

BIF PRESS RELEASE

BIF Expresses Strong Disappointment Over Omission of Lower 6 GHz Band in NFAP 2025

New Delhi, 31 December 2025: Broadband India Forum (BIF) has expressed strong disappointment and serious concern over the National Frequency Allocation Plan (NFAP) 2025, as the document fails to address some of the most urgent and foundational spectrum requirements needed to deliver sustainable, affordable, inclusive, and future-ready broadband connectivity across India.

While the NFAP-2025 document is expected to function as a strategic, forward-looking policy instrument one that reflects Government intent, global technology trends and outcomes of stakeholder consultations, the complete omission of the Lower 6 GHz band for which Government has already declared its intent when it issued draft Gazette Notification on 16th May, 2025 and when it was announced in public forums including on World WiFi Day 2025, comes as a major shock and setback and reflects a missed opportunity for strengthening India's digital and innovation ecosystem.

Lower 6 GHz Omission: A Critical Miss in Spectrum Planning

Keeping in view the strategic importance of the Lower 6 GHz band for a Viksit Bharat and the Government's already declared intent to delicense it vide the Draft Gazette Notification of 16th May, 2025, it would have been apt if a reference to the same had been made, with a covering remark that operational and implementation details would be notified subsequently through a separate GSR (General Spectrum Release (GSR)). This absence is particularly troubling given the fact that the Lower 6 GHz band is globally harmonised and deployed in a license exempt manner in 97 countries till date and with several others already waiting to follow suit. Also for enabling modern, advanced & next-generation Wi-Fi (WiFi6E, WiFi7 & WiFi8), this band is seen as indispensable for delivering high-capacity, low-latency, and cost-efficient connectivity across homes, enterprises, campuses, public WiFi hotspots, and smart infrastructure.

By failing to even provide a forward-looking reference, NFAP 2025 denies stakeholders much-needed policy clarity and weakens confidence in India's long-term Wi-Fi and innovation roadmap.

Departure from Stated Government Intent

In this context, the exclusion of the Lower 6 GHz band from NFAP 2025 is not merely an oversight; it represents a clear departure from an already articulated policy direction. Such inconsistency introduces avoidable uncertainty and risks slowing momentum for innovation and the deployment of modern, advanced Wi-Fi technologies across the country.

Implications for Innovation, Inclusion, and Emerging Technologies

Wi-Fi continues to be the most affordable and widely used broadband access technology in India, playing a decisive role in indoor connectivity, public access networks, and last-mile digital inclusion. Access to the Lower 6 GHz band is essential to support high-growth and high-impact applications such as digital education, telemedicine, AR/VR/XR, cloud gaming, metaverse platforms, digital twins, and immersive enterprise solutions. These use cases demand large contiguous spectrum blocks capable of delivering high throughput with low latency at scale; requirements that cannot be sustainably met without the license exempt assignment of the Lower 6 GHz band.

By overlooking this reality, NFAP 2025 risks constraining India's ability to harness Wi-Fi as a key driver of innovation, productivity, and socio-economic transformation.

Urgent Need for Policy Coherence

In BIF's view, the NFAP [National Frequency Allocation Plan] must demonstrate policy continuity, coherence, and clarity. The complete silence on the Lower 6 GHz band in NFAP 2025 runs counter to these principles and risks delaying the rollout of advanced Wi-Fi networks that

are critical to deliver sustainable, affordable, inclusive, and future-ready broadband and achieve India's digital ambitions.

Mr. T. V. Ramachandran, President, BIF, said: *"BIF is deeply disappointed that NFAP 2025 makes no mention of the Lower 6 GHz band, especially when a Draft Gazette Notification for its delicensing was already issued earlier this year, clearly signalling Government intent. At the very least, the NFAP should have acknowledged this direction and indicated that operational details would follow under GSR. The absence of such recognition is a setback for innovation and for the deployment of advanced Wi-Fi needed to support use cases such as e-education, e-health, immersive technologies, and next-generation digital services. We urge the Government to address this gap and provide the policy clarity necessary to enable affordable, ubiquitous, and future-ready broadband connectivity."*

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