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RCOM names Safawi CEO of mobility biz

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ANIL Ambani's Reliance Communications has just inducted Syed Safawi as president & CEO of its national mobility business. Mr Safawi, who till recently was executive director at Bharti Airtel, will be responsible for both the CDMA and GSM operations of RCOM.

As president of the wireless business, he will be reporting to RCOM's group managing director Satish Seth, a senior company executive told ET. In a written response to ET's email query, RCOM chairman Anil Ambani confirmed Mr Safawi's induction. "We are glad to have Syed Safawi leading our mobility business to the next frontier of growth. With a strong and experienced team supporting Syed, I'm confident Reliance Mobile will achieve a leadership position at a significantly accelerated pace," Mr Ambani noted in the email.

Mr Safawi was handling Bhar-

ti Airtel's international operations and its eastern and western circles. A Wharton alumnus, he brings in 22 years of experience cutting across the FMCG and telecom space. Prior to Airtel, he spent 11 years at Coca-Cola. Mr Safawi could not be reached for an official response on his induction into RCOM despite repeated attempts by ET.

Interestingly, Mr Safawi's entry is the second high-profile induction into the RCOM fold from outside the system, coming as it does after the R-ADAG poached ex-Vodafone Essar director & chief technical officer Naresh Gupta as president, Reliance Globalcom, a wholly-owned RCOM subsidiary.

Incidentally, the CEO slot for RCOM's mobility business had been vacant for several months ever since former wireless business chief SP Shukla relocated to the company's special projects cell that is scouting for mobile service opportunities in offshore markets like Africa and Sri Lanka.

