

India adds 27.45 mn more mobile subscribers

India added 27.45 million mobile subscribers in the quarter ended March 31, taking the total number of connections to 261.07 million, new data showed Thursday.

Accordingly, the combined tele-density in the country rose to 26.22 percent, data released by the watchdog Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) said.

This amounts to a growth of 11.75 percent in the wireless telephony market. The number of mobile telephones in the quarter ended Dec 31, 2007 was 233.62 million.

The 261.07 million telephones include 192.70 million GSM and 68.37 million CDMA connections.

While GSM operators clocked a combined growth rate of 11.89 percent, CDMA service providers registered a growth rate of 11.37 percent in the quarter.

Bharti Airtel retained its market position with the maximum number of subscribers. It operates in 23 circles offering GSM services with a market share of 23.74 percent.

Reliance Communications - which has interests in both GSM and CDMA space - has 17.54 percent of mobile subscribers.

The fixed line market saw a growth of 10.12 percent during the quarter, taking the subscriber base from 272.87 million in December 2007 to 300.48 in the last quarter of 2007-08.

The total revenue of the telecom service sector for the financial year 2007-0 was Rs.1.29 trillion. The total revenue for the quarter stood at Rs.357.7 billion.

The quarterly performance indicator released by TRAI also showcased the Internet penetration levels in the country. The broadband subscriber base grew at 7.08 percent in the quarter to 11.09 million subscribers.

The government target is to reach a penetration of 20 million broadband subscribers by 2010.

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