

Comment on Consultation Paper on Issues related to Digital Terrestrial Broadcasting in India. 24th June, 2016

First of all, it's very praise worthy and pragmatic for TRAI to accept for the companies to use any technology they deem preferable for DTT. As it will encourage companies to go for the most effective technology, that is also efficient. This in turn will push advancement quicker.

I'm not going to comment on all the questions, rather just the ones I have opinions on.

Q.1 Do you perceive the need for introduction of Digital terrestrial transmission in presence of multiple broadcasting distribution platforms? Please provide your comments with justification.

Yes, the introduction of DTT is a technology long awaited to be introduced in India. DTT fills a gap between Cable Network television and DTH television. How so? Well, that's because in case of Cable, there is lack of portability, i.e. when you move to some where you cannot take the connection with you, among many other shortcomings. In case of DTH, yes portability is somewhat possible, but aligning the parabolic dish is still a hassle. Finally for any internet based TV service, the user always has to pay for internet, which is a huge negative for the lower income class people who subscribe to the DD FTA DTH service. In between all of these is DTT. It can be portable, free to air, etc among many other advantages.

Also, there is a huge potential customer base for DTT that has not been tapped into, i.e. college students. Mostly, college students are not allowed to keep televisions in their hostels, or do not have the financial ability to watch internet TV, as it takes up a lot of data to constantly stream videos. With the introduction of DTT, they would be able to watch TV anytime, anywhere without paying for costly internet data packs.

Q.2 If yes, what should be the appropriate strategy for DTT implementation across the country? Please provide your comments with justification.

The basic strategy I would suggest is to let private parties participate from the beginning, i.e. from the introduction of DTT in India. As it would ensure that the service is advertised and hyped from the beginning, at the expense of the private parties or rather at no expense to the government or PB. So the people will get to know about the service from the beginning, and expecting to buy it. That means, to emulate the introduction of DTH in India to the introduction of DTT.

Q.3 Should digital terrestrial television broadcasting be opened for participation by the private players? Please provide your comments with justification.

Yes, absolutely. The DTT broadcasting in India must be opened to private players, as it will ensure fast deployment, public sensitisation, and most importantly **growth of the sector**.

One of the main reasons for DTT to not catch on to the public despite DD introducing it twice in India is lack of public awareness. Since, private parties were not involved, and DD was not able to create the necessary hype needed in the early days of introduction of any new technology. Hence, despite having huge potential, the service did not catch on. For any technology to catch on and keep advancing, public awareness is a must, and private players are the only option that can get it done quickly.

Q.4 Which model or a combination thereof for Digital terrestrial transmission will be most suitable in Indian context? Please furnish your comments with justification.

Transmission Network Model would be the best suited according to me. It will free the government and PB from the

headache of accommodating others into their infrastructure, etc. Also, government won't have to invest a penny. It can simply authorise and regulate everyone. Although, it may make the entry of new players with relatively less financial backing into the market much harder. Hence, a **Combined Model** should be arrived at.

Q.10 What should be the roadmap for digitization of terrestrial TV network in the country? Please provide your comments with justification.

Digitization should be started from the most densely populated urban areas, and slowly follow to the rural/remote areas. Similarly, switching off of the analogue transmission should also start from the urban areas, and go on to the rural areas in a phased manner, because, there is almost no use of the Yagi Uda Antenna anymore in the urban areas, but in rural areas, there are still some, who use it for analogue reception of DD-National.

Also, involvement of private parties from the beginning is a must for its success.

Bibekananda Roy
Jalandhar, Punjab