Upgrading Cable Broadband Infrastructure

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n
- The cable television broadband infrastructure is available in almost all the households in India.
\n
- This has to be upgraded to reliable wired broadband infrastructure, for ensuring economic growth.
\n

\n\n

What is the current status of broadband in India?

\n\n

\n
- According to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), only 1 broadband line is present for every 100 people in India.
\n
- Mobile broadband may be seen as a substitute for wired broadband, but each new 10 mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 people reduces GDP per household by 0.52 per cent.
\n
- Reliance-Jio’s capacity at each cell tower of 20MHz is shared by the entire local population and suffers loss of signal or speed inside the houses.
\n
- But there is an existing capacity of 856MHz from television cables which remain unused in each household.
\n

\n\n

What is the significance of cable broadband?

\n\n

\n
- Cable broadband is affordable, easy to install, can be replaced or repaired locally with limited training.

\n
- A local television cable network can be upgraded to broadband in 8-12 weeks with existing labour.
\n
- The rural Wi-Fi project can also be easily implemented with this available infrastructure.
\n
- Cable broadband has the capacity to deliver 1.5Gbps speed to each household along with HDTV channels.
\n
- Each new 10 cable broadband per 100 people improves per-capita GDP and each broadband job creates 2.5 to 4.0 other jobs in a multiplier effect.
\n

\n\n

What are the concerns with the cable broadband industry?

\n\n

\n
- The lack of regulation by the government has helped in quickly cabling the country.
\n
- But it has led to fragmentation of local cable industry, non-transparent financing with network assets deployed freely without rights on government property.
\n
- These assets without verifiable title has no property rights and cannot attract institutional capital.
\n

\n\n

What measures are needed to improve cable broadband?

\n\n

\n
- The government is required to increase the capital expenditure for upgrading one-way cable TV to two-way broadband for the local cable network.
\n
- Steps have to be taken to address the anti-competitive practices in the broadcast television industry that hinder Cable Broadband.
\n
- There is also a need for regulating the property rights of set up boxes and conditional access systems should be standardised.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Business Line

\n