

## **BIF Hosts 1st Convergent Conference on Subsea Cables and Digital Cloud Infrastructure, Advancing India's Digital Backbone**

**New Delhi, February 24, 2026** – The Broadband India Forum (BIF) convened its first convergent conference on subsea cables and digital cloud infrastructure under the theme *“Connecting Continents, Scaling Digital Cloud,”* bringing together senior government officials, regulators including the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and TRAI, and industry leaders from Google, Meta, Consti, Lightstorm, NEC, Ciena, and Tata Comms Ltd. to deliberate on strengthening India's global connectivity and digital infrastructure backbone.

While congratulating BIF for swiftly updating the last year's Subsea Conference to the 1st Convergent Conference on Subsea Cables and Digital Cloud Infrastructure, Shri A K Lahoti, Chairman TRAI highlighted the strategic importance of resilient connectivity infrastructure in enabling India's digital and economic ambitions. *“Subsea cables and digital cloud are no longer parallel infrastructures; they are interdependent engines of growth. Subsea cables carry 95% of the world's data traffic, and as India surpasses 1 billion broadband subscribers, the demand for low-latency, hyperscale cloud services grows with it. With 268 Tbps of activated capacity and projected 7.4% growth in subsea infrastructure, India is building the foundation for a sovereign, sustainable, and globally connected digital economy.”* he said.

This strategic focus aligns with the Government's broader infrastructure push, including the INR 12.21 lakh crore allocation in the Union Budget 2026–27 and policy measures aimed at strengthening India's digital ecosystem. The Budget also introduced long-term tax incentives for global cloud providers operating through India-based infrastructure, reinforcing the country's positioning as a preferred destination for digital and AI infrastructure investments.

Shri Rudra Narayan Palai, Member (Technology), Department of Telecommunications, said, *“Modern AI Data Centers rely on speed, scale, and seamless data exchange, and submarine cables provide the high-quality, high-capacity communication backbone across the nations that makes this possible. Without them, the delivery of AI-powered services, cloud platforms, and real-time applications would not be possible. Submarine cable networks should not be seen as just another infrastructure, they are the invisible bridges connecting global digital ecosystem. India's membership in the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC) underscores its commitment to resilient and robust subsea infrastructure. India has already accorded Cable Landing Stations (CLSs), the status of “Critical Telecom Infrastructure”.*

The conference highlighted the growing strategic convergence between international connectivity infrastructure and domestic digital capacity, underscoring the need for coordinated policy support and industry participation to build a resilient, future-ready digital backbone. The conference emphasized that subsea connectivity and cloud infrastructure are increasingly interdependent pillars of India's digital growth strategy.

Mr. T.V. Ramachandran, President, Broadband India Forum, closing the inaugural ceremony *“This conference marks a pivotal moment. India's first convergent conference reflects a simple but profound truth, the infrastructure beneath our oceans is not just technical, it is strategic. History tells us about trade routes and silk routes, but in the 21st century, the new trade routes are completely invisible, running through the sea and through the clouds. These carry data,*

*and data is currency. Whoever controls this infrastructure shapes global commerce, financial inclusion, social interactions, and the everyday aspirations of billions. India is poised to be a key player in defining this architecture but that requires regulatory clarity and resilient design. The strategic opportunity is here. The question is whether we are ready to seize it."*

Smt. Aruna Sundararajan, Chairperson, Broadband India Forum, said, *"The convergence of subsea connectivity and digital cloud infrastructure reflects the next phase of India's digital evolution, where digital backbone assets are increasingly recognized as strategic national infrastructure. Strengthening route diversity, expanding capacity, and building indigenous maintenance capabilities will be essential to ensuring resilience, supporting global investments, and enhancing India's digital sovereignty and economic security."*

India's rapidly expanding digital economy is also driving strong growth in data centre infrastructure. The Government has outlined an ambition to position India as a global hub for cloud and AI infrastructure, with the sector expected to attract significant long-term investments. As India scales its Data Centre capacity to support AI workloads, financial systems, and digital services, resilient and geographically diversified subsea connectivity will be critical to enabling seamless global data flows and supporting next-generation digital applications.

The conference provided a platform for policymakers and industry leaders to align on strengthening infrastructure resilience, accelerating investments, and enabling policy frameworks that support India's growing role in global digital networks. Participants emphasized the importance of coordinated industry-government action to enhance connectivity resilience, streamline approvals, and support sustained infrastructure development.

As India accelerates its digital transformation and AI adoption, investments in subsea connectivity and cloud infrastructure will play a pivotal role in strengthening the country's digital backbone, positioning India as a key global hub for digital infrastructure and powering the next phase of economic growth.

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*About Broadband India Forum: Broadband India Forum (BIF) is an independent policy forum and knowledge-based think-tank that works for the development and enhancement of the entire broadband & broadcasting ecosystem in a holistic, technology - neutral and service neutral manner. BIF has established itself as a thought leader and a credible and effective voice, to help propel the nation to achieve the country's ambitious vision of creating a Digital India. To achieve this, BIF works to promote the rapid development of policies, to facilitate affordable and high-speed ubiquitous broadband throughout the country.*