

According to a joint report by Assocham and Ernst and Young (EY), internet of things (IoT) has the potential to reach 2 billion connections and generate revenues worth Rs \$11.1 billion by 2022.

However, the report highlighted that, India currently lags behind the US, China and South Korea in terms of optical fibre connectivity. At present, only 25 per cent of the telecom towers in India carry optical fibre whereas the share of OFC in the US, China and Korea is about 65-80 per cent.

In this regard, the report pointed out that nearly 60 per cent of the telecom towers in India will need to be fiberised by 2022, as outlined in the National Digital Communications Policy (NDCP) 2018. As demand for 4G and subsequently 5G grows, networks will become denser and deeper, making fiberisation an imperative, it said.

Moreover, the emergence of new technologies would multiply the consumption of data, thereby necessitating the need for installing more towers. To this end, about 100,000 telecom towers will be required to meet the growing demand for data across India. Further, the report stressed on the need to upgrade backhaul networks and fiberise minimum of 60 per cent of mobile towers to support the 5G ecosystem.

In addition, the report also suggested the rationalisation of licence fees, taxes and levies to promote investments and revive the financial health of the sector to harness emerging technologies.

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