The amendment of the new tariff order NTO 2.0 by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) saw some of the top broadcasters like ZEE, Sun TV, Discovery Communication India, Disney Star India, Viacom18 and Curler Max Entertainment reviewing their pricing strategy. The new pricing will be effective February 1, 2023. The TRAI Chairman for his active stance in taking the collaborative route to deal with the NTO 2.0 related issues.

All top broadcasters are revising pricing strategy and publishing their RIOs. This has left the cable industry in a tizzy and there are fears echoed by the cable industry, which now feels that the changes will entail loss of subscribers to OTT and Free Dish. These legitimate concerns of the cable industry need to be addressed by the authorities and a similar collaborative approach needs to be taken to address the issues of the cable industry. The initiative needs to come from TRAI, I&B Ministry and all other active stakeholders.

The Amendment of the new tariff order NTO 2.0 by the Kerala High Court. The Federation, which is the apex body of multi system operators (MSOs), has urged the HC to set aside amendments to the NTO 2.0 which were issued on 22nd November and order the Trai to maintain status quo till their petition is disposed.

A recent update mentioned that The information & broadcasting sector attracted foreign direct investment (FDI) worth Rs. 1,766 crore in 2022. The I&B ministry approves the formulation of FDI policies in the broadcasting, film and DTH, and entertainment is 100%. But the FDI in cable has not seen any major investors pumping in money into this sector. This issue needs to be looked and addressed on what are the factors for the lack of capital influx into the cable industry.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India recommendation on the registration for MSOs should be done for 10 years and that the processing fee to be fixed at Rs.1 lakh. This should provide a level of transparency.

In a major step to improve the broadcasting infrastructure, the Govt has given a major boost for Public Service Broadcasting; and improving the Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development (BIND) with an outlay of Rs.2,539.61 crore up to 2025-26.

Wishing all the readers a very happy and prosperous 2023.

(Manoj Kumar Madhavan)