



PRESS RELEASE

GSM INDUSTRY MAKES STRONG PITCH FOR 3G MOBILE BROADBAND FOR ALL

April 25, 2008, NEW DELHI...In a first of its kind, the Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), and the GSMA (GSM Association), the global trade group for the mobile industry, have partnered to present a Seminar on “3G Mobile Broadband for All” on Friday, April 25, 2008 in New Delhi.

The **Seminar was inaugurated by the Hon’ble Minister of Telecom and IT Thiru A Raja.**

A host of industry leaders from the mobile eco-system participated in the event, including **Mr. Rob Conway, CEO and Board Member of the GSMA** and **Mr. Sunil Mittal, Chairman & Group CEO, Bharti Enterprises** who gave keynote perspectives on the international 3G landscape and the potential for Mobile Broadband, with particular emphasis on the social and economic advantages it will bring for India.

The agenda also boasted a **number of expert speakers** providing insights on the benefits of Mobile Broadband, **both from India as well as abroad, sharing their experiences and expertise in Mobile Broadband deployment.** These included **Mr. Don Price**, Director Networks, Bharti Airtel, **Mr. Neil Gough**, Director Public Policy – Emerging Markets, Vodafone Group Plc, **Mr. Kanwalinder Singh**, President Qualcomm India and South Asia, **Mr. Paul Salmon**, Head of Technology Development Maxis, Malaysia, **Mr. David O’Byrne**, Director, Mobile Operator Business Development, Microsoft, **Mr. Vineet Taneja**, Head- Go to Market, Nokia India, and **Mr. Naresh Singh**, Principal Analyst, Gartner Inc. The afternoon session was presided over by **Mr. Shyamal Ghosh**, former Secretary, DoT and currently the Chairman of NASSCOM’s Data Security Council.

Around **250 delegates** comprising of members of the GSM operator community, global infrastructure and handset vendors, media and various other industry stakeholders **participated in the Seminar.**

The Seminar included a **live demonstration on Mobile Broadband applications by Ericsson**, which showcased its Gramjyoti Project. Ericsson demonstrated how 3G Mobile Broadband could change and enhance the lives of people and communities. The demo included clips on mobile education, e-governance, tele medicine and how the eco-system can be harnessed to deliver these applications on a sustainable basis. **Mr. P Balaji, Vice President, Marketing, Ericsson** said that the **project could be scaled up to cover 2 lakh villages** where GSM towers already existed and that **there was a very viable model for using mobile communications to bridge the digital divide.**

The **Hon’ble Minister Thiru A Raja in his Inaugural Address lauded the growth of the GSM industry and noted** the many milestones that the industry had crossed in the last one year alone, including the **latest landmark** of April 2008 **which saw India become the second largest wireless market in the world.** Hon’ble Minister **emphasized on the need** for the industry **to now focus on improved rural penetration.** He remarked that **“mobile broadband will be the most desirable and preferred way to increase broadband penetration”.** Hon’ble

Minister announced that the Government would very shortly come out with its detailed guidelines in respect of 3G as also mobile broadband access.

Rob Conway, CEO and Board Member of the GSMA commented: "It is essential that additional spectrum is released to mobile operators in India as soon as possible, so that users can enjoy the myriad of benefits derived from Mobile Broadband services, which are live today in more than 73 countries. India's mobile industry, its technology eco-system and ultimately its economy can take advantage of tremendous economies of scale to bring affordable Mobile Broadband services, including internet access and rich media services, to millions of people in India."

Mr. Sunil Mittal in his opening remarks said that "India represented the finest example of public-private partnership and how telecom has benefited society." He also said that "it was time now for the industry to crack the code of mobile broadband and that in India, mobile broadband was required in the rural areas."

Ms. Suneeta Reddy, Chairperson Elect, COAI and Chairperson Aircel, in her vote of thanks, thanked all present in the gathering for their support for the cause of mobile broadband. Ms. Reddy expressed the hope that India would soon introduce 3G and assured the Hon'ble Minister that the industry would fully participate in and support the broadband revolution and do its best to help achieve the connectivity objectives of the Government.

FAST FACTS ON 3G MOBILE BROADBAND

3G Mobile Broadband services are taking off exponentially in the rest of the world.

As of April 2008, there are over **168 networks in 73 countries that have opted for mobile broadband (HSPA).**

As of March 2008, there are **more than 32 million Mobile broadband (HSPA) connections worldwide**, a ten-fold increase in the last one-year alone. This is **forecast to grow to 700 million by 2012.**

There is also a **vast selection of 3G Mobile Broadband devices** available in the market today. It is estimated that **more than 470 devices had been commercialized by 102 vendors by April 2008.** These devices include handsets, notebooks, USB modems, PC cards and wireless routers.

In the last four years, the **prices of WCDMA handsets have dropped by almost 80%** signaling the ever-improving affordability of the service.

It is estimated that the **sale of 3G Mobile broadband devices will increase** from around 170 million in 2007 **to nearly 800 million in 2013.**

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