



# GAMECHANGERS



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THE ECONOMIC TIMES, MUMBAI, THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2016

A CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE



**Excellence & Innovation in Telecommunications:** All the winners at the fifth edition of The Economic Times Telecom Awards, an initiative supported by GTL Infrastructure Ltd.

## THE FUTURE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The fifth edition of The Economic Times Telecom Awards seeks to honour and acknowledge the excellence and innovation in the Indian telecom sector as a result of which this key infrastructure sector has grown by leaps and bounds and is close to connecting a billion Indians

Suhana Bhatia

You're probably reading this feature, while keeping an eye on your mobile phone, waiting for that urgent email, a Whatsapp message from home or a comment on your post on social media. Who knows, you're probably reading this on our e-paper on your phone? Simultaneously, you have also this same device to pay your electricity bill online, and will have a Skype meeting with your Singapore-based client in an hour's time. As kids, we used to read about such fascinating technologies in sci-fi comics and now we live in this reality. Artificial intelligence has turned things around on their head, and no one's complaining.

The fifth edition of The Economic Times Telecom Awards presented by GTL Infrastructure Limited was held on 11 March, 2016 in New Delhi. As has become the norm over the last four years, the awards night witnessed the convergence of some of the most eminent personalities and leaders from the Indian telecommunications industry. These awards, an initiative by The Times Group and GTL Infrastructure Limited are aimed at providing a platform that celebrates the excellence displayed by industry members and also highlights the benchmarks and standards of business and of innovation that are a hallmark of the highly competitive telecommunications industry in India. The telecom sector of India has perhaps the most tangible and immediate impact on the daily lives of millions of Indians. Its policies, decisions and business generate interest from the consumer in a vocal way. From mobile number portability to the lowering of the voice call; from call service providers transforming into the internet service provider; the telecom operators in India not only provide a voice service for the

Indian consumer but they also become an agent of change and growth for the consumer and the national economy.

### TELECOM 2020

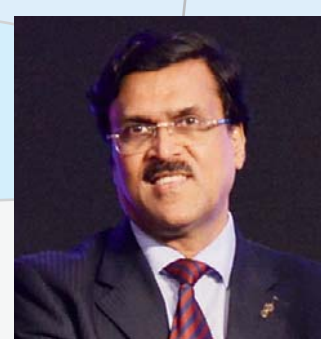
The evening began with a welcome address by Arunabh Das Sharma, President, Bennett, Coleman and Company Limited. He said that these awards aim to celebrate excellence and set benchmarks for the highest standards of innovation in the telecom industry in a market which is ever evolving and thus poses its own set of challenges. "Through this initiative, The Economic Times has created what we believe is a credible platform that truly honours the achievers in the telecom sector," he further added. These awards recognise those who ventured into the unknown - telecom is still a relatively new industry - and created products and services that are both innovative and competitive. Telecommunication services are



**Arunabh Das Sharma**  
President, Bennett, Coleman and Company Limited

recognised globally to be really good barometers of economic development in a nation. They are also one of the prime support services needed for rapid growth and modernisation of various sectors of the economy. The government of India

recognises this fact and has taken several major initiatives to provide a business friendly environment for fostering growth in this industry. Driven by a reasonably high 3G penetration and the 4G rollout, a



The growth of the sector has been due to huge and continuing partnership between private enterprise and the government... helped along by a lot of innovators.

**JS DEEPAK**  
Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman - Telecom Commission

fairly large M2M (Machine to Machine) growth is expected in India, especially when allied with other smart government initiatives such as the Smart Cities Project. India is already set to become the 2nd largest global market for smart phones. According to a study by GSME, which really represents the interests of mobile operators, we believe that by 2020 smart phones will account for 2 out of every 3 phones in India. And that can have a transformative impact on the economy. "This year we have introduced a new platform - Telecom Vision 2020, which is to identify and recognise visionary ideas which will enable the telecom industry to thrive in an environment of change and accelerate India's position on the global map by setting new benchmarks and trends," he informed the audience.

### TELECOM TRANSFORMATION

JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India and Chairman - Telecom Commission,

telecommunications experience in India via his own experiences. He recalled how in the early 80s, making a 'lightning call' to a neighbouring town barely 40 km away, took more time than typing the contents of the message and sending it via road. In contrast, India today boasts of the world's second largest telecommunications network. Deepak credited this transformation to the huge and continuing partnership between private enterprise and the government, helped along by a lot of innovators and great policies. The next phase of the growth and expansion of the telecom sector was the Internet. Internet being mostly mobile in India, its rapid and widespread growth has been phenomenal! It took 18 years to touch the first 100 million internet connections, 3 years for the second hundred million, 18 months for the third 100 million and a mere 12 months to touch 400 million users in December 2015.

