

## TRAI calls for zero telecom equipment imports by 2022

Suggesting that India aim at net zero imports of telecommunications equipment by 2022, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Friday recommended the setting up of a Rs. 1,000 crore fund for promoting research and innovation in the sector.

The recommendations, TRAI said, aimed at enabling Indian telecom equipment manufacturing sector to transition from an import-dependent sector to a global hub of indigenous manufacturing.

“India should aim to achieve the objective of ‘net zero imports of telecommunication equipment by 2022. For this purpose, Telecom Equipment Manufacturing Council (TEMC), should identify and recommend specific areas of priorities,” TRAI said.

The import of telecom instruments was far greater than the export of such items, TRAI said.

As per available data, the export of telecom instruments stood at \$1,201.7 million in 2017-18 while imports totalled \$21,847.92 million.

The regulator has suggested that the progress of indigenous telecommunication equipment manufacturing be monitored by Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

### Security concerns

To address security concerns, TRAI had suggested that the telecom service providers be incentivised for deploying indigenous telecom products “beyond the quantities to be mandated” under the preferential market access policy.

On setting up the fund, TRAI said, “For promoting research, innovation, standardisation, design, testing, certification and manufacturing indigenous telecom equipment, Telecom Research and Development Fund (TRDF), with initial corpus of Rs. 1,000 crore, should be created.”

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