Equity Research

January 31, 2017 BSE Sensex: 27850

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INDIA



Telecom

Vodafone India and Idea Cellular – a 'mega-merger' in the making

Reason for report: Sector update

Vodafone Group confirmed that it is in discussion for all-share merger with Idea Cellular (Idea) through fresh shares to Vodafone in Idea. Though we see the likely merger as a positive with the combined entity to be no.1 operator, we see regulatory costs and integration challenges. Some costs however could be offset by synergy benefits accruing from merger. We also see Bharti Airtel (Bharti), to benefit from industry consolidation and it would still continue to be no.1 operator in 11 circles (which contributed 48.6% to industry AGR) even after the Vodafone-Idea merger. We see Bharti Infratel to be impacted from tenancy cancellations on consolidation and potentially lower tenancy opportunity in the longer term. We have not baked in any merger benefits in Idea for now. Maintain our BUY rating on Bharti Airtel (our top pick), HOLD on Idea and REDUCE on Bharti Infratel.

- Potential merger of Vodafone and Idea Though positive....
 - Based on a press release, Vodafone Group and Aditya Birla Group (promoter of Idea Cellular) are in discussion for all-share merger through issue of fresh shares to Vodafone in Idea Cellular.
 - Idea's press release said the fundamental premise of preliminary discussion is based on equal rights between Aditya Birla Group and Vodafone in the combined entity.
 - We believe merger would be a positive with the combined entity being the no. 1 telecom operator with adjusted gross revenue (AGR) of 43%. However, if we apply AGR market share cap at 50% (in circles where combined entity exceeds the allowed limit for merger), then combined entity would have AGR market share of 39.3%.
 - Our analysis shows the merged entity would have data spectrum holding market share of 38% (without including excess spectrum) compared to 28% for Bharti Airtel and 34% for Reliance Jio (including the entire 850MHz of RCom).
- ...it would have its own challenges regulatory costs and integration challenges
 - If Idea acquires Vodafone, then combined entity will incur spectrum liberalisation cost of Rs45bn or will have to surrender Vodafone's administratively allocated spectrum.
 - Merged entity to exceed 50% spectrum cap in five circles in 900MHz band with total excess spectrum of 12.7MHz, however U.P. (west) has administratively allocated spectrum. The combined entity will need to either sell (which looks difficult though!) or surrender excess spectrum worth Rs52bn without any refund from the government. Also, have to surrender 20MHz of spectrum in the 2500MHz band worth Rs9.7bn.
 - Combined entity will exceed AGR market share of 50% in seven circles. The cumulative excess AGR is Rs30bn in H1FY17, which will need to be reduced within one year of merger.
 - Apart from this, the top management of the combined entity will need to invest significant time in integration of employees, network operations and vendor contracts.
- ▶ Potential synergy benefits Access charges, network costs and SG&A expenses
 - Our profoma P&L shows the combined entity is likely to have revenues of Rs414bn in H1FY17; however, we see some revenues lost due to market share cap limit and lower IUC revenues, which was arising between the merging operators.
 - We see synergies from: 1) lower access charges as the merged entity is likely to have much higher on-net calls and nil 3G intra-circle roaming fees, 2) lower selling and marketing costs on branding and distribution, 3) lower number of cell sites (though this may take some time due to lock-in and penalty clause in MSAs) and other network operating costs, and 4) savings in employee and administrative expenses.
 - In case combined entity achieves EBITDA margin equal to Bharti, it would imply synergy benefit of 15% on costs and that potential EBITDA of the combined entity will be 34% higher than the simple summation of present EBITDAs of Idea and Vodafone.

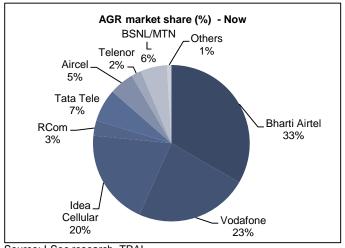
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Will combined entity have much lower leverage?

