The NTO 3.0 has come into effect from February 1, 2023. The various cable TV associations from across the country have been making desperate attempts to get the NTO 3.0 stalled and have made urgent requisitions to TRAI and I&B Ministry. Also filed petitions in various courts. However, none of this has had any impact yet. Majority of DPOs have already signed up with the broadcasters agreeing to the latest NTO regime.

The big broadcasters’ trio of Disney Star, Sony and Zee have already sounded out to TRAI on the list of MSOs who have signed and implemented NTO 3.0.

Tata Play, Dish TV and Airtel Digital TV have also given in and agreed to implement NTO 3.0.

The lone warriors fighting the battle is AIDCF (All India Digital Cable Federation) members and a few other associations. They are awaiting a clarity from Kerala High Court, which has refused to stay the implementation, and next hearing is end February 2023. Even Siti Cable has joined the bandwagon of players which will implement NTO 3.0. Siti Cable is fighting a desperate battle for survival in the midst of its financial woes.

The actual full scale implementation of NTO 3.0 will take around 60 days. By then we will get a clear indication from the High Court if there is any directive to stall the NTO 3.0. But this looks like a remote possibility in the current juncture.

The broadcasters are pushing hard and fast on a speedy implantation of NTO 3.0.

The LCOs are also demanding Infrastructure status for the digital cable TV industry. This they believe will help them get benefits which the telecom companies are enjoying. And the LCO community feels that if the National Digital Communications Policy of extending broadband to every Indian citizen has to work, then the LCOs will be a major stakeholder to help deliver broadband in the last mile connectivity across the country. This is a valid point and needs to considered seriously by the government.

Let us hope that there emerges a solution to the battle waged by the cable TV industry and they see better days ahead.