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"Gaining access to the world's second largest mobile market is a major achievement for Telenor," said Telenor president and CEO Jon Fredrik Baksaas. "Entering the Indian mobile market gives Telenor a unique possibility to further enhance the Telenor Group's position as one of the leading emerging markets operators."

However, Unitech is a startup that has yet to launch services. It was Founded in 2007, has licenses in all 22 telecom circles and plans to launch GSM services in mid-2009.

Commenting on the plan, Ovum said: "We view Telenor as an experienced emerging market operator that has the experience to make money out of India - but not for a while."

According to Ovum, "On the face of it, India is a very attractive market. A country with 1.2 billion people, it still has only 26 percent mobile penetration, although this is growing very rapidly. It is currently adding nine million new mobile customers each month. By 2013 we forecast 380 million additional subscribers to join the current 300 million, so there is plenty of growth to be had.

"However, India is also a crowded and very competitive market with a plethora of domestic players, such as Reliance, Bharti, BSNL and Tata, competing with international players such as Vodafone, and soon Etisalat and Telenor, as well as numerous start-ups.

"What is more, the next 300 million subscribers will typically be low-spending users. Most will live in rural areas, with ARPUs of less than \$US5 per month. This means that Telenor will be met with fierce competition for existing higher-value customers and a tough challenge to make money out of the new, lower-spending ones."

The pluses...

On a more positive note, Ovum points out that Telenor has vast emerging market experience. "Telenor's critics may overlook its extensive experience in the emerging markets. It was one of the first Western players to enter Eastern Europe and Asia mobile markets. Today it has successful operations in the Ukraine, Hungary, Serbia, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh and Pakistan. This means that it can bring vast technical, operational and marketing experience to the table (it calls it its 'Mobile Way')."

...And the minuses

However Ovum then throws a damper on things by noting that: "Telenor entered most of these markets a number of years ago, much earlier in their development. We cannot escape the feeling that it may be a little late to make a big impact in the already crowded Indian market."

When Ovum does its sums, the outcome does not look very promising: "Telenor estimates that it will need to plough at least another \$US2 billion in capex into Unitech over the next three years - including the cost of the acquisition, that's \$US3 billion for the next three years before any operational cost.

"We forecast that the Indian market will be worth \$US40 billion in revenues by 2013. Even if we make the optimistic assumption that Telenor will build a 10 percent

market share and a five percent net margin as a late entrant, the most it could generate is some \$US200 million in net income by 2013.

"So, while India is a great market opportunity, we think it will take Telenor quite a while, possibly up to a decade, to make a positive RoI on this strategic venture. In these credit-constrained times, no wonder investors are worried."

Boingo adds Tata hotspots to global roaming network

Global WiFi access provider, Boingo Wireless, has added Tata Communications' hotspots to its roaming network giving its customers access to over 500 new hotspots under the Tata Indicom brand.

According to Boingo, "With the addition of the Tata Communications network, Boingo members will be able to enjoy high speed WiFi connections in restaurants, cafés, coffee shops and airports while travelling through India.

"With the new locations from Tata Communications, Boingo's aggregated network in India now includes such popular destinations as Barista Coffee, Pizza Corner and Coffee World, Nokia Priority Centres and Nirula's, as well as numerous hotels in India."

Boingo users can also get access at airports around India, including Chennai International Airport, Cochin International Airport, Goa International Airport, Hyderabad Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Pune International Airport, and Sardar Vallabhbhai International Airport.

Boingo provides Internet access from more than 100,000 locations in 90 countries using the hotspots of more than 150 WiFi operators. Boingo subscribers can connect to any of these locations with a single Boingo account using GoBoingo, Boingo's free WiFi client software, which combines more than 660 network names into one 'Boingo Wireless' network and stores the user name and password to simplify identifying and connecting to commercial Wi-Fi networks.

Japan

NTT DoCoMo unveils new strategy

NTT DoCoMo has released a new action plan, "DoCoMo's Change and Challenge to Achieve New Growth," which covers initiatives to be implemented between the current fiscal year 2008 ending March 31, 2009 and fiscal year 2012 ending March 31, 2013.

After a period of rapid expansion, the Japanese mobile communications market has entered a mature phase with total subscriptions exceeding 100 million and DoCoMo says it will be difficult to expect further growth on a significant level unless breakthroughs are made. "In addition, customers' values have diversified and their demands have become increasingly sophisticated."

DoCoMo says that the market has potential for significant growth if services that take advantage of unique mobile properties - such as real-time immediacy, personal authentication and locating capabilities - can be developed in conjunction with the evolution of networks and handsets.