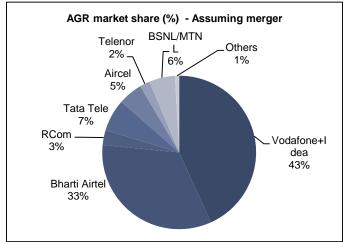
- We believe the merged entity could have much lower leverage due to potential sale of towers assets on the books of Vodafone India and Idea
- If Aditya Birla (AB) Group is working to equal right, it could imply fresh equity infusion from AB Group in the combined entity

Chart 1: Vodafone and Idea AGR market share is 23% and 20% respectively...



Source: I-Sec research, TRAI

Chart 2: ...hence merged entity would have AGR market share of 43%



Source: I-Sec research, TRAI

Table 1: However, accounting for market cap, the merged entity will likely have AGR market share of 39.3%

	Vodafone		lde	a	Vofafor	ne+ldea	Vofafone+Idea		
•		AGR-		AGR-		AGR-		AGR-	
AGR (Rs mn)	AGR	MS (%)	AGR	MS (%)	AGR	MS (%)	AGR	MS (%)	
Metros									
Delhi	15,910	30.5	5,054	9.7	20,964	40.2	20,964	40.2	
Mumbai	15,658	38.1	3,250	7.9	18,908	46.0	18,908	46.0	
Kolkata	6,284	36.7	820	4.8	7,104	41.5	7,104	41.5	
A' Circle									
Maharashtra	17,121	26.5	24,258	37.5	41,379	64.0	32,341	50.0	
Gujarat	18,347	42.5	10,748	24.9	29,095	67.4	21,593	50.0	
A.P.	4,803	7.9	16,295	26.8	21,097	34.7	21,097	34.7	
Karnataka	7,586	12.8	5,601	9.4	13,187	22.2	13,187	22.2	
T.N.	17,698	25.4	3,181	4.6	20,879	29.9	20,879	29.9	
B' Circle									
Kerala	8,336	22.0	18,464	48.8	26,800	70.9	18,910	50.0	
Punjab	4,047	14.7	8,019	29.1	12,066	43.8	12,066	43.8	
Haryana	4,285	30.4	4,088	29.0	8,372	59.5	7,037	50.0	
U.P.(W)	7,091	21.3	11,658	35.1	18,749	56.4	16,618	50.0	
U.P.(E)	15,234	30.8	7,136	14.4	22,371	45.3	22,371	45.3	
Rajasthan	8,433	22.1	4,534	11.9	12,967	34.0	12,967	34.0	
M.P.	2,677	7.1	17,894	47.6	20,571	54.7	18,796	50.0	
W.B.	10,408	41.3	2,203	8.8	12,611	50.1	12,585	50.0	
C' Circle									
H.P.	382	6.9	695	12.6	1,076	19.5	1,076	19.5	
Bihar	5,475	14.0	5,154	13.2	10,629	27.2	10,629	27.2	
Orissa	2,415	16.0	837	5.6	3,252	21.6	3,252	21.6	
Assam	3,321	23.5	547	3.9	3,868	27.3	3,868	27.3	
N.E.	1,474	17.6	251	3.0	1,725	20.6	1,725	20.6	
J&K	609	8.3	482	6.6	1,091	14.9	1,091	14.9	
Total	177,593	23.3	151,167	19.9	328,759	43.2	299,062	39.3	

