TELECOM REGULATORY AUTHORITY OF INDIA
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The Authority had released a Consultation Paper on Issues Relating to Convergence and Competition in Broadcasting and Telecommunication. This Consultation Paper drew upon the work earlier done by the Authority on various subjects where issues relating to convergence had been addressed. The Consultation Paper also included the suggestions made by a Committee that had been set-up by TRAI to examine the issues in helping the cable industry to provide services based on broadband.

2.   The Authority had received responses from various stakeholders in response to the Consultation Paper. It had also conducted Open House Discussions at Bangalore and Delhi. Based on these inputs the Authority has finalized its Recommendations under Section 11 (1)(a)(iv) of the TRAI Act on these issues. The Recommendations focus on the need to enable convergence and extreme fair competition amongst the converging businesses and technologies. These cover the following four issues:-

a)   Whether there is a need for having a comprehensive legal framework to deal with various issues arising out of convergence of technologies and services? If so

b)   Whether, the legal framework must be developed around the Communication Convergence Bill, 2001? If so.

c)   Whether changes may be required in the Bill especially taking into account TRAI's unified licensing recommendations dated 13th January, 2005.

d)   Whether regulation of carriage and content should be separated, as the skill sets required for the two are grossly different?

3.   I am enclosing the Recommendations of the Authority along with a copy of the Consultation Paper and Press Release. These Recommendations are being put up separately on TRAI's website today.

(Pradip Baijal)
Chairman, TRAI
March 20, 2006

Minister of Information & Broadcasting
Shastri Bhawan
New Delhi

Minister of Communications & IT
Sanchar Bhawan
New Delhi

Copy to :-

1.   Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

2.   Secretary, Ministry of Communications & IT, D/o Telecommunications, Sanchar Bhawan, New Delhi.