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India

TRAI recommends introduction of MVNOs

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended the introduction of MVNOs in the Indian Telecom network.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in March requested TRAI to make recommendations on the need and timing for introduction of MVNO as well as terms and conditions of the license to be granted to such operators. TRAI has undertaken a public consultation process on the various underlying issues relating to the introduction of MVNOs such as concept and definition of MVNO, different models, need and timing for entry of MVNOs, regulatory approaches, licensing issues etc. It issued a consultation paper on 5 May 2008, followed by an open house discussion in New Delhi on 16 June.

It recommends that an MVNO be defined as "any licensee in any service area that does not have spectrum of its own for access service, but can provide wireless (mobile) access services to its own customers through an agreement with the licensed access provider, UAS/CMTS licensee." These would include services offered in 2G, 3G and broadband wireless access (BWA) spectrum. MVNOs would not be able to participate in spectrum auctions for access services in their service area, as they cannot have their own spectrum. Similarly, ISPs can become MVNOs if they do not own broadband wireless access spectrum.

TRAI recommends that MVNOs be introduced as a distinct service provider category with its own licensing and regulatory framework. Any Indian company having a net worth of Rs100 million for metro/ category A areas, Rs50 million for category B areas and Rs30 million for category C service areas and paid up capital of 10 percent of prescribed net worth and satisfying licence conditions such as FDI, substantial equity etc would be eligible to apply for an MVNO licence.

MVNOs would be free to choose their business model. Typically, a 'thin' MVNO would offer services in its own brand without any infrastructure and a 'full' MVNO would set up its own HLR, VLR, IN switches, MSC etc. There would be no limit on number of MVNOs that could operate on any individual mobile network.

The full text of the recommendations is available on TRAI's website (www.trai.gov.in).

Bharti Enterprises restructures

Bharti Enterprises has created a new structure designed to "strongly build emerging businesses as well as enhance empowerment to functions and developed businesses."

"We are now embarking on a journey to significantly scale up our emerging businesses and leverage our leadership position in established businesses. Towards this end, we are strengthening the Bharti organisation structure and the governance model that will take us further on the path to building one of the most admired conglomerates in India," said Sunil Bharti Mittal, chairman and group CEO of Bharti.

"With the new structure, we will engage functionally with our emerging businesses at a deeper level, empower the developed businesses, strengthen the interface mechanisms of Bharti with the businesses and leverage the group functions effectively."

An office of the chairman & group CEO has been created with primary focus on seeking growth opportunities, guiding businesses, securing financial health of the group, and growing & developing talent. Rakesh Bharti Mittal and Rajan Bharti Mittal will be the vice chairmen & MD of Bharti Enterprises. While Rakesh B Mittal will also be the co-chairman of Bharti Foundation and enhance focus on social projects, Rajan

B Mittal has been elevated to the position of vice-chairman and will focus on retail, cash & carry and realty. The office of the chairman & CEO will be supported by three directors – director, chairman's office; director, corporate affairs and director, shareholder's office.

Akhil Gupta has been elevated as the post of deputy group CEO & MD of Bharti Enterprises. He will take specific charge of the Tower Infrastructure business as the vice chairman & MD, Bharti Infratel and also lead the financial services and the software business. He will continue to be on the board of Bharti Airtel. Manoj Kohli, has been elevated as the CEO & joint managing director of Bharti Airtel.

China

NTT Com & Coordinate to offer Japan-China WiFi roaming access

NTT Communications (NTT Com) has signed an agreement with Coordinate Technologies to enable bilateral WiFi data service roaming between NTT Com and China Mobile to be followed by interconnections with future Chinese operators.

Coordinate Technologies is claimed to be the leading provider of wireless data interconnectivity services for carriers accessing the China market. By connecting through the Coordinate interconnection platform, NTT Com roaming subscribers will have trial access to over 900 WiFi hotspots managed by China Mobile in six Olympic cities, as the first phase of NTT Com's roll out, and the coverage will grow to over 4000 hotspots by the end of 2008. Chinese subscribers will have roaming access to over 1300 NTT Com hotspots throughout Japan.

