



# **Telecommunication Law- An Overview**

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## Topics Covered

- Meaning of telecommunication
- Historical evolution of telecommunication sector
- Fact check: India's telecommunication network
- Impact of the telecommunication sector
- Authorities in telecom sector
- Legislations in telecom sector

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## MEANING OF TELECOMMUNICATION

Compound of the Greek prefix “tele” which means ‘far off’, and the Latin word “communicare”, which means ‘to share’

In general parlance, refers to transmission of signals over a distance for the purpose of communication

Ancient period: communication between persons took place by means of drums, smoke signals, flags

Present time: introduction of sophisticated high-speed telecommunication service, increase in the demand for signal transmission

Major sectors of the Indian telecommunication industry: Telephone, Internet and Television Broadcast Industry

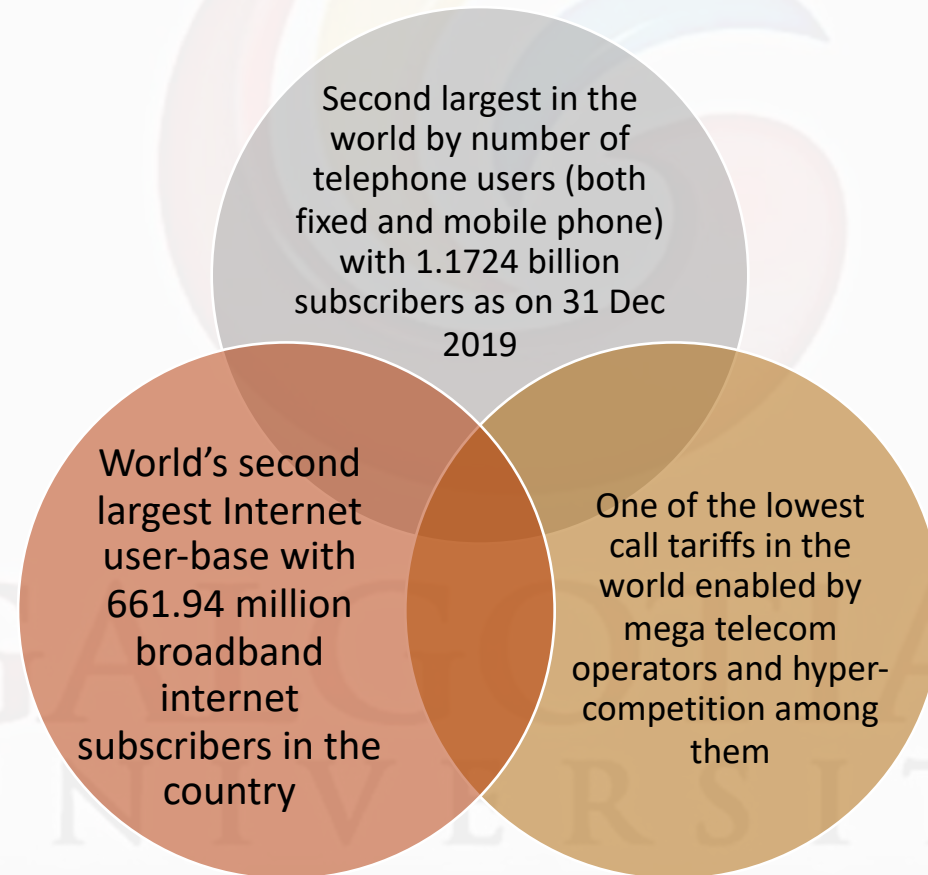
## HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR

- 1850: First experimental electric telegraph line was started between Calcutta & Diamond Harbour
- 1853: The construction of 4,000 miles of telegraph lines
- 1880: The Oriental Telephone Co. Ltd. and the Anglo-Indian Telephone Company Ltd. approached the Indian Govt. to establish telephone exchange in India. [refused by the GOI]
- 1881: Oriental Telephone Co. Ltd was granted license for opening telephone exchanges at Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Ahmedabad establishing the first formal telephone service in the country

- 1913-1914: First Automatic Exchange installed in Shimla
- 1933: Radiotelephone system inaugurated between the UK and India
- 1960: First subscriber trunk dialing route commissioned between Kanpur and Lucknow
- 1980: Department of Posts and Telegraphs [telephone services and postal services]
- 1985: Separation of the Department of Post and creation of the Department of Telecommunications

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## FACT CHECK: INDIA'S TELECOMMUNICATION NETWORK



## IMPACT OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION SECTOR

- ❖ Enabled telephonic communication between people in different locations
- ❖ Enabled supply-chains to work seamlessly across continents to create products and fulfil demands
- ❖ Key to the rapid growth and modernization of the economy
- ❖ Important tool for socio- economic development for a nation
- ❖ Significant role in narrowing down the rural-urban digital divide
- ❖ Transparency of governance with the introduction of e-governance in India
- ❖ Deliver mass education programmes for the rural folk of India

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## AUTHORITIES IN TELECOM SECTOR

Department of Telecommunications

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal

Wireless Planning & Co-ordination Wing

Standing Advisory Committee on Radio Frequency Allocation



## TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAWS

The Indian Telegraph Act,  
1885

The Indian Wireless  
Telegraphy Act, 1933

The Telecom Regulatory  
Authority of India Act, 1997

The Information Technology  
Act, 2000

## References

- The India Telegraph Sector: Legal & Regulatory Framework, Nishith Desai Associates 2014.
- Telecom Sector Regulation in India: An Institutional Perspective by Maruthi P. Tangirala 2019.

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