

## DoT notice to Vodafone Idea over non-payment of licence fee for Q4



The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued show-cause notice to [Vodafone Idea](#) (Vi) for non-payment of licence fee and spectrum dues for the last quarter of FY21.

The telco has not paid fees for seven circles — Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh (East), and Odisha — which was due on March 25.

The DoT has directed Vi to show cause by April 12, 2021, why action should not be taken against the company under relevant clauses of licence agreement.

Licence fee is payable in four quarterly instalments during each financial year. Quarterly instalment of licence fee for the first three quarters of a financial year are payable within 15 days of the completion of the relevant quarter. For the last quarter of financial year, licencees have to pay the licence fee by March 25.

Sources close to the company said payments had been made towards licence fee and spectrum usage charges for the quarter ending March 2021, last month, and that payment gaps if any, will be completed within the defined timeline.

Earlier this week, the department also issued a notice to Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea for non-payment of adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues, deadline for which expired on March 31.

In a relief to the cash-strapped telecom operators, the Supreme Court in September had allowed the companies to clear their AGR dues in ten years and begin by making an upfront payment of 10 per cent of the total dues.

The payment timeline begins from April 1, 2021, and the first installment needs to be paid before March 31, 2021.

The SC had said that any default in payment would invite interest, penalty and contempt of court.

According to the DoT's calculations, Bharti Airtel owes the exchequer Rs 43,780 crore, of which the company has paid Rs 18,004 crore.

Vodafone Idea has paid Rs 7,854 crore of its Rs 50,399 crore dues. Tata Teleservices has paid about Rs 4,197 crore and the balance is about Rs 12,601 crore.

Industry sources indicated that the payments to DoT were unlikely as the matter was in the Supreme Court.

[Vodafone Idea](#)