"The increasing adoption of open-platform handsets and entry of new global players will produce new services that transcend conventional boundaries and thereby propel further advancements and diversification in the market."

Perceiving this as an opportunity, DoCoMo says it "intends to drive innovation in collaboration with a wide range of partners on a global scale, committing the company to taking on the challenge of creating new value by leveraging the virtually unlimited potential of mobile phones."

As first steps towards implementing the "Change and Challenge" action plan, DoCoMo has changed its corporate branding and integrated its regional subsidiaries following a comprehensive review of operational structure.

Also, the company intends to perform a comprehensive review of all operations - from customer relations to handset and network development - to enhance customer satisfaction with the aim of being ranked No. 1 in customer satisfaction by FY2010.

According to DoCoMo, as mobile services and networks evolve, mobile phones will assume the role of assisting customers' individual behaviour, in addition to providing the means for communication, information access and support for daily activities.

It intends to take on the challenge of advancing each of these roles, and to contribute to the sustainable development of society by providing solutions to pressing issues.

"DoCoMo will deliver personalised services and functions that cater to the varying lifestyles and needs of individual customers, and further enrich their lives [and] will launch new businesses in fields such as environment, ecology, safety, security and health management for the sustainable growth of society and the creation of value in these new domains."

DoCoMo will link mobile phones with various devices to provide convenient services tailored to specific usage scenarios. Through collaboration with content providers, it will support customers' lives and individual behaviour with value-added video services available uniquely on mobile phones.

The company says it will construct a high-speed, low-latency, large-capacity network by implementing LTE from 2010.

It will provide handsets and devices that better fit customers' specific needs by adopting open platforms, enhancing hardware and software functions and diversifying designs and user interfaces.

The company says it will conduct research aimed at creating infrastructure that contributes to the development of society and its economy, "ultimately to realise a more affluent society that fully leverages the advantageous characteristics of mobile communications."

DoCoMo also plans to expand its revenue streams from international business and achieve sustained growth by strengthening its international service offerings and pursuing investments and alliances mainly in the Asia-Pacific region.

Under the plan DoCoMo expects to achieve a 10 percent reduction in costs and expenses to solidify its financial standing for sustained growth. Initiatives will include the nationwide optimisation of operations and reduction of costs related to networks and sales.

It expects to achieve over ¥900 billion in annual operating income in FY2012, and will also endeavour to maintain the highest level of payout ratio in Japan and stable dividends.

Cisco advances Data Centre 3.0 vision

Cisco has created a virtualisation environment using unified fabric and has implemented interoperability trials to advance its Data Centre 3.0 vision.

Cisco also announced that it has set up a Cisco VN-Link and a virtualisation demonstration in the customer proof-of-concept (CPOC) facility at its Tokyo head office to provide an environment for customers to experience virtualisation.

The storage, server, adapter, virtual server and system integrator vendors who collaborated in the creation of the system include: EMC Japan, ITOCHU Techno-

Solutions, Intel, Emulex, Dell, NetApp Japan, Net One Systems, NEC, Hewlett-Packard Japan, Fujitsu, VMware and Q-Logic.

In the CPOC environment customers receive explanations of the benefits brought about by next-generation networks from a business perspective, and can also experience the benefits of virtualisation first-hand.

According to Cisco, "This enables customers not only to reduce the amount of effort required for connection checks during the design and creation of virtualised systems, but also to flexibly expand their ideas of a successful business while actually using a next-generation system environment.

"The unified fabric enables the integration of Internet protocol (IP), storage and server clustering networks over the Internet, reducing the number of server interfaces and simplifying cable management. Additionally, it reduces costs and improves operational efficiency while protecting existing investments in data centre resources. This unified fabric is made possible through open standards such as Fibre Channel over Ethernet (FCoE) and Cisco Data Centre Ethernet."

Cisco VN-Link is a solution for providing smoother implementation of virtual servers in enterprises that have reached the deployment phase. According to Cisco, "The implementation of virtual servers requires harmonious design, setup and management of servers, storage and the network. Cisco VN-Link provides a solution to bridge these. Network policies can be set on a virtual server basis. Sound security policies can be applied to each virtual server even in movement of virtual machines between physical servers and live migration. It provides a common design, setup and operation environment for physical and virtual servers.

Cisco VN-Link is provided as software on Cisco Nexus 1000V running a VMware ESX environment. On the storage side, it is supported by the Cisco MDS9000 Series multilayer SAN switch.

Cisco adds support for NTT's UNI to IOS

Cisco has added support for NTT's user network interface (UNI) to Cisco IOS Software, enabling Cisco routers and switches to connect directly to NTT's UNI.