Source: I-Sec research, TRAI

Table 2: Total spectrum held by Vodafone India and Idea Cellular

		Vodafon	e India		Idea Cellular						
Operators	900	1800	2100	2500	900	1800	2100	2300	2500		
	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz		
Metros											
Delhi	5.0	10.0	5.0	20.0	5.0	8.6	-	-	-		
Mumbai	11.0	8.2	5.0	20.0	-	6.4	5.0	-	-		
Kolkata	7.0	10.0	5.0	20.0	-	5.0	5.0	-	-		
A' Circle											
Maharashtra	5.0	1.3	10.0	20.0	9.0	11.0	5.0	10.0	10.0		
Gujarat	6.0	10.8	5.0	20.0	5.0	10.0	5.0	-	10.0		
A.P.	-	6.8	-	-	5.0	6.0	5.0	-	10.0		
Karnataka	-	13.0	5.0	-	5.0	6.0	-	-	-		
T.N.	6.2	1.0	15.0	-	-	11.4	-	-	-		
B' Circle											
Kerala	6.4	9.9	5.0	10.0	6.0	10.0	5.0	10.0	10.0		
Punjab	-	11.1	5.0	10.0	5.6	10.0	5.0	-	-		
Haryana	6.2	4.9	10.0	10.0	6.0	10.8	5.0	-	10.0		
U.P.(W)	6.2	4.9	5.0	10.0	5.0	9.4	5.0	-	10.0		
U.P.(E)	5.6	8.5	10.0	10.0	-	6.2	10.0	-	10.0		
Rajasthan	6.4	5.0	10.0	10.0	-	11.2	5.0	-	10.0		
M.P.	-	6.9	-	-	7.4	11.6	5.0	10.0	20.0		
W.B.	6.6	11.9	5.0	10.0	-	11.3	-	-	10.0		
C' Circle											
H.P.	-	5.7	-	-	-	9.8	5.0	-	10.0		
Bihar	-	6.9	-	-	-	10.7	5.0	-	10.0		
Orissa	5.0	6.9	5.0	10.0	-	10.0	-	-	10.0		
Assam	-	14.9	5.0	10.0	-	10.0	-	-	10.0		
N.E.	-	14.7	5.0	10.0	-	11.0	-	-	10.0		
J&K	-	6.9	-	-	-	10.0	5.0	-	10.0		
Total	82.6	180.0	115.0	200.0	59.0	206.3	80.0	30.0	170.0		

Source: I-Sec research, TRAI, DOT

Table 3: Combined entity to exceed 50% spectrum cap in five circles in 900MHz band and two circles in 2300MHz band

		Vod	afone + Id	lea	Spectrum cap					
Operators	900	1800	2100	2300	2500	900	1800	2100	2300	2500
-	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz	MHz
Metros										
Delhi	10.0	18.6	5.0	-	20.0	11.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Mumbai	11.0	14.6	10.0	-	20.0	11.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Kolkata	7.0	15.0	10.0	-	20.0	10.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
A' Circle				-						
Maharashtra	14.0	12.3	15.0	10.0	30.0	10.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Gujarat	11.0	20.8	10.0	-	30.0	10.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
A.P.	5.0	12.8	5.0	-	10.0	10.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Karnataka	5.0	19.0	5.0	-	-	10.1	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
T.N.	6.2	12.4	15.0	-	-	10.1	29.7	20.0	30.0	20.0
B' Circle				-						
Kerala	12.4	19.9	10.0	10.0	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Punjab	5.6	21.1	10.0	-	10.0	10.9	27.4	20.0	20.0	20.0
Haryana	12.2	15.7	15.0	-	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	20.0	20.0
U.P.(W)	11.2	14.3	10.0	-	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	20.0	20.0
U.P.(E)	5.6	14.7	20.0	-	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	20.0	20.0
Rajasthan	6.4	16.2	15.0	-	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	20.0	20.0
M.P.	7.4	18.5	5.0	10.0	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
W.B.	6.6	23.2	5.0	-	20.0	9.7	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
C' Circle				-						
H.P.	-	15.5	5.0	-	10.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Bihar	-	17.6	5.0	-	10.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Orissa	5.0	16.9	5.0	-	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
Assam	-	24.9	5.0	-	20.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
N.E.	-	25.7	5.0	-	20.0	9.7	27.4	20.0	30.0	20.0
J&K	-	16.9	5.0	-	10.0	9.3	27.4	20.0	20.0	20.0
Total	141.6	386.3	195.0	30.0	370.0	215.4	605.1	440.0	600.0	440.0

Source: I-Sec research, TRAI, DOT

Table 4: Administratively allocated spectrum holding and potential payout for liberalisation

0	Vodafo	ne India	Idea	Voda	Idea	
Operators>	900MHz	1800MHz	1800MHz	900MHz	1800MHz	1800MHz
Metros						
Delhi			8.0			7,420
Mumbai			4.4			10,515
Kolkata						
A' Circle						
Maharashtra						
Gujarat						
A.P.		6.2			3,498	
Karnataka		8.0			3,436	
T.N.	6.2	1.0		11,128	522	
B' Circle						
Kerala						
Punjab		6.2			1,108	
Haryana						
U.P.(W)	6.2			16,102		
U.P.(E)			6.2			1,919
Rajasthan			6.2			1,325
M.P.		4.4			1,875	
W.B.	4.4	1.8		3,317	301	
C' Circle						
H.P.		4.4	4.4		344	164
Bihar		4.4	4.4		1,333	1,345
Orissa		4.4			817	
Assam		4.4			860	
N.E.		4.4			236	
J&K		4.4			279	
Total	16.8	54.0	33.6	30,547	14,610	22,687

