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Telecom sector brutally challenging, yet offers ample opportunities: Sundararajan

The "brutally challenging" Indian telecom market has only seen the beginning of many disruptions, but offers ample growth potential to draw massive investments as well as ensure profitability, Telecom Secretary Aruna Sundararajan said yesterday.

Sundararajan said that USD 100 bn sectoral investment enshrined in the national digital communications policy is not an over-estimate and may well turn out to be less-than-adequate in the wake of new age technologies and advent of 5G.

Sundararajan said that while the Indian telecom market is "vibrant and exciting", it is also "brutally challenging".

"I think we have only seen the beginning of disruption and I am sure there will be many more disruptions to come but this is a market which is big enough, has enough growth potential for us to attract those kinds of investments and yet make investments profitable" she said.

Speaking at a panel discussion on 'Digital Infrastructure for Transforming India' organised by Broadband India Forum, she pointed out how China and the world at large are committing huge investments in the digital communications space.

"The global spend on telecom is expected to touch $ 4 trillion, and China is spending around $ 188 bn every year on digital communications infrastructure...For 5G alone, China's budget is expected to be of the order of $ 500 bn. Estimates suggest that impact of 5G on global GDP can be potential doubling of GDP and so countries are infusing investments in telecom infrastructure," she said.