According to Cisco, this means that the Cisco TelePresence system can now be easily added to commercial NGN services offered by NTT East and NTT West. "Business communications can also more easily take place between companies using the same NTT service, while Cisco TelePresence use can be tracked via metered billing."

Cisco TelePresence can be used as a guaranteed bandwidth application service called 'Hikari Telephone Office Type' that can be subscribed to by users of 'Flets Hikari Next Business Type,' for which NTT East and NTT West are scheduled to begin service in October 2008.

Willcom selects Alcatel-Lucent for wireless IP network

Mobile network operator, Willcom has selected Alcatel Lucent's IP service router portfolio as the foundation for its wireless IP network.

According to Alcatel-Lucent its service routers will enable Willcom to support increased traffic growth and new advanced service features required for the commercial launch of their next-generation wireless services, eXtended Global Platform (XGP) in October 2009.

"Preparation for the launch of our XGP has been progressing steadily, with the Alcatel-Lucent's solution performing very well in the core and edge of our IP network. It is meeting the high standards we need to provide our customers the kind of quality services they can expect from us," said Yoshiki Chika, director and executive vice president, Willcom.

"We have selected Alcatel-Lucent because its solution will enable us to drive future network trends and introduce new features on our scalable IP core and edge network layers, catering to the anticipated huge bandwidth growth demand in the market. Furthermore, we are re-assured by Alcatel-Lucent's non stop routing features enabling us to offer high quality service as well as network stability to our customers."

Taiwan

Intel invests to boost Taiwan's wireless industry

Intel has signed agreements with government and industry in Taiwan aimed at extending Taiwan's position as a leading centre for developing and deploying future connected devices and related technologies.

Intel and the Taiwan Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) will jointly establish an enabling centre for Moblin - an open source project focused on building a Linux-based platform optimised for the next generation of mobile devices including netbooks, mobile Internet devices, and in-vehicle infotainment systems - optimised for Intel Atom processor-based devices.

According to Intel, with its and the MOEA's support, the Moblin Enabling Centre's laboratory and its engineers will train and consult to device and software vendors, resulting in faster time to market for Moblin-based devices powered by Intel Atom processors. Intel's support of the centre will include engineering talent, software development resources and software contributions to moblin.org.

According to Intel, new software and applications are needed to deliver a richer, on-the-go Internet experience on the next generation of connected devices including Atom-based mobile Internet devices, netbooks, nettops and in-vehicle-infotainment systems.

Intel invests in WiMAX operator

Intel also announced that, subject to closing conditions, Intel's global investment organisation, Intel Capital, intends to invest \$NT386 million (\$US11.5m) in Taiwanese carrier VMAX. Intel says this, and its accompanying business engagement, will enable VMAX to deploy Taiwan's first mobile WiMAX network, intended to be commercially available within the first half of next year. VMAX also intends to be the first to deploy a 2.5GHz WiMAX network in Asia Pacific.

VMAX Telecom was awarded a WiMAX operator permit by the National Communications Commission on July 26, 2007. It claims an influential line-up of shareholders, including Teco Electric & Machinery, Tecom and Vibo Telecom.

China

CSC to open IT service delivery centre in Tianjin

Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) is to open a new information technology services delivery centre in Tianjin to better serve existing multinational and local customers and increase its presence in the region.

The new centre which will be located in the Tianjin Airport Industrial Park at 3 Crown Square, 55 Central Ave and will open early in the second quarter of 2009. CSC will begin delivering services from a temporary location in the same area starting November 1, 2008. The centre will initially house approximately 200 employees. The company anticipates that number will grow to 500 within three years.

CSC also plans to construct a data centre facility in or near Tianjin to address global demand for technology hosting and managed services within the region. It claims

that "the efficient and cost-effective modular design will allow CSC to meet customer needs for several years and grow in 200-square-metre increments as required." Construction of the data centre is scheduled for completion in mid-2010.

The Tianjin centre expands CSC's World Sourcing global delivery capability in Asia and joins an integrated network of more than 50 global delivery centres, including locations in Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, India, Lithuania, Malaysia, Spain and Vietnam.

According to CSC, "These operations provide complete coverage of all CSC clients' current requirements and have been designed to support future business needs. The Asia centres provide infrastructure, applications and business process outsourcing services while simultaneously offering clients a variety of language and technology skills. Best-in-class tools and processes permit seamless movement of work between and among the centres."

Services offered from the new facility will include applications development and maintenance and service desk providing support in Mandarin, English, Korean and Japanese. Once the data centre is complete, CSC will also offer both applications and data hosting.

