

India plans 4G mobile sale: report

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An Indian farmer talks on his mobile phone on the outskirts of Hyderabad in April 2009. India plans to hold an auction of ultra-high-speed fourth-generation (4G) mobile phone spectrum soon after completion of 3G access now underway, a report said Wednesday.

India plans to hold an auction of ultra-high-speed fourth-generation (4G) mobile phone spectrum soon after completion of 3G access now underway, a report said Wednesday.

The sale process for 4G, which will provide high-speed Internet connections, will begin as soon as operators roll out their 3G networks this year, Communications Minister A. Raja was quoted as saying by the Hindustan Times newspaper.

The [government](#) expects to bring in at least 350 billion rupees (eight billion dollars) from the sell-off of 3G airwaves and a follow-on [auction](#) of [broadband wireless](#) access [spectrum](#) that began last Friday and could

take weeks.

Operators believe 4G will bring near-broadband speed technology to mobile phones, allowing users to receive multimedia such as [TV broadcasts](#) and online games at rates up to 10 times faster than those possible on [3G networks](#).

"I do not want any delay in 4G services. We should be with the rest of the world in 4G," Raja said.

Germany on Monday began Europe's first auction of 4G frequencies.

Raja said he expected the successful telecom bidders for 3G frequency would start launching their new networks within a few weeks of receiving the spectrum when it is allocated in September.

The auction of 3G spectrum will propel India into the Internet era, giving millions who have no computer access the ability to surf the web from their phones.

It will also heat up the battle for customers in the world's fastest-growing [mobile market](#).

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has already started the pre-consultation process for the sale of 4G spectrum, Raja said.

"Once TRAI submits its recommendations, the government will work on it," he said.

Raja's comments came after the government completed 22 rounds of auctions to award 3G spectrum for 3G telecom services, according to the Department of Telecommunications website.

A bid for a pan-India 3G licence rose to 45.8 billion rupees on the fourth day of the auction Tuesday -- 31 percent above the reserve price fixed by the government. Bidding was closed Wednesday for a public holiday.

The winning companies' names will be announced after the auction's completion and approval by the government.

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