

# India rings in new era, enters select 5G club

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NEW DELHI: India on Saturday took a mega generational leap in mobile telephony as the ball was set rolling for the launch of 5G network with PM Narendra Modi – who inaugurated the services – promising a leg-up in economic activities and citizen empowerment through the high-speed network that boasts of minimum speeds of at least 100 Mbps. India now joins a select set of countries that offer 5G telephony and these include the US, Korea, UK, Japan, China, and nations across Europe. While Airtel has launched the service in eight cities, Jio will begin from Diwali and Vodafone Idea is also gearing up.

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[Airtel kicks off 5G services, Jio sets launch for Diwali](#)

PM Modi, who launched the services at the annual India Mobile Congress (IMC) in the presence of industry leaders such as Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani, Airtel chief Sunil Mittal and Vodafone Idea promoter Kumar Mangalam Birla, said that 5G – while being transformative for the industry and enterprises – will lead to empowerment of the poor in rural and semi-urban areas through efficiencies in areas such as education and health.

## AIRTEL BEGINS IN 8 CITIES, JIO BY DIWALI

➤ Airtel kicks off 5G services in 8 cities, including **Delhi, Mumbai, B’luru, Chennai, Hyd & Varanasi.** Rel Jio promises launch by Diwali

➤ Airtel’s 5G tariffs not known yet. Those with enabled phones can opt for 5G networks; transition process still unclear

PM Modi being greeted by Mukesh Ambani, Sunil Mittal and K M Birla at the 6th India Mobile Congress in New Delhi, where the PM launched 5G services. Also seen are Union ministers Ashwini Vaishnaw (behind PM) and Devusinh Chauhan

A photograph showing Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a light pink kurta being greeted by several men in dark blue suits. They are standing on a red carpet in front of a modern building.

Today, 130 cr Indians are getting a wonderful gift... 5G is the beginning of an infinite sky of opportunities – PM Modi

“Today, 130 crore Indians are getting a wonderful gift in the form of 5G from the country and from the telecom industry. 5G is a knock on the doors of a new era in the country. It is the beginning of an infinite sky of opportunities,” Modi said while launching the services, though he avoided the customary practice of making a call to herald the entry of a new technology.

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The PM is being seen as one of the key driving forces behind the launch of the services, and has insisted that 5G should come in through indigenous technologies and network infrastructure. He said the development of local competencies means that India will take a lead in the launch and population of new telecom technologies across countries as the world moves to intelligent and efficient network solutions.

“New India will not remain a mere consumer of technology, but will play an active role in the development and implementation of that technology. With 5G, India is setting a global standard in telecom technology for the first time... India will play a big role in designing the future wireless technology, and manufacturing related to it.”

Apart from mobile operators, network companies also welcomed the launch. “Nokia is committed to support our partners in ushering the 5G era in India... Our global experience in 5G rollouts shows that it will provide a strong impetus to socio-economic growth and industrial development,” Sanjay Malik, head of Nokia’s India market said. Anku Jain, MD of MediaTek India, said 5G will usher in a new wave of opportunities for businesses, unlocking the next level of growth. “... 5G is going to revolutionise businesses and industries, enhancing advancements, and innovation & R&D while also improving customer experiences,” Jain said.

PM Modi said the growth in 4G and now new technologies such as 5G has been enabled by affordable smartphones as well as some of the lowest mobile tariffs in the world. Thus, even 5G will find a play not only in the urban and affluent India but also in smaller towns and rural India.

“The goal of this vision is to bring that technology to the common people which works for the people, works by connecting with the people,” Modi said, adding that he had always found the poor eager to adopt new technologies. “Today, you go to a local market or vegetable market, even a small street vendor will tell you, not to transact in cash, but via UPI. This shows... (that) when a facility is available, the thinking (of consumers) also gets emboldened,” he said.

The PM said the adoption of 5G will not be limited to high-speed internet access, but it had the capability to change lives. “5G technology should be used to bring about a revolution in the country.”