China Mobile is investing heavily in WiFi hotspot deployment throughout China covering 43 airports and over 700 brand hotels. As an official partner of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, the network will cover the Olympic venues, stadiums, athlete villages and surrounding areas in six Olympic cities.

According to Coordinate Technologies, "international carriers are hungry to access the China market, especially given the current lack of 3G data services and the heightened excitement leading up to the 2008 Beijing Olympics." Jason Liang, CEO of Coordinate Technologies, said: "Japan is China's largest import partner and is one of the biggest sources of foreign visitors to China."

Coordinate Technologies Communications provides wireless data interconnectivity and other value added services to global service providers leveraging 802.11 (WiFi) and 802.16 (WiMAX) standards. The company was founded in 2006 by Liang who formerly oversaw all WLAN operations for China Netcom and was the China appointed representative to the Wireless Broadband Alliance. Coordinate customers include China Netcom, Chinacom-CECT, China Mobile, NTT Com, Telefónica, iPass, Boingo, WeRoam, Swisscom, Orange, SFR, Freedom4, Vex, Smart, and PT WiFi.

ZTE & Huawei dominate CDMA2000 market

According to market research firm EJM Wireless Research, Chinese vendors ZTE and Huawei are taking the lion's share of the CDMA infrastructure market.

EJM says that second quarter base station contracts totalled 67, up from 47 in Q1 of 2008. ZTE secured 31 percent of total [CDMA2000] contracts during the June quarter, edging out Huawei which had 30 percent. Both Motorola and Nortel Networks each managed to secure only one contract in Q2. Ericsson and Alcatel-Lucent each won billion dollar contracts from China Mobile during the quarter, according to EJM. Founder and president, Earl Lum, said: "Demand remained concentrated in both Asia Pacific and Africa during the quarter. CDMA2000 dipped

from the jump in Q1 but Chinese OEMs continue to dominate this segment as they captured 100 percent of global CDMA contracts in Q2."

Downturn in sales of CDMA infrastructure have been blamed for the problems and Alcatel-Lucent and the poor financial results from Nortel in the most recent quarter. And

Celltick launches LiveScreen Media on China Unicom network

Celltick has launched a mobile news service over China Unicom's cellular network, delivered through Celltick's LiveScreen Media platform.

The new service will initially provide official Olympics-related content directly from Xinhua News, the official news agency in China, including the latest news, results and anecdotes and accompanied by topical games and applications. The service will also include content relating to news, lifestyle, fun, business and entertainment.

According to Celltick, "With LiveScreen Media mobile operators can non-intrusively deliver segmented content, rich media and advertising to a virtually unlimited number of users. Unlocking a new revenue source via targeted teasers delivered to the idle screen, LiveScreen Media rapidly and easily expands the offering of operators, helping them make the most of today's burgeoning mobile marketing opportunities."

Celltick's LiveScreen Media application will be embedded on SIM cards distributed through China Unicom retail outlets around Beijing. The service will be available in both Chinese and English. Celltick says launch of the LiveScreen Media service in Beijing will be the first in a series of LiveScreen deployments across China.

Motorola reveals \$US431m GSM contracts

Motorola has revealed that it signed multiple contracts worth \$US431m with China Mobile Communications Corporation in H1 of 2008 for GSM network upgrades and expansion.

The contracts were signed in the first half of 2008 and approximately 50 percent of the revenue was recognised in the first half of 2008. Motorola will supply CMCC with GSM network equipment and a range of services to be deployed across 16 provinces and municipalities within the coverage area of CMCC, namely Beijing, Tianjin, Sichuan, Zhejiang, Henan, Hunan, Guangdong, Yunnan, Fujian, Hubei, Shanxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Jiangxi, Anhui and Guizhou. The upgrades will enable China Mobile to deliver enhanced and value-added multimedia functionality and services.

AsiaSat names new manager for China

Asia Satellite Telecommunications Company (AsiaSat) has appointed Mr Zhang Hai Ming as its new general manager China.

He will oversee all AsiaSat's marketing, sales and customer relations activities in mainland China. He has over 20 years experience in the satellite industry having worked with Echostar, Lockheed Martin, Skywave TV (an 80 percent owned subsidiary of AsiaSat) and China Mobile Broadcasting Satellite in various management positions, covering business development, sales and marketing, and operations.