Source: I-Sec research, TRAI, DOT

Table 5: Mobile broadband spectrum holding market share of combined entity to be 38% (accounting for surrender of excess spectrum due to spectrum cap) vs 28% for Bharti Airtel and 34% for RJio

Operators>		Vo	dafone+lo	lea		Bharti Airtel				Reliance Jio		
Operators>	3G-900	3G-2100	4G-1800	4G-2300	4G-2500	3G-900	3G-2100	4G-1800	4G-2300	4G-850	4G-1800	4G-2300
Metros												<u> </u>
Delhi	5.0	5.0	15.0	-	20.0		10.0	5.0	30.0	8.8	5.4	30.0
Mumbai	5.0	10.0	14.6	-	20.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	30.0	10.0	6.6	30.0
Kolkata	-	10.0	15.0	-	20.0	5.0	-	5.0	30.0	10.0	10.0	30.0
A' Circle												
Maharashtra	5.0	15.0	10.0	10.0	20.0		5.0	5.0	20.0	5.0	5.0	30.0
Gujarat	5.0	10.0	15.0	-	20.0		5.0	5.0	10.0	11.3	6.0	30.0
A.P.	-	5.0	10.0	-	10.0	5.0	5.0	10.0	30.0	5.0	5.8	30.0
Karnataka	-	5.0	15.0	-	-	5.0	5.0	5.0	30.0	8.8	5.0	30.0
T.N.	-	15.0	10.0	-	-		10.0	5.0	30.0	8.8	6.8	30.0
B' Circle												
Kerala	5.0	10.0	15.0	10.0	20.0		5.0	5.0	20.0	8.8	5.0	30.0
Punjab	-	10.0	20.0	-	10.0	5.0	-	10.0	20.0	10.0	5.2	20.0
Haryana	5.0	15.0	10.0	-	20.0		5.0	10.0	20.0	10.0	5.0	20.0
U.P.(W)	5.0	10.0	10.0	-	20.0		5.0	5.0	-	10.0	5.0	20.0
U.P.(E)	-	20.0	10.0	-	20.0		5.0	5.0	-	10.0	6.4	20.0
Rajasthan	-	15.0	15.0	-	20.0		10.0	5.0	-	8.8	10.0	20.0
M.P.	-	5.0	15.0	10.0	20.0		5.0	10.0	20.0	10.0	6.4	30.0
W.B.	-	5.0	20.0	-	20.0		5.0	5.0	30.0	8.8	10.6	30.0
C' Circle												
H.P.	-	5.0	10.0	-	10.0		5.0	10.0	30.0	10.0	10.4	30.0
Bihar	-	5.0	10.0	-	10.0		10.0	5.0	30.0	10.0	5.0	30.0
Orissa	5.0	5.0	10.0	-	20.0		5.0	10.0	30.0	10.0	5.0	30.0
Assam	-	5.0	15.0	-	20.0		5.0	9.5	30.0	10.0	5.4	30.0
N.E.	-	5.0	20.0	-	20.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	30.0	10.0	6.4	30.0
J&K	-	5.0	10.0		10.0		10.0	5.0	20.0	10.0	10.0	20.0
Total	40.0	195.0	294.3	30.0	350.0	30.0	125.0	144.5	490.0	203.8	146.4	600.0
MBB spectrum market share (%)		-	38				-	28			34	

