall offer at least one Plan Voucher, one Special Tariff Voucher, and one Combo Voucher which shall be renewable on the same date of every month and **if the date of such renewal is not available in a month, the date of renewal shall be the last date of that month.**
- ✓ 60 days have been given to TSPs to implement the order.



https://traigov.in/sites/default/files/Regulation_31032022.pdf

3. Webinar

3.1 Webinar on “Blockchain Technology and its applications”

TRAI conducted a webinar on “Blockchain Technology and its applications” through Regional Office, Jaipur via an online meeting platform on 11th March 2022.

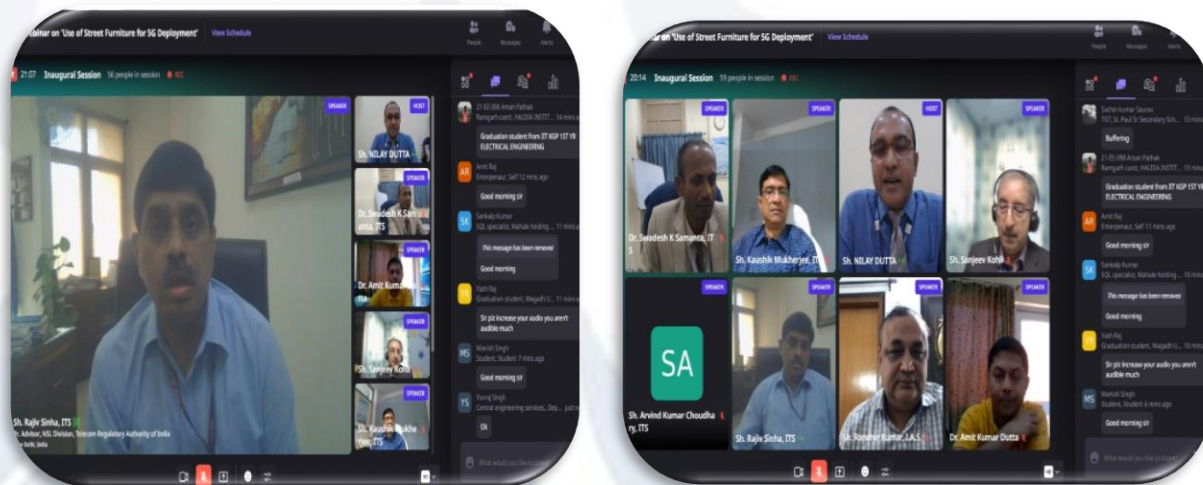


The Webinar started with a welcome address by Shri Shyam Sunder Chandak, Advisor, Regional Office Jaipur. Sh. Mahendra Shrivastava, Pr. Advisor, TRAI, HQ New Delhi was the Chief Guest. The Webinar comprised of four sessions covering the important aspects of “Blockchain Technology and its applications”.

Shri Sanjay Kumar, PGM BSNL, Jaipur spoke on the introduction to Blockchain Technology and its important use cases. Sh. Asit Kadayan, Advisor (CA, QoS, IT) TRAI, HQ New Delhi spoke on the use of blockchain by TRAI to curb SPAM messages. Dr. Ramesh Babu Battula, Assistant Professor (CSE) MNIT, Jaipur spoke about blockchain for 5G and above. Sh. Apurv Mehra, Senior Program Manager, Emerging Market Group, Microsoft India spoke on the topic of Blockchain use cases: Philanthropy case study.

3.2 Webinar on “Use of Street Furniture for 5G Deployment”

TRAI Regional Office Kolkata conducted a Webinar on “Use of Street Furniture for 5G Deployment” through online mode on 15th March 2022. The objective of the seminar was to create awareness about the use of street furniture for 5G deployment.