AsiaSat serves over two-thirds of the world's population with its three satellites: AsiaSat 2 at 100.5°E, AsiaSat 3S at 105.5°E and AsiaSat 4 at 122°E and provides services to both the broadcast and telecommunications industries. Some 300 television channels are delivered by its satellites, reaching over 96 million households across the Asia Pacific region. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Asia Satellite Telecommunications Holdings Limited, a company listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

Vietnam

m2m of Australia launches VoIP to VTC Wireless customers

Australia's m2m Group has launched VoIP services in Vietnam under an exclusive agreement which gives it access to 10 million subscribers.

m2m subsidiary, Profit Way Technology, in partnership with the government-owned VTC Wireless Broadband Company has commenced the marketing of VoIP products and services in Vietnam under a newly created brand for such services called "aloVTC" (www.alovtc.vn).

m2m says that initial market research conducted in conjunction with PWT shows that the average spending on VoIP type services is between \$US4-8 per month per subscriber. PWT's products and services will be rolled out progressively to VTC's 10 million and growing subscribers currently using VTC's pay-TV, online games and mobile services.

PWT is leveraging off VTC's existing channels of sales outlets, television networks, online portals and print media for the distribution of these services. Up until now the only organisations that could legally provide VOIP calls in Vietnam were state owned or controlled organisations.

Vietnam has around 17 million Internet users (20 percent of the population) with the government planning to inject \$US6.3 billion by 2010 to increase penetration to 35 percent. It is anticipated that the telecommunications sector will generate revenues of up to \$US3.5 billion per annum in the same period.

VTCW is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Ministry of Information and Communications. Its parent, VTC, owns the national television network covering 10 national TV stations, digital TV broadcasts, four radio stations, newspaper, magazines, 16 Internet portals (www.vtc.com.vn). VTC also has businesses in online gaming investments, Internet TV and VoIP. VTC is also one of only four telecommunications companies with a licence for the future WiMAX wireless spectrum. In addition, it holds one of only six government licences to operate telecommunication, Internet and related services.

Taiwan

Fujitsu and Institute for Info Industry JV underway

Fujitsu Global Mobile Platform (FMP), a joint venture between Fujitsu's former LSI business division (now a separate entity, Fujitsu Microelectronics), and the Institute for Information Industry of Taiwan has commenced operations.

The joint venture will develop reference designs - designs which improve design efficiencies - for WiMAX-related products for Taiwan-based ODM vendors, in addition to providing technical support.

Mobile WiMAX commercial services are anticipated to begin in Taiwan, Japan, and the US from around August 2009. Much of the design and manufacturing of WiMAX-related products required for those services, including mobile WiMAX devices and mobile WiMAX ultra-small base stations, is conducted by numerous ODM vendors centred in Taiwan.

Based on WiMAX system-on-chip (SoC) solutions from Fujitsu Microelectronics and software technologies from the Institute for Information Industry, FMP will provide Taiwan-based ODM vendors with reference designs for WiMAX-related products and with technical support.

Initial WiMAX commercial services are foreseen to be PC-based, using computer accessories such as PC cards or USB dongles. Five ODM vendors in Taiwan have already committed to use Fujitsu Microelectronics' WiMAX solutions and FMP will now provide these ODM vendors with technical support for products that the vendors plan to commercialise, and will also develop related software.

The Institute for Information Industry was established in 1979 as a non-governmental organisation, jointly sponsored by the Taiwan government and prominent private enterprises, for the purpose of strengthening the developments of information industry in Taiwan.

Indonesia

Indosat picks Nokia Siemens mobile softswitch

Indosat has taken a first step towards an all-IP environment with the deployment of Nokia Siemens Networks' mobile softswitch to expand network coverage and capacity.

According to Nokia Siemens the move is in response to "unprecedented subscriber growth" and will allow Indosat to meet future capacity demands and offer customers reliability and added-value services, widen network coverage, use IP backhaul, and create a call-prioritisation feature for high value customers.

Nokia Siemens Networks will also provide a broad range of services including replacement and relocation of old equipment, network design, new equipment implementation and project management and training and maintenance for all products and solutions included in the deal.

