

To,
The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)
Mahanagar Doorsanchar Bhawan,
Jawaharlal Nehru Marg (Old Minto Road),
New Delhi – 110 002.

15/11/2016

Sub: Comments on Draft Tariff Order from Consumer's Point of View

Kind Attn: Mr. V.K.Agrawal

Dear Sir,

The undersigned is member of Akhil Bhartiya Grahak Panchyat ,Aurangabad unit from last 15-20 years and is also engage in various activities related to consumer movement.

I have gone through the Consultation on the Draft Telecommunication (Broadcasting and Cable Services) (Eighth) (Addressable Systems) Tariff Order, 2016 in detail. I am herewith submitting my suggestion /observations from consumer's point of view.

As you aware that Television is now part of every common man's life. Television has occupied its space almost in every house. It is the medium through which news from one corner of world is communicated /share to other part of world. One can watch live program likes games, religion etc. and see what is happening directly through this medium. Television also plays important role in maintaining social harmony , peace in day to day to life .

It is to be noted that initially the programs on television, its broadcasting time was totally in the hands of Government. However due to globalization and with the entry of private players in this sector, necessity to control the broadcasting material was felt which ultimately resulted in forming regulatory

Presently there are @ 200-225 different channels available for viewing to the people at large . Some of the channels are dedicated to news media, sports , Religion, entertainment , movies etc. Initially cable connection were provided through local cable operators who use to collect money from consumer on monthly basis and were expected to pay.

However as the system developed many loop holes and there was no control over amount to be charged and no transparency in business , Govt. has made viewing television through Set Top box mandatory. At present the payment towards viewing television is required to be made directly to the owner or through its cable operators or main distributors . At present the offer is based on package of channels . i.e. Z group, Stars group, sports channels , English movies channels etc. It is to be noted that the charges collected from consumers are not same at all places.

On this issue , I would to suggest that TRAI should ensure that transparency in rates is maintained and same rates are charged all over the country. Consumers should not be put to harassment or looted by the channel owners. The consumer who has capacity will select more channels for viewing and pay more accordingly.

Now with the development of technology, HD channels are now being introduced on television. The same program is available on regular channels as well as on HD channel. However channel owners are demanding excess amount from consumers which is required to be stopped .

On going through your tariff order , I am surprised to note that permission to charge upto Rs.130/(For FTA channels) is under consideration. This is huge increase and this will help private channels owners to extract more money from common consumers for whom watching pay channels will be additional financial burden. .

It is to be noted that a common consumer or his family members jointly watches same channels which has program on episode basis or either watches a news channels or sees a movie or sport activity on channel. Considering his requirement expenditure of Rs. 200-250/ per month is within his limit. Now in case high rates of Rs. 130/ for HD channels is approved then there will be more extraction of money from common consumers who is not very much keen to take FTA channels. In short the rates of viewing television with all channels shall not go beyond Rs. 250/

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In present modern life , It is common practice to have one television in Drawing or common room and additional one in Bedroom also. The cable operator presently @Rs.100-150/ for this additional connection. Now with this increase in rates same consumer will have to pay more which is unjustified and needs to reconsider.

Premium Channels:

The authority of declaration of premium channels shall be kept with TRAI and not with the Broadcasters. The maximum price is also require to determine for such premium channels and should be kept affordable to the common consumers.

Cloned Channels:

It has been observed that many channels are broadcasting same programs either a episode or sport match in different languages in multiple channels. However while doing so, the consumer is being charged doubly for the same program.

This aspect is unfortunately ignored by TRAI and has kept this clone channels outside any regulations. In my opinion, broadcaster should show any program only on one channel, and can provide different language options in the channel like Discovery, NGC etc.).

Additional Rental:

I wish to bring to your kind notice that once the cable operator lays a cable to my place by installing a set top box, I start receiving the channels provided by him which can be 100-400 in numbers. However when I desire to change my package to view more channels , I am asked to pay additional amount for more channels . Practically no physical changes is required to be done nor any additional cost is required to be incurred for getting more channels . I request TRAI to look into this issue also .

In view of above submission, I request you reconsider the order from common consumer angles and to take decision which will benefit common consumer.

Thanking you,

Yours Faithfully

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