Shri Randhir Kumar IAS, Secretary IT & Electronics Govt. of West Bengal graced the Webinar as the Guest of Honour and gave a brief talk highlighting the need of using street furniture as the number of sites, which needs to be increased three-fold. Shri Rajiv Sinha ITS, Principal Advisor TRAI New Delhi delivered the keynote address on the occasion highlighting the need for the use of street furniture (e.g., light poles, bus stand, etc.) for expediting the deployment of 5G in cities/towns. He also emphasized that TRAI has taken initiatives for 5G deployment on a trial basis in four locations in India covering Sea Ports, Airports, Metro Routes, and Urban/city areas.

The Webinar was attended by other officers of DoT/state govt., Municipal authorities, and representatives of Telecom Service Providers & Infrastructure Providers, representatives of PSUs, students, and telecom consumers.

Eminent speakers Dr. Amit Kumar Dutta of IIT Kharagpur, and Dr. Pritam Kumar of IIT Patna delivered talks on the subject. Industry leaders Shri Sanjiv Kohli, Head, Presales, India, M/s Nokia Telecom, and Shri. Ashish Mittal, General Manager M/s ATC highlighted technical issues and challenges in using street furniture.

In the following session a panel discussion was moderated by Dr. S.K. Samanta, Advisor, TRAI Regional Office Kolkata. Distinguished experts Shri Kaushik Mukherjee, Director, DoT WB LSA, Shri K.N. Rai, Director, DoT Bihar LSA, Shri Manoj Kumar, Director (IT & e-Gov) Govt of Jharkhand, and senior officers from government of Bihar, A&N UT, and West Bengal states expressed their views. Representatives of Telecom industry Shri Subrata Mitra of M/s Ericsson, and Shri Manoj Kumar Singh of M/s Indus Towers Ltd. discussed the importance of close coordination which is required between DoT and state government departments to address various issues (e.g., permission to use street light poles, etc.) and challenges in rolling out 5G in cities/towns.

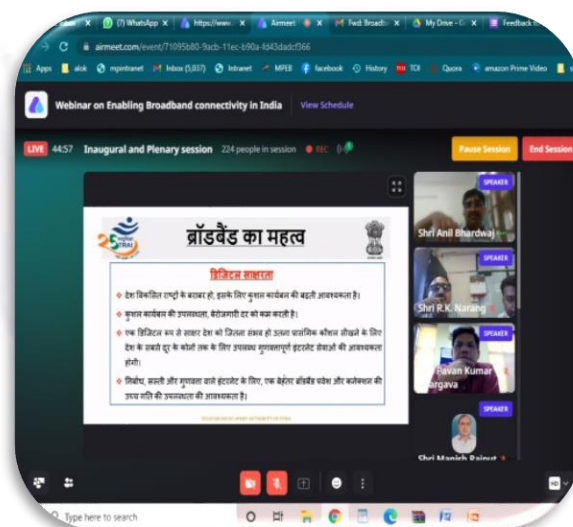
Panel members unanimously suggested the following actions:

- 1) A detailed process starting from the proposal submission by TSP/IP to Right of Way (RoW) approval by one nodal unit of State Government department (be it in municipal area or town area) need to be defined in consultation with all State Govt. department and DoT. Detailed process may include charges/fees, examination of feasibility (e.g., the load bearing capacity of the furniture), estimation of expenditure required for strengthening/modification of the existing furniture, agency who will carry out the strengthening/modification works, time frame for each activity etc. IT Department of the State Govt. may need to continue to be the Nodal Department as multiple departments are the custodians of street furniture.
- 2) Customization for Centralized RoW Portal for the use of street furniture.
- 3) Proof of Concept of using existing light poles, bus stands, etc. in a small area of tourist importance (e.g., park), or one important road in the heart of the city may be done where one Infrastructure provider will provide all infrastructure for fixing small cell, overhead/underground OFC for all the TSPs after making necessary strengthening of light poles to be able to withstand wind load/load of overhead OFC. DoT may help all TSPs to decide the number of light poles/bus stand required to provide coverage/capacity in the area.
- 4) As State Government's role will be critically important, the Nodal Department of the respective state govt. may set up the process for inter-department co-ordination and may also examine if any organization (e.g., State PSUs) can be given this responsibility to ensure a smooth rollout.
- 5) Apprehensions and concerns of the customers about increased exposure to radiation due to a three-fold rise in towers/sites must be addressed simultaneously through a massive awareness program.