Indonesia

Ericsson to expand and manage Axis' cellular network

Indonesia's newest GSM/3G operator, Axis, has chosen Ericsson to deploy a GSM/EDGE and WCDMA radio access network covering about 2100 sites in Greater Jakarta, Banten and Sumatra.

Ericsson will also supply backhaul systems comprising optical and microwave products. The contract also includes a three-year managed services agreement to provide technical support and network operation, including field operations and support services.

Erik Aas, president and CEO of Axis, said: "Ericsson has been a key strategic partner since the launch of our operations and we are pleased to continue this relationship into Axis' next growth phase. Having Ericsson as our managed services partner will help us boost competitiveness, improve cost efficiencies and achieve our ambition of bringing high-quality communications services to our subscribers."

Axis has deployed more than 2000 base stations and signed up more than one million customers since its launch in 2008. It expects to achieve national coverage in 2009 and to have deployed more than 8000 sites by the end of 2010.

Indonesia has a population of about 240 million and mobile phone penetration is presently less than 50 percent,.

Singapore

SIS Technologies to distribute WatchGuard in Singapore

Network security specialist, WatchGuard Technologies has appointed SiS Technologies Pte Ltd as a distributor for Singapore extending the two companies' regional partnership.

The move follows WatchGuard's July announcement of its new partnership with SiS Distribution (Thailand), on top of similar agreements in Hong Kong and Indonesia.

According to WatchGuard, "SiS Technologies' well-established reseller network understands the diverse economic and cultural backgrounds of Singapore-based enterprises, as well as how to meet the local compliance policies. In particular, SiS

will be able to help WatchGuard to tap into Singapore's considerable SMB sector – 97 percent of the 150,000 Singapore-registered companies are SMBs."

According to Gartner, network-security spend in Singapore is expected to total \$S33.8 million (\$US22.53m) in 2008, up 13.7 percent over 2007, as organisations try to secure their data against the escalating barrage of recognised and future, unknown malware threats.

The WatchGuard family of wired and wireless unified threat management (UTM) appliances and WatchGuard SSL VPN remote access solutions provide network security, network visibility, management and control. WatchGuard products are backed by WatchGuard LiveSecurity Service, a support, maintenance, and education programme.

Malaysia

Motorola opens wireless lab in Cyberjaya

Motorola Technology Sdn Bhd (Motorola Penang) has set up a new MMU-Motorola wireless broadband technology lab at Multimedia University (MMU), Cyberjaya, providing a wireless network for students and faculty members to conduct applied research on the latest wireless broadband technologies.

The lab is claimed to be the first of its kind in Malaysia and supports MMU's goal to "enable the knowledge society through WiMAX. It is being billed as Motorola's latest contribution to the education community, strengthening the company's support to human capital development at universities around the world.

According to Motorola the lab provides academics and researchers with an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with various fixed, nomadic and mobile MOTOwi4 wireless broadband technologies and applications, keeping them up-to-date with the latest developments.

According to Mr Yew Tian Tek, managing director of Motorola Penang, "Motorola always looks for opportunities to collaborate with universities in innovative technology areas in which MMU has distinct competencies. Motorola decided to join force with MMU as the two parties have enjoyed a long-term and constructive working relationship over the past 10 years.

"We also share a mutual appreciation of the advantages and benefits of wireless broadband access technology including WiMAX. The lab strategically aligns with MMU's plans to further expand its WiMAX research interests.

The Motomesh Duo system enables a WiFi service which covers indoor and outdoor areas of MMU's Cyberjaya campus. In addition, Motorola is establishing a seamless campus-wide wireless broadband network by using its Motomesh Duo and Canopy network solutions, allowing more than 10,000 MMU students and faculty members to access the Internet anywhere in the MMU campus.

Motorola is also training MMU staff and students to maintain and manage the Canopy, Motomesh Duo and WiMAX equipment.

New Zealand

Telecom NZ to offer Xero accounting via SaaS

Telecom New Zealand is to offer the Xero online accounting system to small, medium and home business customers through its Business Hub for a monthly or annual subscription fee.

Telecom said the move marked the next phase of development for its Business Hub, launched in September, and that more products and services would be announced over coming months.

According to Xero CEO, Rod Drury, "our online accounting system gives small businesses and their advisors easy access to bank transactions, invoicing, reports and GST, anytime it's needed, from anywhere in the world where they are connected to the Internet. This partnership with Telecom makes that access even easier. Once customers have a login they can use their laptop, BlackBerry, mobile broadband, or basically anything with an Internet connection to log on, saving them time and money."

Pan Asia

How the global financial crisis will affect Asian telcos

In the wake of the financial market turbulence, Ovum is making a number of predictions for telcos in Asia in 2009.