New Zealand

NZ's third cellular network rollout delayed

New Zealand's would-be third cellular operator NZ Communications (formerly Econet) has delayed the launch of its network until late 2009 after initially targeting October 2008.

New Zealand's *Business Day* newspaper, citing un-named industry sources, said that NZ Comms had built only 50 cell towers, 400 short of the number needed to launch, and it blamed the delay on the company failing to negotiate a cell-site co-location deals with Vodafone and Telecom NZ.

The Commerce Commission issued a draft determination last week on the non-price terms for co-location but this is not expected to be finalised until mid-to-late November and *Business Day* said this was the reason for the delay.

TelstraClear upgrades with Juniper E320 routers

TelstraClear has upgraded its broadband network capacity and enhanced its service delivery capabilities by installing Juniper Networks' E320 broadband services routers and C-series controllers.

According to Juniper, TelstraClear is using the C-series controllers to manage service provisioning over a wide array of access types, including cable, retail and wholesale DSL. "We previously had multiple teams managing our systems – one for hardware, another for the operating system software and a third responsible for network applications. With the session and resource control solution, a single team manages the entire system," said Peter Ambrose, manager of design and planning for TelstraClear. "We chose the Juniper solution for its superior subscriber management scalability and ease of administration." TelstraClear already uses Juniper E- and M-series routers and SDX-300 service delivery system.

InternetNZ names executive board members

The Internet Society of New Zealand (InternetNZ) has appointed Peter Dengate-Thrush, June McCabe, Miki Szikszai, and Judy Speight as members of its recently-established executive board.

The board reports to the InternetNZ Council and will be responsible for developing policy relating to the Internet and advocating on behalf of Internet users. Former minister of communications, Paul Swain, was recently named as its chair.

Dengate-Thrush is an intellectual property lawyer and the chairman of ICANN. McCabe holds several other board positions including TVNZ and the New Zealand Venture Investment Fund. Szikszai is an executive in digital media and next generation broadband and mobile networks. Speight represents the InternetNZ Council on the board and has a background as an ICT strategist, advisor, negotiator and lobbyist. McCabe has been appointed for three years, Szikszai and Speight for two and Dengate-Thrush for one year to ensure that board members' terms do not expire at the same time.

Pan Asian

Obopay and Grameen to bring cellphone banking to billions

Obopay, which provides a service enabling payments via mobile phones has teamed up with Grameen Solutions to support the use mobile technology to deliver banking services to a billion of the world's poorest people by 2018.

The Grameen-Obopay 'Bank A Billion' initiative, it is claimed, will provide access to affordable financial services, including cross-border remittances, money transfer, payments, savings and credit accounts. "By empowering life and work endeavours with mobile technology that is ubiquitous even in the most impoverished and remote corners of the world, Grameen-Obopay is bringing the full power of banking to those who need it most," they claim.

"I was inspired to found Obopay when I was volunteering in Africa and saw that while people in remote corners of the world often lacked access to the most basic financial services, they almost all had mobile phones," said Ms Carol Realini, CEO of Obopay.

Obopay and Grameen claim that, with more than three billion connections to GSM mobile communications networks currently active globally and emerging markets responsible for 85 percent of new connections today mobile technology can effectively deliver financial services to billions of underserved people on every continent. "Until now, even the most basic financial services have been unavailable to the world's poor because they are physically inaccessible and/or far too expensive to be practical. Using mobile technology to deliver banking services overcomes previously limiting restrictions of space and time by using existing infrastructure to give even the most underprivileged access to financial services."

Grameen Solutions' CEO, Mr Kazi Islam, said: "We carefully evaluated globally available mobile money service providers with a view to identifying a partner that fits with our vision and mission. Obopay is clearly that partner, and we look forward to maximising the global potential of mobile financial services with them. By using a technology that is already pervasive — the mobile phone — we will clearly be able to have a dramatic impact on global poverty."

Bank A Billion will begin delivering services in October, 2008, initially in Mumbai, India and in Bangladesh. Details at www.bankabillion.org

Celltick opens regional office in Singapore

Celltick, which claims to be the pioneer of mobile idle screen marketing solutions, has opened an office in Singapore to manage and support its client base throughout the Asia Pacific region.