6) The Panellists concluded that 5G commercial services on trial basis (in small area) in each capital city of A&N UT, Bihar, Jharkhand, and WB is required to be deployed by TSPs in close coordination with DoT and State Govt. Departments for learning and formulating the process required to use street furniture for expediting the deployment of 5G in cities/towns

3.3 Webinar on “Enabling Broadband Connectivity in India”

TRAI conducted a webinar on “Enabling Broadband Connectivity in India” through Regional Office, Bhopal via online meeting platform on 16th March. 2022.

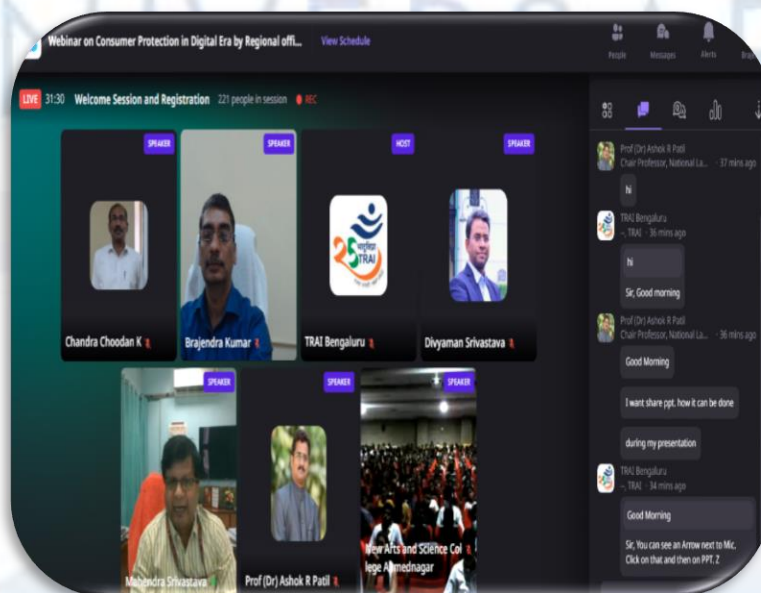


The Webinar started with a welcome address by Shri Vinod Gupta, Advisor TRAI Regional Office Bhopal. The Chief Guest, Shri Mahendra Srivastava, Principal Advisor (CA,QoS, IT) TRAI HQ, New Delhi delivered the keynote address.

The Webinar comprised of three sessions covering the important aspects of “Enabling Broadband connectivity in India”. Shri Anil Bhardwaj, Advisor (B&CS) TRAI HQ, New Delhi gave a presentation on “National Broadband mission, Importance of Broadband, the present state of broadband in India, the challenges faced and Government initiatives. Second session was focussed on the presentations by Telecom service providers (TSPs) and Internet service providers (ISPs) on increasing broadband penetration in India especially using Multi-service operators (MSOs), Local cable operators (LCOs), and other service providers using copper or optical fiber network. In this session the Plans, methodology, achievements, and case studies have been discussed. In the Third session, MSO/LCO and other service providers working as a franchise for broadband connection as an additional business with the Cable TV network explained the activity, investment, and revenue involved in such a model.

3.4 Webinar on “Consumer Protection in Digital Era”

TRAI Regional Office Bengaluru organised a Webinar on “Consumer Protection in Digital Era” on 24th March 2022.



The Webinar on this topic was organised considering the phenomenal growth of data usage in the country aided by affordable tariffs, the resultant large-scale digitalization of our economic, business activities, and the relatively new Consumer Protection Act of 2019.

