

## **Issues with telecom regulations**

### **What is the issue?**

\n\n

There are no clear telecom regulation policies on net neutrality in the country.

\n\n

### **What is net neutrality?**

\n\n

\n

- Internet service providers should enable access to all content and applications regardless of the source, and without favouring or blocking particular products or websites.
- Net neutrality would enhance the innovation in the Internet.
- There are no laws governing net neutrality in India, which would require that all Internet users be treated equally.
- There have already been a few violations of net neutrality principles by Indian service providers.
- On February 2016, Telephone Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) published a Regulation titled, the 'Prohibition of Discriminatory Tariffs for Data Services Regulation, 2016, whereby different pricing rate for different services or for a certain type of services were allowed.
- TRAI rolled out a Consultation Paper on Net neutrality for public Consultation recently

\n

\n\n

### **What are the issues with telecom regulations?**

\n\n

\n

- Treating service providers and Internet companies as single or separate entities comes with much complexity

\n

- Revenues from telecom firms contribute to more than 90 per cent of the government for 2017-18.

\n

- Monitoring device or company favourable networking is difficult.

\n

\n\n

\n

- Earlier different companies provided voice telephony, Internet service, and Internet content and applications.

\n

- Presently telephony, internet connectivity and Internet content and applications have become heavily vertically integrated.

\n

- Increasingly, the new model of value creation involves integrated eco-systems or “walled gardens”.

\n

\n\n

## **What are complexity in regulatory approaches?**

\n\n

\n

- If telecom and internet industries treated as same industry, the difference are not neglected.

\n

- The telecom industry has geographical jurisdiction, are subject to a variety of national regulations.

\n

- Internet companies operate globally and are subject to light touch regulations, in most national jurisdictions.

\n

- India is silent on the vertical integration of different layers of the Internet.

\n

\n\n

## **What can be done?**

\n\n

\n

- The reduction in levies will allow the cash-rich internet companies to create integrated value networks.
- Treatment of connectivity providers and Internet companies as separate industries can be followed.
- The principle of net neutrality has to be strictly enforced with respect to the walled gardens created by Internet companies.
- Telecoms should stop supporting one particular company or applications, it can depend on ad services for revenues.
- Stronger data protection laws should be enforced, and telecom providers need to assure data security to the users.
- The complexities in telecom regulations can be resolved only when telecom product vendors innovate constantly.

\n

\n\n

## **Quick fact**

\n\n

## **Walled gardens**

\n\n

\n

- In the realm of open and free Internet, the term walled garden refers to a browsing environment where users are restricted to certain content on a website and allowed to navigate only particular areas of the website.
- The main purpose of creating a walled garden is to shield users from certain kinds of information.
- This method is often used by an Internet service provider (ISP) to restrict users from accessing some websites

\n

\n\n

\n\n

**Source: Business Line**

\n

