

# Trusted Telecom Products

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**In News:** The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has amended the licensing conditions for telecom companies when purchasing 'trusted telecom products' and sourcing equipment from 'trusted telecom equipment sources'.

## Trusted Telecom Products or Trusted Telecom Equipment Sources

- Due to geo-political tensions, over time, they became non-trusting of one another's technological advances and accused each other of spying using modern technologies.
- This resulted in each nation curating its own list of companies, countries and products that it trusted, especially in crucial sectors such as telecom.
- A trusted telecom product or a trusted telecom equipment source, is simply a product, a company, or a technology that has been deemed safe by the government of a country for use in crucial and critical infrastructure.
- India's Cabinet Committee on Security approved the setting up of a new National Security Directive on the telecommunication sector with an intent to classify telecom products and their sources under the 'trusted' and 'non-trusted' categories.
- The list of products telecom companies will be allowed to use in their network would be approved by the National Cyber Security Coordinator, which in turn will make its decision based on the approval of a committee headed by the deputy National Security Advisor (NSA).

## DoT's notification on trusted telecom equipment

- DoT amended the telecom licensing norms and included defence and national security as parameters for the purchase of trusted telecom products and from trusted equipment sources.
- Including defence and national security as parameters

means the designated authority can, at any time, citing these two aspects, ask telecom companies not to use products which it has deemed unsafe.

- New norms will kick in from June 15, following which telecom companies will not be able to use any products that do not appear on the trusted telecom equipment source list.
- If a telecom company wishes to expand its network by using any equipment that does not come from a trusted source or is not on the list of trusted telecom products, it will have to take prior permission from the designated authority, which is the National Cyber Security Coordinator.

### **National Security Advisor**

- The National Security Advisor is the senior official on the National Security Council of India.
- Chief adviser to the Prime Minister of India on national security policy and international affairs.
- Ajit Doval is the current NSA, and has the same rank as a Union Cabinet Minister.

### **NSA Role**

- NSA is a highly prominent and powerful office in the Government of India, serve at the discretion of the Prime Minister of India.
- The National Security Advisor (NSA) is tasked with regularly advising the Prime Minister of India on all matters relating to internal and external threats and opportunities to India.
- The NSA of India also serves as the Prime Minister's Special Interlocutor with China as well as the envoy to Pakistan and Israel on security affairs.
- The NSA receives all intelligence (RAW, IB, NTR0, MI,

DIA, NIA) reports and co-ordinates them to present before the Prime Minister.