What is even more incredible is the multitude of ways that mobile-based technology aided by

internet connections, has done to revolutionise education, banking, agriculture, socio-economic reform and awareness in the remotest sectors and areas of the nation.

### THE AWARDS PROCESS

The awards were preceded by an audio-visual presentation by Ernst & Young, the official tabulators of these awards. The process of finding the final awardees is a rigorous and intense journey with some of the most respected names in the industry screening over a hundred nominees in 13 hotly contested categories.

The jury looks for not just innovation but innovation that will have an impact on the socio-economic fabric of the community and was also sustainable. The awards this year looked for projects and innovations that also have scalability in the future. Last but not least, they had to be relevant to India and for India. The ET Telecom Awards ultimately, were a toast to innovation, socio-economic revolution and changing technologies. While the awardees have gone home treasuring their trophies, work is underway already for innovations and technologies that will seek to further transform the telecommunications horizon for India because the vision is to transform India into a digitally powered Knowledge Economy by 2020.



Catch the coverage of the ET Telecom Awards on ET NOW - Saturday, April 2, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. Repeat telecast on Sunday, April 3, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.

### QUOTE UNQUOTE



These kinds of events are extremely important if you want a particular industry to progress. Fortunately, everyone in this country has understood the importance of communication, and appropriate support has come from the government. If you see, all the important operators in the world are today part of this industry in India.

**Milind Naik**  
Wholtime Director & COO, GTL Infrastructure Ltd.



The ET awards have been a very special area for us... so applying for the award, going through the rigour and going through the entire jury process was a challenge. It was a tremendous achievement and I take my hat off to each and every one of my communications team member who has seen this through and actually this award is for them. I'm just taking it on their behalf.

**Rajat Mukarji**  
Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Idea Cellular



It is about making sense of the data through intelligence, so we would call ourselves a Machine Intelligence / Artificial Intelligence company for telecom networks. That's what we do - where you can build a layer of intelligence upon the data that is coming in, from various sources, both human created as well as machine.

**Avinash Ambale**  
Founder & CEO, Pervasive Automations Systems



I think, as you all know, that data is exploding. It is a big revolution and the biggest hindrance towards adoption of data is really around rural areas, especially around the women-folk. So it's about 'how do we really go about and engage the women and get them into the internet fold?' So, we said we will go down to the block level... to the rural areas... speak to them, train them on it and then bring them into the data fold. That's what we did really. We went to almost 128 block levels and today, we have one lakh fifty thousand women who we have been able to make 'internet-saksham' (internet-skilled). That's what 'stree-shakti' is all about.

**Vir Inder Nath**  
CEO, Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh, Bharti Airtel



Today, broadband offers the biggest opportunity. Internet is offering the biggest opportunity. Affordable internet for the masses is a big challenge that we are facing. On one side it is a huge opportunity, on the other side it is a huge challenge to deliver affordable, good quality internet.

**Sridhar Krish**  
Chief Operating Officer, Tikona Digital Network Pvt. Ltd.

WINNER

**GAMECHANGER OF THE YEAR - PAYTM**



L to R: JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission and Kiran Reddy - Vice President, Paytm

WINNER

**USE OF TELECOM FOR SOCIAL GOOD (FOR PROFIT COMPANY) - BHARTI AIRTEL LTD.**



L to R: JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Vir Inder Nath, CEO, Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh, Bharti Airtel and Puneet Gupta, Head Corporate Communications, MP&CG, Bharti Airtel

WINNER

**USE OF TELECOM FOR SOCIAL GOOD (FOR NON-PROFIT COMPANY) - IMMUNIZE INDIA CHARITY**



L to R: JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Dr. Pramod Jog, President - Indian Academy of Pediatrics; Rajan Kumar Pejavar - Managing Trustee and Gopala Krishnan - Trustee





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WINNER

**EXCELLENCE IN TOWER DEVELOPMENT –**  
ERICSSON INDIA PVT. LTD. – ERICSSON ZERO SITE



L to R: Saurav Mukherjee, Director, BCCL; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Jayant S. Moghe, Head Mobile Broad Band, Engagement Practice and Arvind Gupta, Director Mobile Broadband, Engagement Practice

## LOOKING AT THE FUTURE

Here is how to use the information generated to design the future

Avinash Ambale of Pervasive gave a presentation titled "Looking at The Future". The focus was on how to use information and lessons from the past to help design the future.

The numbers and facts that he shared with the audience stunned the mind. The world today is awash in a flood of data with 5 hexabytes of data being created each day. Whether it is uploading videos, posting images on social media, industrial data transfer, etc., we are literally walking and breathing through a mine of information invisibly travelling past us. The global



**Looking Ahead:** Avinash Ambale, Founder & CEO - Pervasive

mobile data traffic has gone up by 274 per cent in just one year. But what does that do for us? Is it possible to quantify and analyse this humongous information? How do

mobile operators use this data to make smarter decisions?

