

## **India still not ready to launch 5G**

### **Why in news?**

Parliamentary committee thinks that India may miss the roll out of 5G services as mentioned in the government's report.

### **What are the findings of parliamentary committee?**

- It says that despite Department of Telecommunications (DoT) report that India is ready to roll out 5G as early as 2018 but there is little progress on the ground.
- Uncertainty in spectrum auctions, high reserve price of spectrum, inadequate development of test cases, low reach of optical fibre & deficient back-haul capacity are the causes for it.
- It also noted that reserve price for auction of 5G was one of the highest in the world which needs to be rationalised.
- The reserve price must take into account the per capita income of the country & reserve prices mandated by other countries.

### **What is the status of global countries are in implementing 5G?**

- Globally, across 59 countries 118 telecom service providers have started deploying 5G networks and AT&T started its testing and deployment in early 2018.
- Verizon followed AT&T's path in expanding its 5G ultra-wide broadband services to 60 cities in the US.
- China has rolled out its 5G services which covers around 8 per cent of their population.
- But India is yet to give formal approvals for 5G testing despite all the 3 major private telecom players having submitted their applications as early as January 2020.
- Reliance Jio is ready to deploy 5G services and is waiting for a nod from the DoT and Bharti Airtel has successfully demonstrated its 5G service over a commercial network in Hyderabad.

### **Will India miss the 5G bus?**

- Though the DoT said that 5G network will be rolled out in late 2021 or early 2022, it would mostly be only in very selected areas.

- Therefore India will continue to use 4G network for the coming 5-6 years.
- It finds that 2G, 3G, 4G deployments was late by 4 years, 10years & 7 years respectively & sufficient preparatory work has not been undertaken for launching of 5G services in India.
- By the time 5G covers 20% of the world population, it will exclude a major portion of India hence it is likely that India is going to miss on 5G opportunities after missing the 2G, 3G and 4G bus.
- The committee suggests that India must expedite its approvals process, sort out issues such as spectrum auction, back-haul capacity, price and user test cases to catch up with other countries.

### **What can be done for faster roll out of 5G services?**

- India can still meet its deadline and board with other countries in rolling out its 5G services.
- Even before the committee findings, DoT reduced the notice period for telcos to 6 months from 1 year to facilitate faster roll out of new services.
- This means that telcos can start testing the 5G network for commercial purposes in all three bands- low, mid and high frequency spectrum.
- It also means that companies can get faster return on their capital expenditure invested because large number of users are eager to try latest technology in mobile and internet connectivity.
- Internet speeds in the high-band spectrum of 5G has been tested to be as high as 20 Gbps (giga bits per second) whereas the maximum internet data speed in 4G is 1 Gbps.
- Moreover parliamentary committee hopes that the DoT would reach an understanding with the Department of Space and Ministry of Defence in earmarking the allocation of spectrum.

**Source: The Indian Express**



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