Source: I-Sec research, TRAI

Table 6: Data capacity market share based on spectrum holding

		Vo	dafone+lo	dea		Bharti Airtel				Reliance Jio		
Operators>						3G-				4G-		4G-
	3G-900	3G-2100	4G-1800	4G-2300	4G-2500	900	3G-2100	4G-1800	4G-2300	850	4G-1800	2300
Metros												
Delhi	30	30	180	-	180	-	60	60	270	53	32	270
Mumbai	30	60	175	-	180	30	30	60	270	60	40	270
Kolkata	-	60	180	-	180	30	-	60	270	60	60	270
A' Circle												
Maharashtra	30	90	119	90	180	-	30	60	180	30	30	270
Gujarat	30	60	180	-	180	-	30	60	90	68	36	270
A.P.	-	30	120	-	90	30	30	120	270	30	35	270
Karnataka	-	30	180	-	-	30	30	60	270	53	30	270
T.N.	-	90	120	-	-	-	60	60	270	53	41	270
B' Circle												
Kerala	30	60	179	90	180	-	30	60	180	53	30	270
Punjab	-	60	239	-	90	30	-	120	180	60	31	180
Haryana	30	90	120	-	180	-	30	120	180	60	30	180
U.P.(W)	30	60	120	-	180	-	30	60	-	60	30	180
U.P.(E)	-	120	119	-	180	-	30	60	-	60	38	180
Rajasthan	-	90	180	-	180	-	60	60	-	53	60	180
M.P.	-	30	180	90	180	-	30	120	180	60	38	270
W.B.	-	30	239	-	180	-	30	60	270	53	64	270
C' Circle												
H.P.	-	30	119	-	90	-	30	120	270	60	62	270
Bihar	-	30	119	-	90	-	60	60	270	60	30	270
Orissa	30	30	120	-	180	-	30	120	270	60	30	270
Assam	-	30	180	-	180	-	30	114	270	60	32	270
N.E.	-	30	240	-	180	30	30	60	270	60	38	270
J&K	-	30	120	-	90	-	60	60	180	60	60	180
Total	240	1,170	3,531	270	3,150	180	750	1,734	4,410	1,223	878	5,400
MBB spectrum												
market share (%)			36				;	31			33	
Source: I-Sec resear	ch TRAI											

Source: I-Sec research, TRAI

Table 7: Proforma P&L and potential impact of synergy benefit on EBITDA

					Scenarios		
Rs mn (1HFY17)	Vodafone	Idea	V+I (No	V+I (5% cost	V+I (10% cost	V+I (15% cost	
	1000.0	luou	synergy)	synergy)	synergy)	synergy)	Remarks
Revenue	226,547	187,828	414,375	414,375	414,375	414,375	Revenue of Rs30bn impact due to AGR limit on merged entity and lower IUC revenue from mins terminating between operators
Direct costs/Access, LF & SUC	62,817	45,112	107,929				Merged entity should have higher on-net mins, hence lower access charges and also nil 3G-ICR chargers
Customer costs/S&M cost	11,121	17,128	28,248				Combined entity would require lower marketing spend
Operating expenses	85,584	66,486	152,071				Lower cell sites, other network cost savings and SG&A cost. Also lower employee cost
Total expenses	159,522	128,725	288,248	273,835	259,423	245,010	• •
EBITDA	67,025	59,103	126,128	140,540	154,952	169,365	
EBITDA margin (%)	29.6	31.5	30.4	33.9	37.4	40.9	
Depreciation & amortisation	50,269	38,735	89,003	89,003	89,003	89,003	
EBIT	16,756	20,368	37,124	51,537	65,949	80,361	
EBIT margin (%)	7.4	10.8	9.0	12.4	15.9	19.4	
Capex	28,854	30,800	59,654	59,654	59,654	59,654	
% of revenue	12.7	16.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.4	
FCF (EBITDA - capex)	38,171	28,303	66,474	80,886	95,299	109,711	
% of revenue	16.8	15.1	16.0	19.5	23.0	26.5	

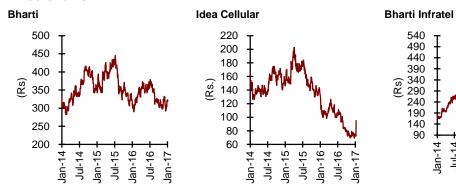
Source: I-Sec research, Company

Jan-14 + Jul-14 -Jan-15 -

Jul-15 -Jan-16 -

Jul-16 -Jan-17 -





Telecom, January 31, 2017 ICICI Securities

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BUY: >15% return; ADD: 5% to 15% return; HOLD: Negative 5% to Positive 5% return; REDUCE: Negative 5% to Negative 15% return; SELL: < negative 15% return

ANALYST CERTIFICATION

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