"While we're talking about 4G, 5G is already on the way... it is a 'moving target'. The more speeds you give consumers, the more data is being used, generated and consumed. One way is to take the data being generated by the cellular networks and observe the decisions being made by consumers - to look at patterns of the past and make informed decisions about the future," Ambale said. The point of Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence is to be able to use algorithms to learn from data and

patterns that are constantly changing and then adapting the technologies to suit the consumer.

He made a relevant case in point about using the scenario of poor network service and call drops. In such a situation, a high-value customer can be offered a month's free subscription to a preferred channel instead of just free talk-time. This information which has been generated from data analysis has thus helped companies retain valued customers. He also made a strong and valid case for using Predictive Analytics to inform network operators about what to do next. "Different people have different ethical, moral, legal complications with machine-learning but we are not here to replace general consciousness. We are not replacing human intelligence by a machine," he pointed out.

## THE FINAL JURY



**Aditya Ghosh**  
President - Indigo



**Madhavan Menon**  
Chairman & MD - Thomas Cook



**Atul Jayawant**  
Senior President & Group CIO - Aditya Birla Group of Companies



**V. Vaidyanathan**  
Chairman & Managing Director - Capital First Ltd.



**Sanjay Jain**  
Group CFO - Future Group



**R.S. Sodhi**  
MD - Amul India



**Munish Mittal**  
CIO - HDFC Bank

WINNER

**INNOVATION IN DEVELOPING OEM PRODUCT –**  
OS LABS - INDUS OS LTD.



L to R: Milind Naik, Wholetime Director & Chief Operating Officer – GTL Infrastructure Ltd.; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission and Rakesh Deshmukh - CEO

WINNER

**EXCELLENCE IN MOBILE CUSTOMER SERVICE –**  
AIRCEL – AIRCEL SEWA KENDRAS



L to R: Sachin Kumar Das - Vice President & Head Customer Service Operations; Milind Naik, Wholetime Director & Chief Operating Officer – GTL Infrastructure Ltd.; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Alok Kumar, Head-Customer Services; Sarika Singhal, Manager- Consumer Insights and Vaibhav Chaturvedi, AGM - Call Center Operations

WINNER

**BEST TELECOM SERVICE PROVIDER – AIRTEL**



L to R: Milind Naik, Wholetime Director & Chief Operating Officer – GTL Infrastructure Ltd.; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission and Vir Inder Nath, CEO, Madhya Pradesh & Chhattisgarh, Bharti Airtel

WINNER

**EXCELLENCE IN BROADBAND PRODUCT – TIKONA**  
DIGITAL NETWORK PVT. LTD. – TIKONA 4G HOME BROADBAND



L to R: Saurav Mukherjee, Director, BCCL; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Sridhar Krish, Chief Operating Officer, Tikona Digital Network Pvt. Ltd. and Sidharath Parimoo, Associate Vice President, Tikona Digital Network Pvt. Ltd.

WINNER

**INNOVATION IN CLOUD BASED TECHNOLOGY FOR THE TELECOM INDUSTRY –**  
TECH MAHINDRA LTD. – CLOUD AGGREGATION PLATFORM



L to R: Milind Naik, Wholetime Director & Chief Operating Officer – GTL Infrastructure Ltd.; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission and Manish Sharma, Platform Head - Cloud Aggregation

WINNER

**MARKETING CAMPAIGN –**  
IDEA CELLULAR LTD. – IDEA INTERNET NETWORK



L to R: Milind Naik, Wholetime Director & Chief Operating Officer – GTL Infrastructure Ltd.; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Rajat Mukarji, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer and Manoj Kumar, Vice President, Service Delivery

WINNER

**EXCELLENCE IN MOBILE DEVICE & EQUIPMENT –**  
SAMSUNG INDIA ELECTRONICS PVT. LTD. – ULTRA DATA SAVING MODE



L to R: Saurav Mukherjee, Director, BCCL; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Amit Kumar, Director, Samsung R&D Institute, India; Tasleem Arif, DGM, Samsung R&D Institute, India and Manoj Kumar - Lead Engineer

WINNER

**EXCELLENCE IN ENERGY MANAGEMENT – INDUS TOWER LTD.**



L to R: Saurav Mukherjee, Director, BCCL; JS Deepak, Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Government of India & Chairman-Telecom Commission; Aishwarya Manikachhal, Deputy General Manager; Neeraj Kumar, Manager - Energy and Indrani Chatterjee, Deputy General Manager - Energy