IETE Comments on
Consultation Paper on National Braodband Plan, 10 Jun 2010

1. **General.** Technology and Regulatory Advisory Committee (TRAC) of the Institution of Electronics and Telecom Engineers (IETE) after due deliberations on the TRAI Consultation Paper on National broad band Plan have made the comments which are given in the succeeding paragraphs.

2. **Following aspects are considered essential for development of broadband in the country:-**

- Providing necessary infrastructure for broadband penetration in urban, semi-urban and up to rural areas. USO Fund may be appropriately used for creating broadband infrastructure.

- Development of suitable contents and applications for broadband usage.

- Localisation of contents suitable for rural areas (for example information about crop, fertilizers, marketing of produce etc).

- Developing contents in vernacular for different regions and states.

- Entrepreneurship models to be developed.

- Nodal points to be developed for demonstration of applications and education on internet and broadband. These nodal points should

emphasize the benefits like saving in time, enhancement of business and improving quality of life. These nodal points should be used as island of excellence for emulating at other places to spread across the nation.

- Creating awareness and training about internet and broadband access.

3.   The ever growing importance of the internet and well established fact that direct co-relation exists between the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate and the broad band access rate in the country, makes it absolutely essential to provide broad band access to all citizens across the length and breathe of the country at affordable price in the shortest possible time frame. India has been able to achieve only 8.75 million broadband connections in the whole country by March 2010 as against the target of 20 million. It is also evident that the existing policy of the government and the agencies responsible to drive the growth of broadband penetration has been grossly inadequate.

4.   **Proposal for Formation of National Broadband Authority (NBBA)**. As till date despite repeated efforts, India has failed to achieve its targets of Broad band targets, an out of box approach is required. Therefore, IETE is of the view that an autonomous body named **"National Broad Band Authority (NBBA)"** be created under the act of Parliament to work under the control of PMO/ Planning Commission and be made responsible for creating necessary infrastructure and to achieve the required broadband penetration in the country with in specified time frame. The **NBBA** may be formed on the lines of **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)** who is given

extra ordinary powers and authority in order to deliver a defined objective with in the specified time frame.

5. **Manning of NBBA.** NBBA is to be headed by a high calibre professional with proven track records and also to be manned by professionals.

6. Characteristics and Type of **Broadband Network Infrastructure:-**

- The policy should be laid down to create infrastructure to support 4 Mbps broadband scheme.
- Broadband network should be primarily OFC based supplemented by wireless and satellite depending upon the terrain and topology.
- NBBA should utilize the existing fiber coverage in the country.
- Existing copper network belongs to BSNL/MTNL. It should be taken over by NBBA and the BSNL/MTNL be suitably compensated.
- Since laying down of new copper lines may be uneconomical as suggested above, the existing copper routes of BSNL and MTNL are put into proper operational shape of taking over by this new authority and are also made available to other service providers in the country who may want to use the same for providing Broadband services.

7. **Time Frame for National coverage.** The time frame for providing nation wide coverage of broadband network should be three years after formation of NBBA.

8.   Right of Way (ROW). NBBA should be given de-facto Right of Way.

9.   **Existing Local Cable Operators (LCOs) Network.** The LCOs are not likely to upgrade their networks to provide broadband in the existing regulatory and licensing arrangement. The LCOs should therefore, be brought under suitable licensing regime to encourage service providers to utilize their infrastructure for last mile broadband connectivity.

10.   **Development of Low Cost Access cum Computing Devices.** Efforts are to be made to develop low cost affordable 'Access cum Computing' devices to enable broadband access to large number of people including students and home users.

11.   **Right to Broadband Access.** The broadband policy of the government should be aimed to provide necessary infrastructure and the contents to ensure that all citizens of the country are provided broad band access at a speed of 4 Mbps with in the period of 5 years. This is on the lines of "Right to Education" bill.

The above comments have been formulated by Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers (IETE), #2, Institutional Area, Lodi Road New Delhi 110 003. Any queries or counter comments may please be sent to president@iete.org

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