CEO, Stephen Dunford, said: "We have taken the strategic decision to open a dedicated office in Singapore at this time to support our current customers and in anticipation of several further significant deals we will be announcing in the next few months."

The office will be headed by Vincent Toh, general manager of operations. He has more than 12 years of sales and marketing experience in the APAC market, specialising in delivering value added services for mobile operators.

Celltick claims a total of ten agreements in place in APAC for its LiveScreen Media technology, including Vodafone India, AIS in Thailand, Globe in the Philippines, Spice in Nepal, VMS in Vietnam and Dialog in Sri Lanka. It claims to have over 25 operators globally generating over 35 million monthly transactions and has just announced a deal with China Unicom (see page 4). The company boasts of excellent working relationships with all major SIM vendors in the region (the client application for LiveScreen Media is pre-installed on SIM cards).

APNIC meeting to discuss divvying up diminishing IPv4 addresses

The Asia Pacific Internet community will descend on Christchurch - New Zealand for the APNIC 26 meeting in August, and deciding how to parcel out the rapidly diminishing pool of IPv4 addresses will be high on the agenda.

The meeting is sponsored by InternetNZ (the Internet Society of New Zealand) and the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) and will be held from 25 to 29 August 2008.

InternetNZ executive director Keith Davidson, said: "The meeting is very timely considering the increasing recognition that IPv6 deployment will be a business-critical issue for network operators in the next two years. Some projections have IPv4 exhaustion within as little as two years. Discussions on how to manage the remaining unallocated IPv4 address space will be prominent on the agenda, as will planning on how the community can facilitate the migration of the world's networks to IPv6 technology." A policy development and discussion program tackling the growing challenge of managing the remaining unallocated pool of IPv4 addresses will be a key component of the meeting's programme.

The OECD recently warned of the impending shortage of IPv4 addresses predicting crunch time as early as 2011. It called on governments and business to "work together more effectively and urgently to meet the growing demand for Internet addresses and secure the future of the Internet economy."

The five-day event also includes hands-on training specific to Internet resource management and IPv6 deployment and a seminar program where international speakers discuss the latest technical developments from across the globe. Details and registration at <http://www.apnic.net>.

Nokia increases venture funding by \$US150m

Nokia Growth Partners has received an additional \$US150m from Nokia taking its funds under management for direct investments to \$US250m.

It says it will now establish direct operations in India and China and augment investment activity in the US and Europe "pursuing investments that are of strategic relevance to Nokia, and or complementary to their strategy."

In addition to its direct investment activities, Nokia Growth Partners will advise on Nokia's other venture capital fund investments. Both of these activities focus on

promising companies seeking change in the mobile landscape. Target investments include companies creating innovative mobile applications and services that encourage rapid adoption of mobile solutions, such as context and location based services, mobile payments, mobile advertising, music and entertainment and other mobile services and software.

Technology

LiMo gather new allies for looming handset battle

The battle between multivendor handset platforms is heating up: the LiMo Foundation has announced new members and new handsets, and Qualcomm has been hinting at iPhone-beating Android based products, as well as singing the praises of its upcoming Snapdragon chipset.

Meanwhile, market researcher firm, ABI Research, has flagged the Linux operating systems as being likely to capture the lion's share of the emerging mobile internet devices (MID) market. It argues that the MID market will "likely be the first real example of a greenfield situation in which all mobile operating systems start on the same equal footing, without the baggage of previous histories such as existed in the smartphone market."

According to ABI, "the Linux OS, in the form of Moblin, LiMo and Maemo, looks ready to take the lion's share of the MID market and is set to capture unit volumes of 50 millions units per annum in 2013. "

ABI Research vice president and research director, Stuart Carlaw, said: "Maemo is already in this space thanks to the patronage of Nokia; Moblin will benefit from tight integration with Atom and Intel's drive; and LiMo is actively being positioned for this market. The flexibility, customisation and very positive cost comparison to Windows Mobile looks set to ensure that Linux takes the leading role in this market."

