

With tech developments, affordability of broadcasting services can be further improved: DoT Secretary

By TIOL News Service

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the year 2022, when the country is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has also completed 25 years of its existence. In continuance of its silver jubilee celebrations, on the esteemed platform provided by the India Mobile Congress, TRAI yesterday organized a Seminar on "Emerging Trends in Broadcasting Sector". This seminar had been organized in the backdrop of the recent technological developments in the sector and their impact.

The seminar was inaugurated by Chairman, TRAI, Dr PD Vaghela, in a well-attended inaugural session. The inaugural session was graced by the presence of T Mano Thangaraj, Minister for Information Technology and Digital Services, Government of Tamil Nadu, Secretary MIB, Apurva Chandra and Secretary, DoT, K Rajaraman.

While delivering his welcome address, V Raghunandan, Secretary, TRAI underlined that today's seminar was in the furtherance of the attempts of TRAI to foster new deliberations and discussions in the sector in order to recognise the required changes in the regulatory framework in the light of new developments in the sector.

Rajaraman, Secretary DoT, highlighted the role of broadcasting sector during the pandemic. He emphasized that with the technological developments, affordability of the broadcasting services and inclusion can be further improved upon. Further, Apurva Chandra, Secretary MIB, underlined opening up of new paradigms and avenues in various sectors with the technological developments in the broadcasting, for instance, immersive learning in education sector. He further raised the policy issues and challenges raised by such new developments and traced the need to update the legal and regulatory regime in the light of the same.

Meenakshi Gupta, Member, TRAI delivering her keynote address presented a snapshot of the trends in the media and entertainment sector. She highlighted the alterations in the dynamics of the sector being witnessed in the light of emergence of digital media. In his inaugural address, Chairman, TRAI, Dr. PD Vaghela put forth the background of the seminar. He underlined the need for balancing the interests of the stakeholders in the light of technological, economic and social developments. He further highlighted some of emerging technologies in the sector, such as metaverse, 5G broadcasting, multiple screens same content, automated journalism etc. Chairman, TRAI feels that there is a scope for easing the regulatory framework further in phases.

The deliberations in the seminar were divided in two sessions. The forenoon session focused on level playing field, de-regulating linear broadcasting, enabling new age content players and light touch policy and regulatory framework.

The second session covered role of broadcasting in education, radio broadcasting and issues arising due to convergence in light of recent developments in the media and entertainment sector.

The seminar was organized in the spirit of the pro-active role of TRAI to work in collaboration with the industry and other stakeholders, and ensure that the regulatory framework fosters and not hinders new technological developments and their adoption. The seminar was successful in developing a foundational understanding of the emerging trends and foster discussions on their impact on the current regime, not only from the perspective of the regulatory regime but also from the perspective of the stakeholders as a whole.