

Liberalised modern Satcom technology to benefit consumers by enhancing Digital Inclusion: BIF

New Delhi, 14th December 2022: Day-two of '**India SatCom 2022**', recognised as the largest, the oldest and most comprehensive conference for satellite communications in the country, was digitally organised today by Broadband India Forum - the leading independent Think-Tank and Policy Forum for Digital Communications in the country. Four dedicated sessions on the vital topics of '**Encouraging Startups & MSMEs in the Space Sector**'; '**Spectrum Management for Satellite & Terrestrial Tehnologies**'; '**Role of Innovation for Affordable Satellite Broadband**' and the '**Cooperation on Global Standards in Satellite Communications**' were held at the Shangri-la Hotel, New Delhi.

The session on '**Encouraging Startups & MSMEs in the Space Sector**' was chaired by **Dr P K Jain**, Director (Program Management & Authorisation), IN-SPACe with **Mr. James Solomon**, Co-Founder & Partner, Citoto Networks, **Mr. Vivek Kimbahune**, Executive Vice President, Sales & Business Development, Saankhya Labs and **Mr. Sunil Gupta**, Co-Founder & CEO, QNu Labs participating as eminent Industry Speakers. The session focused on a number of MSMEs and startups who have already taken giant strides in different areas of space activities and satellite communications, thereby showcasing an excellent opportunity for young & budding entrepreneurs to play a role in nation building and enhancing the space ecosystem through indigenous initiatives

The next session on '**Spectrum Management for Satellite & Terrestrial Tehnologies**', delved into aspects related to the a) need and mechanism to identify enhanced spectrum in existing bands and new spectrum bands b) coordination and management of spectrum requirement between different user groups for same or competing spectrum bands c) mode of allocation of spectrum for satellites and why satellite spectrum being a shared resource cannot be exclusively allocated and divided for individual operators and be allocated through a spectrum auction, unlike terrestrial technologies. Session Chair - **Shri V J Christopher**, Wireless Adviser, WPC, Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Government of India, discussed and deliberated on the critical topic with **Shri P V Kumaramohan**, Associate Director, Satcom PO, ISRO Headquarters; **Mr. T V Ramachandran**, President, BIF and **Mr. Paritosh Saha**, Executive Director – Broadcast Technology & Operations at Disney Star.

Speaking in the Technical Session on 'Spectrum Management for Satellite & Terrestrial Technologies' on Day 2 (14th December, 2022) of India Satcom 2022, BIF President Mr. TV Ramachandran clarified as below:

"It appears there was some misunderstanding in media reports about Chairman TRAI's speech made at the Inaugural Session on Day 1 (13th December) of India Satcom 2022 as regards, "Mode of allocation of Satellite Spectrum". Mr. Ramachandran said referring to Chairman TRAI's speech, "India will be the first to handle the issue of auctioning the space based spectrum and we are working on it and we will come out with the consultation paper in due course and your people and your help in coming out with some sort of model which actually see that the idea is we can create an ecosystem. It is very important any system you bring in should actually encourage and promote investment in the sector and should not increase any burden and that is the biggest challenge which we have and we are conscious of this fact."

What was meant was obviously that of being the first to handle the subject of auction of satellite spectrum. As is well known to all, consultations are yet to start and hence there can be no regulatory conclusion or outcome spoken of.

The third session of the day on “**Role of Innovation for Affordable Satellite Broadband**” was chaired by **Shri Radhakrishnan Durairaj**, CMD, NSIL. A galaxy of distinguished speakers from the industry participated in this important session which focused on the technology innovations in the space segment, the ground segment, satellite applications besides innovations in the launch vehicle technologies which have helped bring down the cost, improved efficiencies besides reliability and resilience of space based ecosystem thereby enabling inclusivity and satellite technology become part of the mainstream. This session witnessed eminent speakers from the industry which included **Mr. Gaurav Kharod**, Country Head, Intelsat; **Prof. Satyanarayan Chakravarthy**, Co-Founder Advisor, AgniKul Cosmos, IIT Madras; **Mr Shivaji Chatterjee**, EVP & Business Head- Hughes Communications India; **Mr. Cristian Gomez**, Senior Director, Government & Regulatory Affairs, Asia Pacific, Viasat and **Mr. Harsh Verma**, Vice President Sales Asia, SES

The last technical session was on “**Global Standards in Satellite Communications**” chaired by **Shri Rajeev Jyoti**, Director – Technical, IN-SPACe with participation from eminent subject matter experts from European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) including **Mr. Daniel Tesfagaber**, Chair - Technical Committee on Satellite Earth Stations (TC SES), ETSI; **Dr Julian Sesena**, Chair - Working Group on Harmonization for Standards on Satellite Earth Stations, ETSI; **Mr. Nicholas Chuberre**, **Thales** and Chair - WG Technical Committee (TC) on Satellite Earth Stations and Systems, Satellite Communications & Navigation (SES SCN), ETSI and **Mr. Prafulla Kumar**, Vice President , Technology & Product Head (SATCOM), Reliance Jio and member of the TSDSI WG on Satellite Standards.

BIF President, Mr. T.V. Ramachandran, commented, *“The modernisation of Satcom specifications by TEC, in conjunction with a general policy regime of a liberalised satellite communications, expected through the forthcoming India Space Bill/Policy, will lend a big boost to the mainstreaming of satcom, provide a cost-effective and reliable means to facilitate digital inclusivity and help bridge the digital divide in a much more efficient manner. An enabling light-touch policy & regulatory framework will enable enhancement of the indigenous space ecosystem to grow rapidly, thereby enabling India achieve its aspirations for provision of ubiquitous digital connectivity to each and every Indian across the country in a cost effective and seamless manner.”*

The enabling and expeditious policy and regulatory support from the Government of India in the last year and a half, underlines its commitment to use the best and most advanced technologies in satcom to provide efficient, reliable and affordable digital connectivity for all, especially those in the unserved and under-served regions of our country, thereby helping in bridging the digital divide. The industry is committed to provide its utmost support for realising the same.

The event concluded with the announcement for the 9th edition of the annual conference, India SatCom 2023, to be held on 14th and 15th **November 2023**.

About Broadband India Forum

Broadband India Forum (BIF) functions as an independent policy forum and knowledge-based think-tank that works for the development and enhancement of the entire broadband ecosystem in a holistic, technology-neutral and service-neutral manner. BIF has established itself as a thought leader and a credible and effective voice, to help propel the nation to achieve the country’s ambitious vision of creating a Digital India. To achieve

this, BIF works to promote the rapid development of policies, so as to facilitate affordable and high-speed ubiquitous broadband throughout the country.

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