According to ABI: "One of the more significant aspects of the Linux OS in this market is its ability to provide a converged platform that can span multiple device segments. The concept of a single OS that covers MIDs, smartphones and mid-tier devices is very attractive indeed. In reality, only LiMo and potentially Moblin hold the possibility of achieving this."

LiMo adds more handsets and members

The LiMo Foundation announced this week the commercial launch of seven new handsets from Motorola, NEC and Panasonic, based on its Linux based open source handset platform. It said these took the total to 21. All seven new models are designed for use on NTT DoCoMo's Japanese FOMA 3G network. These were followed two days later by Motorola's announcement of the ROKR EM30, a GSM quad-band LiMo phone billed as offering "an exciting set of compelling music features." It is expected to launch first in Taiwan then in other markets in the current quarter.

According to the LiMo Foundation "Several of the latest LiMo handsets include advanced enabling features that herald the forthcoming Mobile 2.0 experience for global consumers. These include international 3G/HSDPA roaming capabilities, GPS, mobile TV and advanced video streaming, secure payment and advanced mail functionalities - all presented through higher-resolution displays and intuitive user interfaces."

The 11 new LiMo members are Cellon, Esmertec, Freescale Semiconductor, Longcheer Holdings, MIZI Research, Movial Corporation, PacketVideo Corporation, SK Innoace, Telecom Italia, VirtualLogix and ZTE and take LiMo's total membership to more than 50. LiMo claims that the new members "further extend LiMo's reach in multiple dimensions: regionally, technologically and within the industry value

system." Some them were previously members of another body promoting a Linux based handset platform, the Linux Phone Standards (LiPS) Forum, which announced in June 2008 that it would fold its activities into LiMo.

LiMo and Android will co-exist

Research firm Strategy Analytics said this week it was "confident that both Android and LiMo will successfully coexist in the marketplace based on research into positioning and respective competitive merits and limitations." The conclusion comes from its report *Android and LiMo will Both Succeed*." Analyst Sravan Kundojjala said: "Strong support from mobile operators shows the popularity of the LiMo platform, however Android's strong momentum in the developer community, backed by Google's brand strength, should almost guarantee its acceptance." The vice president of the strategic technologies practice, Stephen Entwistle, added: "Strategy Analytics predicts that LiMo and Android could coexist by serving different market needs."

Qualcomm aims to better iPhone

Qualcomm's COO, Sanjay Jha (who has since left to head up Motorola's mobile device division) addressed Qualcomm's industry analyst briefing in San Diego last week and, according to a local press report praised the iPhone but said: "There are opportunities to do some things better." The reported added: "Jha mentioned the iPhone several times during his talk about the company's powerful new Snapdragon line of voice and data chips, which feature a 1GHz processor and the ability to run an 8 megapixel camera and a high-definition video camera. The first Snapdragon chip will produce high-definition video at a resolution of 720 lines progressively scanned. All of those features would be upgrades over the iPhone's hardware."

Qualcomm, however has no plans to support Android on Snapdragon but expects a large number of Android handsets to run on its chipsets. Jha was reported telling analysts that he has seen the latest version of Android and "It is meaningfully better than the previous version." Qualcomm is a member of the Open Handset Alliance (OHA), which is promoting the Android platform.

HTC is expected to be the first handset maker with an Android product, later this year. There have been reports that Android is facing significant delays. However, according to Cellular News, Google is expected to make an announcement regarding the Android platform within a few weeks, including new members of the OHA and an updated version of the developer software kit.

TM Forum's Information Framework becomes ITU-T standard

The Telemanagement Forum has hailed acceptance by the ITU-T of its Information Framework as a major step forward for the industry.

TM Forum president, Martin Creaner, said it met a pressing need among service providers for a single common framework to harmonise all information models across the industry. The ITU-T Recommendation M.3190 initially encompasses the product and service domains of The TM Forum Information Framework v 7.5, as well as some explanatory addenda. According to the TM Forum, "These elements of Recommendation M.3190 will serve as an introduction to the Information Framework Analysis Model which will cover all of the information required to implement use cases based on the TM Forum Business Process Framework (eTOM). Future submissions to the ITU-T will include other SID domains."