New Telecom Policy-2018

Why in news?

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The communications ministry is going to set up a working groups to deliberate on the new telecom policy which is expected in 2018.

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What to expect from NTP-2018?

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- The advent of high-speed data services and enhanced user expectation of getting real time on-demand band-width to run live applications has set the tone for new policy.
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- It will be application driven as compared to connectivity driven at present.
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- The focus will be on the end users and newer opportunities for expanding the availability of telecom services.
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- Impetus for the development of next-generation technologies like 5G, Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and seamless connectivity is envisioned.
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- It has been proposed to align the new policy with various e-governance initiatives like Digital India, Internet for all, smart cities and and intelligent transportation systems, along with enhancing web based education & financial services.
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- Facilitating more investments in the sector is being considered as a priority.
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- The establishment of one pan-Indian telecom circle by integrating the various present regional circles is being considered.
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- Skills development and security archetecture in the sector are being

cosiderd.
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- The ministry has promised “widest possible public consultation” involving the industry, local stakeholders & government regulators for finalising the contours of the NTP.
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What is the current scenario in the industry?

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- India is the second largest telecom market in the world with over one billion mobile subscribers.
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- FDI equity inflow in the sector has been drastically increasing year on.
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- However, the sector is now reeling under a staggering Rs 4.6 lakh crore of debt.
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- The pressure on revenue and profitability due to intense competition in the market, and disruptive voice and data offerings of the newcomer ‘Reliance Jio’ has hit the industry hard.
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- An inter-ministerial group has been constituted to suggest ways to ease the industry’s financial stress.
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- The Telecom department is also considering setting up telecom Computer Emergency Response Team-CERT to enhance cyber & telecom security.
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- Internet’s contribution to India’s GDP at about 5.6% in 2015-16 and is estimated to grow to nearly 16% of the country’s GDP by 2020.
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Source: Economic Times

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