"Telcos in the Asian region were already facing many challenges," said David Kennedy, research director (Asia-Pacific) at Ovum, "but the financial crisis will add a new element of uncertainty".

He added: "Ovum does not expect the crisis to hit Asia as hard as the US, but declining US domestic demand will certainly affect Asian exporters and hence the rest of the economy. That includes telcos."

According to Kennedy, the impact on the telco sector will be mixed. Slowing economies will hit revenue growth, increasing short-term pressure to cut costs. "We expect many planned infrastructure projects to be delayed or cancelled in 2009. But it is also time for telcos without a clear transformation program to start planning their pathway to a permanently lower cost base. This will require more spending on IT systems and new network technologies in the medium term. This will require telcos to generate clear business cases for investment and develop strong execution skills.

"The good news is that transport budgets are likely to be an early target for cost-cutting across the economy. That could mean growing demand for national and international telecommunications services, especially in the enterprise sector. And advanced telecommunications services like mobile and broadband, once regarded as discretionary by consumers, are increasingly regarded as essential".

Ovum predicts that these pressures will drive several new trends in the Asian telco market:

- An accelerated shift to customer focussed strategies and structures. "As customers tighten their belts, they will be looking for better value for money. This will require telcos to target their product development and pricing strategies more carefully to address different customer segments."
- Accelerated multi-play strategies. "Telcos that have not already done so will accelerate the introduction of multi-play products to lock in choosy and price-sensitive consumers."
- Faster integration and synergisation of international investment strategies. "Higher hurdles for telco investment and rapid exchange rate movements will make it harder to expand international investment strategies. The focus will shift to exploiting synergies to maximise the benefits of existing investments."
- Slower handset replacement cycles. "In mobile, handset replacement cycles will lengthen and higher-end models will potentially be passed over for cheaper alternatives. This will have the effect of slowing the growth of mobile data traffic."

Technology

Scope Alliance sets out aims in new position paper

The Scope Alliance - an association of network equipment providers formed to accelerate the deployment of carrier grade base platforms for service provider applications - has released a new technical position paper, The Scope Alliance - Influencing the Agenda.

It promises to "provide commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) component vendors and industry organisations with a perspective on the Scope requirements for network elements, enabling them to better meet the NEPs' needs."

The paper describes the evolving changes to network architectures and the corresponding mandates of the telecom industry. It includes traditional carrier-grade requirements that ensure equipment is fit for running highly available services. It also explains new requirements such as modularity, portability and hardware independence that emphasise speed of deployment and low operational costs.

In the paper, Scope also details each of the components of the carrier grade platform reference architecture (CGBP). "To date, Scope has focused on improving the CGBP and its related tools. The paper provides COTS vendors with a concise understanding of Scope's technical output as well as highlights future areas of consideration," Scope says. The paper is available at www.scope-alliance.org.

NEC & Bubble Motion team to push BubbleTALK

NEC is partnering with Bubble Motion to promote Bubble Motion's BubbleTALK service to telcos worldwide.

NEC will be the exclusive provider of the BubbleTALK service to telecom operators in Japan providing deployment and technical support and the two will jointly offer BubbleTALK to telcos elsewhere, trying to exploit synergies between BubbleTALK and NEC's NGN products. Bubble Motion and NEC are seeking to expand business in rapidly growing markets, such as China, Brazil and Russia and in advanced markets.

BubbleTALK enables users to send short voice messages directly to the receiver's handset. One of its claimed advantages is fast deployment - just a few weeks. "Typically [it] does not require any additional network resources, and can even be deployed as a hosted service," NEC claims. Other claimed features are: minimal initial investment, minimal operating cost and interconnection between operators. "Furthermore, Bubble Motion can provide excellent services, such as consultation and data mining, to maximise operators' RoI," says NEC.

Fortinet names Di Data as systems integrator

Fortinet, a provider of unified threat management technology, has struck a global agreement with Dimension Data under which the latter will integrate, install and provide consultancy services for Fortinet's network security solutions to enterprises worldwide.

Fortinet says that, with Dimension Data operating in 47 countries across five continents, this is its "deepest and broadest global systems integrator partnership."

According to IDC, the UTM appliance market was worth \$US1.2b in 2007 and is projected to have a compound annual growth rate of 26 percent between 2007 and 2011 - greater than any other segment of the security appliance market. Using ASICs, the FortiGate appliance "integrates essential security applications such as antivirus, firewall, VPN, intrusion prevention, Web filtering, anti-spam and traffic shaping." The company says its products have won multiple awards around the world and are the only security products certified in six programs by ICSA Labs (firewall, antivirus, IPSec, SSL, network IPS and anti-spam).