

PRESS RELEASE

AIDCF Calls for GST Relief to Safeguard Cable TV Industry

Urges Government to Reduce GST Slab from 18% to 5% in Line with Next-Generation GST Reforms

The All India Digital Cable Federation (AIDCF), the apex body representing India's Digital Multi-System Operators (MSOs), has appealed to the Government of India for a reduction in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate on Cable TV services from the existing 18% slab to 5%. This request has been placed in the context of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's vision of introducing next-generation GST reforms aimed at simplifying the structure, rationalising rates, and easing the tax burden on citizens.

AIDCF has formally written to both the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB), urging the government to take up the issue during the forthcoming deliberations of the GST Council.

AIDCF emphasised that the Cable TV industry continues to be a vital pillar of India's broadcasting ecosystem, reaching more than 6.4 crore households and directly supporting nearly 10-12 lakh livelihoods across urban and rural regions. For decades, Cable TV has remained the most affordable and accessible source of information, education, and entertainment for the common man.

The Federation highlighted that the industry is under severe financial stress due to recurring increases in channel prices by broadcasters, shrinking margins, and unfair competition from unregulated digital platforms operating outside the regulatory and fiscal framework. Rising satellite channel costs have already pushed consumer prices upward making Cable TV increasingly unaffordable for ordinary households.

AIDCF pointed out that reducing the GST slab to 5% will directly benefit consumers by keeping monthly bills affordable, while at the same time supporting the financial health of MSOs and Local Cable Operators (LCOs). The relief in working capital will allow these largely MSME operators to invest in spreading wired broadband, thereby strengthening the government's Digital India mission and ensuring universal access to affordable information and entertainment. The step will also provide a level playing field vis-à-vis competing platforms that benefit from subsidies or regulatory exemptions.

Speaking on behalf of the industry, Mr. Manoj P. Chhangani, Secretary General of AIDCF, said: *"Cable TV is not just entertainment, it is part of India's social fabric. Families in small towns and rural areas gather around it as a shared medium of education, information, and culture. A rationalisation of GST to 5% will not only ease the burden on consumers but also preserve lakhs of livelihoods and safeguard an industry that has been instrumental in bridging the digital divide."*

AIDCF expressed confidence that the government, under its reform agenda, will consider this request favourably, ensuring that Cable TV remains accessible, affordable, and sustainable for millions of Indian households.