RS SHARMA TERM ENDS IN SEPT

TRAI Chairman R S Sharma’s 5-year-old tenure will come to an end this September. Sharma got an extension in 2018 and he will also reach his retirement age of 65.

According to media reports, an advertisement has been published to fill Sharma’s position.

Sharma was first appointed as TRAI Chairman for a period of three years in July 2015.

Sharma’s tenure has seen some controversy with regards to certain amendments brought in by him like the NTO 2.0. Sharma had said that TRAI is open to discussions with broadcasters to address any issues they have around the amendments to NTO.

NTO 2.0 is in favour of consumer freedom is what Sharma felt. A fact which was opposed by the broadcasters.

DISH TV ENDS LOCK-IN PHASE

Dish TV has done away with the lock-in phase that was applied on channel bouquets, free-to-air (FTA) channel packs, and individual channels. The new change is in place for both Dish TV and D2h subscribers. Lock-in periods will apply to add-on packs, and they range from 30 to 360 days - depending on the pack duration.

The change is visible once you log in with your credentials on the Dish TV or D2h website.
In July, Dish TV reintroduced lock-in periods for a-la-carte channels and add-on packs months after its initial removal last year. Other players like Airtel Digital TV and Sun Direct don't include lock-in periods for individual channels. Tata Sky removed the lock-in clause for its subscribers opting for a-la-carte channels as well as curated packs and broadcaster pack.

**STAR WORLD CHANNEL DROPPED**

Star India is dropping Star World channel and they are process of completing its impact study and will then give the one month’s mandatory notice to cable and DTH operators. TRAI’s NTO2.0 has seen some niche channels like AXN, AXN HD and FYI TV18 discontinue their operations.

Star India launched Star Plus as English GEC in 1992, which was renamed Star World in 2000 after Star Plus became Hindi GEC.

Star World was a market leader in English GEC genre both in terms of viewership and revenues until the implementation of NTO last year. According to industry observers, the channel’s advertising revenues dropped to ₹30 crore from ₹100 crore after NTO while the subscription revenues did not pick up enough to sustain the operations of the channel.

**BHARATI – INDUS DEAL EXTENDED**

The AGR issue has complicated matters for the Bharati Infratel – Indus Tower merger. In a recent development Bharti Infratel has extended the long stop date for the closure of its merger with Indus Towers to August 31. There are some conditions which need to be fulfilled.

The merger is dependent on the Supreme Court’s final views in the adjusted gross revenue (AGR) case. If the top court doesn’t allow telcos, including Vodafone Idea, to spread the payment over several years, the Indo-UK telecom JV is likely to shut shop, which will in effect kill the deal.

This, since Infratel and Indus both count Vodafone Idea as their major customer, and the telco’s closure will deal a huge blow to both tower companies, severely denting valuations, say market experts.

In fact, Bharti Infratel had deferred its June 11 board meeting that was scheduled to take a final call on its big-
ticket merger with Indus Towers, which would form among the world’s largest telecom tower companies. The deal, once closed, may net some ₹ 4,500 crore to Vodafone Idea if it decides to sell its 7% stake in the merged entity, instead of retaining its holdings.

**KOLKATA CABLE TV INDUSTRY REBUILDING**

Cable TV and broadband service providers are reeling across Kolkata due to huge infrastructural losses due to the cyclone impact. It is estimated that 1-1.5 lakh set-top boxes and fibres of few crores have been damaged across the state.

The operators have to work from scratch in those areas.

Around 50,000 set-top-boxes have been damaged of Siti Networks and many control rooms where headends have been blown away incurring more losses. All players in Kolkata have come to work together in the crisis and they have a common plan of pulling the cables and maintaining them together. Siti Networks is now focusing on rebuilding the network after temporary damage control; it will look at more underground cable lines.

**BROADCASTERS BACK ON DD FREE DISH**

All the big four broadcasters that pulled out of DD Free Dish in 2019 after the new tariff order was
implemented have come back on Prasar Bharati’s free direct-to-home (DTH) platform. Star Utsav, Sony Pal, Zee Anmol, Colors Rishtey and Zee Anmol Cinema have successfully bid on the 45th e-auction for placement. Last year, top broadcasters agreed with the decision to no longer show any Hindi general entertainment and film channels on Doordarshan’s free dish service. Industry sources said that broadcasters take such a decision so that cable and DTH customers cannot shift to DD Free Dish service.

DD Free Dish has a base of 30 million households across India which offers huge reach helping in advertising revenue. However, the major broadcasters said earlier that converting the channels as pay channels helped them in subscription revenue despite a dip in ad revenue. Notably, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) announced that Sony Pal, Star Utsav, Zee Anmol and Colors Rishtey would be available to all viewers across the country for a period of two months free of charge on all DTH and cable networks due to the lockdown.

DD Free Dish has a base of 30 million households across India which offers huge reach helping in advertising revenue. However, the major broadcasters said earlier that converting the channels as pay channels helped them in subscription revenue despite a dip in ad revenue. Notably, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) announced that Sony Pal, Star Utsav, Zee Anmol and Colors Rishtey would be available to all viewers across the country for a period of two months free of charge on all DTH and cable networks due to the lockdown.

**INDIA’S MOST RESPECTED TRADE MAGAZINE FOR THE CABLE TV, BROADBAND, IPTV & SATELLITE INDUSTRY**

- In-depth & Unbiased Market Information
- Technology Breakthroughs
- Reaches More Than 40,000 Personnel Across The Satellite & Cable TV Industry every month

**... You Know What You are doing But Nobody Else Does**

**ADVERTISE NOW!**

Contact: Mob.: +91-7021850198 Tel.: +91-22-6216 5313 Email: scat.sales@nm-india.com
TATA SKY LEADS IN DTH SEGMENT

As per a report - ‘The Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicator Report October – December 2019’ published by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), the Indian DTH service has displayed phenomenal growth since launch in 2003. The total number of total active subscribers with pay DTH operators (Tata Sky, Airtel, Dish TV, Sun Direct) in India in the quarter ending December 2019 was 69.98 million, which is an increase from 68.30 million in the quarter ending September.

In terms of market share, Tata Sky led the DTH sector with the highest 31.80 per cent share followed by Dish TV at 30.55 per cent. Compared to the previous quarter, Tata Sky has further strengthened its market share lead over Dish TV. The data also suggests Tata Sky is 1.5X the size of Hathway, Den and GTPL Hathway all combined.

Tata Sky Spokesperson said, “At Tata Sky our commitment is to ensure our ever increasing base of consumers can access their entertainment across platforms. This philosophy has enabled us to cement our leadership position in the direct to home and overall pay TV business, as underlined in TRAI’s latest report. As we explore technology driven newer platforms for content delivery and further scale up our customer support, we are confident that our viewers will continue to make Tata Sky the prime choice of their entertainment needs. The report also reinforces our belief that Television as a medium of entertainment continues to grow and strengthen.”

PRADEEP HEJMADI IS CMO AT HATHWAY

Hathway Cable and Datacom Pvt Ltd appointed Pradeep Hejmadi as the chief marketing officer. Hejmadi comes with more than two decades of experience in the media and entertainment sector. He was associated with brands like Discovery India, Zee TV, Turner and MTV.

Hejmadi is a seasoned leader with deep knowledge of consumer research and advanced analytics, experienced in building and leading large, multidisciplinary teams in matrix organizations.