

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

**New Delhi, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021:** Day-two of **'India SatCom 2021'**, 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. Two dedicated sessions on the vital topics of **'Modern Satcom Technologies & Consumer Benefits'** and the **'Complementary Role of Satcom to help achieve Broadband for All'** were held, followed by an **'Interactive Session'** with participation from senior government dignitaries and leading industry experts in the satellite communications vertical, from India and abroad.

The session on **'Modern Satcom Technologies & Consumer Benefits'** was chaired by Shri Rakesh Sasibhushan, CMD, Antrix with Mr. K Krishna, VP & CTO, Hughes India; Mr. Shivaji Chatterjee, Sr. VP, Enterprise Business, Hughes Communications India Limited; Mr. Cristian Gomez, Sr. Director, Government & Regulatory Affairs - Asia Pacific, Viasat; Mr. Mehul Bhandari, Sr. Advisor, Policy & Regulatory (India), Viasat; Mr. Gidi Talmor, Vice President of Sales and Business Development, Satixfy, UK; Mr. Gajendra Tijare, Executive Vice President, STAR India; and Mr. Brajendra Urmalia, Product & Pre-sales Head – Maritime & Aero Business, Nelco Limited participating as eminent Industry Speakers. The session focused on how the latest policy and regulatory provisions have enabled positioning of satcom as a viable, mainstream technology option for delivering efficient and cost competitive broadband services everywhere and to everyone in a ubiquitous manner. The implications of a liberalised approach and enhanced applicability of satcom for future networks were also discussed, especially with the expected imminent ecosystem of converged technologies and verticals going forward. 5G for example, will be integral to the use of IoT applications, Industry 4.0, etc. for augmenting efficiencies, performance and productivity, in a multitude of sectors. Satcom will play the major role in providing both connectivity as well as backhaul services to the networks for these sectors.

The next session explored the **'Complementary Role of Satcom to help achieve Broadband for All'**, delving into the aspects of need for Satellite Broadband to provide ubiquitous internet connectivity across the length and breadth of the country, issues pertaining to satcom's enhanced capabilities and how it can complement other technologies to facilitate a robust blend of all communications technologies in creating a cohesive and widespread pan-India network, to cater to the connectivity needs of the people. Session Chair Shri Suneel Kumar Niraniyan, DDG (Satellite), Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications, Government of India, discussed and deliberated on the critical topic with Industry Experts - Shri Rahul Vatts, Director, OneWeb; Mr. Chris McIntosh, CEO, Methera Global Communications Ltd. and Mr. Subhankar Pal, Senior Director and Global Research & Innovation Leader for Future of Networks, Capgemini Engineering, among others. With its suite of technology advancements and ensuing integration into Global Standards for 5G, Satcom can help in proliferation of 5G in geographically challenged terrains, remote and far flung rural areas.

A vibrant **Interactive Session** was held next, with Shri K Rathnakara, Director - Satcom PO, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Department of Space (DoS) as Session Chair and Shri Suneel Kumar Niraniyan, DDG - Satellite, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) as Co-Chair. The industry participants were Mr. PJ Nath, MD & CEO, TATA Nelco; Mr. K Krishna, VP & CTO, Hughes India; Mr. K Aravamudhan, Sr. VP, STAR India; Mr. Gautam Sharma, MD, Inmarsat India; Mr. Mehul Bhandari, Sr. Advisor, Policy & Regulatory (India), Viasat; Mr. Chris McIntosh, CEO, Methera Global Communications Ltd. and other reputed experts from the satcom ecosystem. The session explored the relevant and critical policy & regulatory issues in regard to strengthening and enhancing the satcom vertical in the country, to help achieve the desired national goals of 'Digital India' and 'Broadband for All'.

**BIF President, Mr. TV 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 Spacecom Policy, will lend a cost-effective and reliable means to facilitate digital inclusivity and will help bridge the country’s digital divide in a much more efficient manner. An enabling light-touch policy & regulatory framework accompanied by use of the latest state-of-the-art satcom technologies will ultimately serve the purpose of empowering and benefitting the consumers the most, through improved ubiquitous coverage and augmented capacity along with reliability and resilience. The growing demand for quality data connectivity and its ubiquitous availability across the entire nation clearly underlines the importance of augmenting and utilising this most potent and effective media for delivering broadband to the masses.”*

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 virtual event concluded with the announcement for the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the annual conference, India SatCom 2022, to be held on **15-16 November 2022**.

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#### **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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