Shri Brajendra Kumar Advisor, RO - Bangalore made the welcome address. Shri Mahendra Srivastava, Principal Advisor TRAI, New Delhi, who was the Chief Guest for the event, delivered the Keynote Address. This was followed by three technical sessions by domain experts as below:

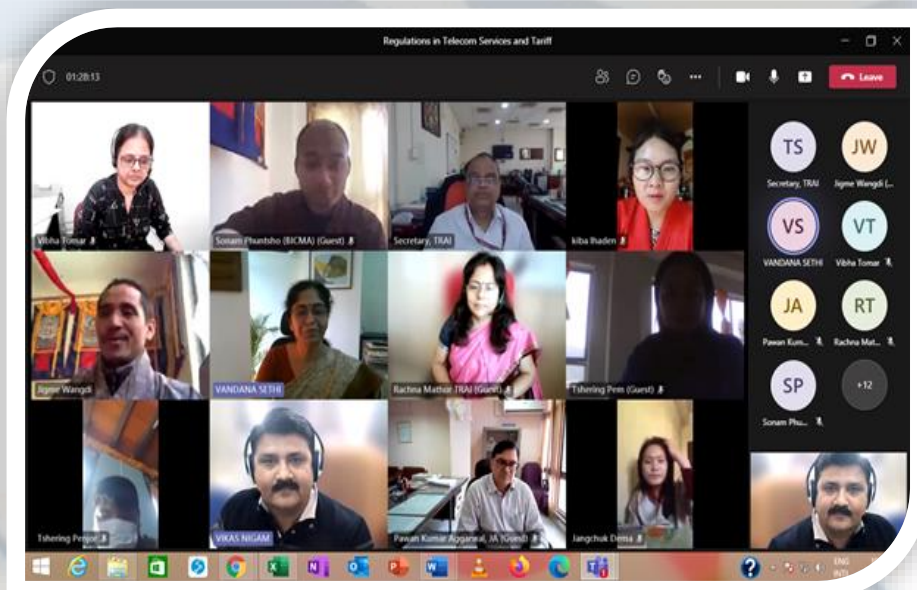
- (i) *Consumer Protection Act, 2019*: Dr M.S. Kamath, Faculty of Law at Pravin Gandhi Law College, Vile Parle, Mumbai.
- (ii) *Consumer Protection in E-Commerce Sector*: Dr. (Prof) Ashok R Patil, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru; and
- (iii) *Regulatory landscape for financial services over Digital Platforms*: Shri Divyaman Srivastava, Deputy General Manager, RBI, Bengaluru.

4. Important Events

4.1 Ms. Meenakshi Gupta, Member, TRAI addressed all the employees on the occasion of International Women's Day 2022 at TRAI Headquarters, New Delhi on 8th March 2022.



4.2 Capacity Building Programme for the officers of Bhutan InfoComm & Media Authority (BICMA)



A Two-day online Capacity Building Programme on "Regulations in Telecom Services and Tariff" for the officers of Bhutan InfoComm & Media Authority (BICMA) was held

from 10th March 2022. Sh. V. Raghunandan, Secretary, TRAI & Mr. Jigme Wangdi, Director, BICMA addressed the trainees in the inaugural session.

4.3 Blood Donation camp

On the glorious occasion of 25 years of the formation of TRAI, a Blood Donation camp was organized by TRAI RO Jaipur on 16th March 2022 at its office premises. The Blood Donation camp was inaugurated by Shri Harwesh Bhatia, Sr. DDG DOT Rajasthan LSA Jaipur. The event was organized in association with Swasthya Kalyan Blood Bank Jaipur, which is one of the largest Blood bank in Rajasthan.



4.4 TRAI started pilot study for Next Generation Telecom Infrastructure deployment using street furniture on 22nd March 2022.



TRAI has started pilot study at Kandla Port, Delhi Airport, Smart City Bhopal and Namma Metro Bengaluru for Next Generation Telecom Infrastructure deployment using street furniture. In order to expedite the availability of Digital infrastructure for the quick roll out of next-generation networks, TRAI has formed four working groups to oversee these pilots. These Working Groups have representatives of TRAI, Department of Telecommunications, Local Authorities, concerned Central Ministries and major Telecom Service Providers. The learning from these pilots will help in

enabling small cell deployment at various locations using existing street furniture such as traffic signals, lit signage, lamp posts, light poles, utility poles, billboards etc.

4.5 Meeting of the Committee for Utilization of Telecommunication Consumers Education and Protection Fund (CUTCEF)

A meeting of the Committee for Utilization of Telecommunication Consumers Education and Protection Fund (CUTCEF) was held at TRAI (HQ), New Delhi on 24th March 2022



Shri S.M.K. Chandra, Joint Advisor (CA) welcomed the participants and informed them about the purpose of holding the meeting in terms of the provisions of the regulations. He also informed that the spirit of consumer education has continued by organizing the events such as seminars and Consumer Outreach Programs in the online mode covering wider geography and a larger number of participants.

Principal Advisor (CA) in his address, stressed upon the active role of Consumer Advocacy Groups in spreading consumer education in nooks and corners of the country.

Secretary, TRAI in his keynote address stressed upon the utilization of TCEPF for enhancing consumer outreach, capacity building of consumer organizations etc. He informed the participants regarding consumer-centric initiatives taken by TRAI in recent times such as tariff plan for 30 days, reduction of USSD charges etc.

A detailed presentation was made before the committee on the activities undertaken during 2021-22 from TCEPF and the same was consented by the committee.

5. Telecom Subscriptions

5.1 Telecom Subscription Data as on 28th February 2022.

Particulars	Wireless	Wireline	Total
Urban Telephone subscribers (Millions)	625.19	22.57	647.76
Rural Telephone subscribers (Millions)	516.34	1.94	518.29
Total Telephone subscribers (Millions)	1141.53	24.52	1166.05
Overall Tele-density (%)	83.10	1.78	84.88
Share of Urban Subscription (%)	54.77	92.07	55.55
Share of Rural Subscription (%)	45.23	7.93	44.45
No. of Broadband Subscribers (Millions)	756.75	26.63	783.37

Active wireless subscribers on the date of Peak VLR in February 2022 were 1016.09 million.

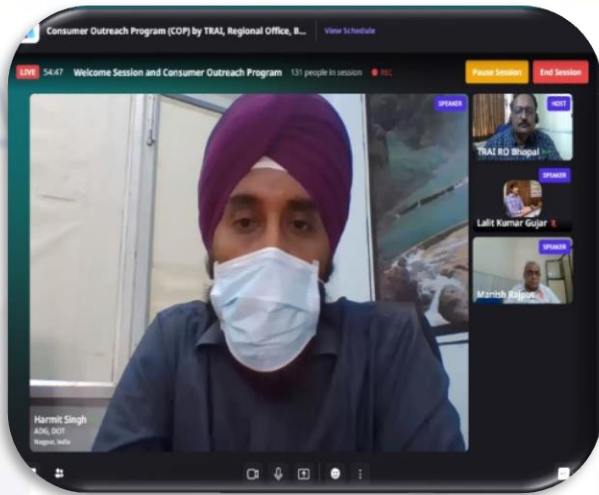
In February 2022, 9.16 million subscriber requests were made for MNP. By the end of February 2022, a total of 680.11 million consumers have availed the MNP facility since its implementation.

6. Events

6.1 The following Consumer Outreach Programmes were organised during March 2022 through the online platform:

Sl. No.	Place	Date
1	Bhopal	23 rd March 2022
2	Andhra Pradesh	25 th March 2022
3	Gujarat	30 th March 2022

PHOTO GALLERY



Consumer Outreach Program for Bhopal held on 23rd March 2022 by Regional Office, Bhopal



Consumer Outreach Program for Andhra Pradesh held on 25th March 2022 by Regional Office, Hyderabad



Consumer Outreach Program for Gujarat held on 30th March 2022 by Regional Office, Jaipur

Full details of the Directions/Orders/Consultation Paper/Report, Subscription Data, etc mentioned in this newsletter are available on TRAI website

www.trai.gov.in

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**YEARS
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