

Proceedings of the 2nd meeting of State Broadband Committee (SBC) under National Broadband Mission held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab on 21-06-2022.

The list of participants is attached as **Annexure 'A'**.

At the very outset, Principal Secretary Industries & Commerce apprised the chairman that auction of 5G spectrum has been scheduled by Government of India, therefore, this meeting assumes greater importance and there is an urgent need to resolve the issues impacting growth of telecom infrastructure in the State.

The item wise review and decisions taken thereon are as under: -

1. Current status of pendency of mobile tower applications in the State.

Principal Secretary Industries & Commerce brought to the notice of the Chairman that 246 applications are pending as on 13.06.2022 and among these 246 applications, 145 applications pertain to installation of ground based towers and 101 applications are pending for installation of roof top towers.

Chairman was of the view that it should be explored if Commissioner Municipal Corporation in Municipal Corporations towns and ADC (Urban) in the Municipal Committee/Notified Area Committee/Nagar Panchayats may be assigned the job of granting permissions of setting up of mobile towers and laying of optical fibre cable. It was directed that the Director Industries will consult Director, Governance Reforms on this issue and as also with the regard to the processes involved in the grant of clearances. Chairman wanted that the applications being received in the online mode

should have mandatory fields and any incomplete application should not be accepted at all.

2. Pendency of Roof Top Tower Applications for clearance due to CWP No. 4424-2021-Simarjeet Singh V/s State of Punjab and others.

Principal Secretary Industries & Commerce apprised the house that consequent upon the orders passed by Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court on 08.04.2021, the matter was referred to Ld. AG, Punjab for advice on issues relating to issuance of NOC only to Bharti and ATC Telecom Infrastructure and as also setting up of towers on unauthorized buildings where structural safety certificate has been granted by the Competent authority. After hearing Principal Secretary Local Government and Principal Secretary Housing and Urban Development, Chairman opined that roof top towers on unauthorized buildings may not be appropriate even if the building is structurally safe.

Department of Local Government was directed to regularize unauthorized buildings by compounding the same within a period of three months if such unauthorized buildings comply with the rules governing such regularizations. Sh. Venu Gopal Johar, Sr. DAG who had joined the meeting through VC informed the house that AG office is shortly filing an early hearing petition in this matter to enable the other Infrastructure Providers/Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) (other than Bharti Airtel and ATC Telecom Infrastructure) to put roof top towers on structurally safe and approved buildings by getting the orders revised from Hon'ble High Court under section 151 of CPC. Chairman directed that this matter should be taken up in the "High Empowered Committee on Litigation" under State Litigation Policy to allow the other Telecom Service Providers/Infrastructure

Providers to set up roof top towers on par with Bharti Airtel and ATC Telecom Infrastructure Ltd as other TSPs/IPs are similarly placed. This would, however, be subject to the satisfaction of Advocate General, Punjab as there are some other issues involved in this case.

3. Extension in time of Regularization Scheme of irregular towers.

Chairman concurred with the provision being carried in the forthcoming policy for regularization of irregular towers.

4. Activation of the Provision of Deemed Approvals for clearance of Mobile Tower Applications.

After discussion, Chairman directed Department of Industries & Commerce to move ahead in this matter in consultation with Department of Governance Reforms. The following decisions were taken:-

- Number of days (for disposal of applications) to trigger deemed approval will be finalized by the Administrative Department after studying the provision being implemented in this regard in the neighbouring States.
- It was also directed that a weekly alert may be send to the concerned authority through e-mail or sms in the initial weeks and in the last week daily alerts should be sent to the Competent authority responsible for giving clearances. Chairman also decided that another provision should be made on the portal that would restrain the Nodal Officer/Competent Authority to reject any application by making an objection in last seven days of the period finalized for granting permissions.

5. Amendments in Telecom Guidelines 2020 and fresh policy provisions for setting up of 5G Small Cell and Aerial Fibre on Street Furniture in State of Punjab.

Principal Secretary Industries & Commerce apprised the house that based on comments/suggestions were received from the various line departments and Department of Industries and Commerce has prepared the Cabinet memorandum for approval of the Council of Ministers.

6. Issue pertaining to Telecom Infrastructure in Rural Areas of Punjab. (LSA, TERM CELL, DoT, Punjab Circle) and Review of current status of BharatNet Project under National Broadband Mission and Bharat Fiber (FTTH).

Sh. Sandeep Deewan, CGM, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd., Punjab, Chandigarh apprised the chairman about the progress made under BharatNet Project of National Broadband Mission and Bharat Fiber (FTTH) of BBNL. At this juncture Sh. Girish Dayalan, Director, Governance Reforms informed the house that as State of Punjab has high telecom penetration, thus services being offered by Reliance Jio and other telecom service providers are cheaper viz-a-viz those being provided by BSNL and BBNL. Chairman directed the concerned officials of BBNL and BSNL to sit with Director, Governance Reforms to see if any alternative can be worked out for the State of Punjab which is cost efficient and cost-effective for Punjab Government to avail these services.

7. Progress Status of PM-WANI.

Chairman directed BSNL and LSA, Punjab to coordinate their efforts with the Border Area Development Project to strengthen the telecom services in the border areas of the State as it has been noted that the signal of Pakistan mobile companies is much stronger at the International Border as compared to signal of Indian TSPs/IPs.

8. Signing of an addendum to the existing MoU to reflect extension and upgradation of the BharatNet project.

The requisite action has already been taken by Department of Governance Reforms, Punjab.

9. Transition of Government websites from IPv4 to IPv6.

Sh. Girish Dayalan informed the house that the required action has been completed by the Department and that the further action is to be taken by NIC for transmission of State Government websites to Internet Protocol version-6.

10. Issues raised with regard to Electricity Connections for establishing Telecom Infrastructure in the State.

Sh. Girish Dayalan on behalf of Principal Secretary Power informed that all the issues highlighted by DIPA relating to expeditious availability of new power connections and availability of 24x7 power supply have been noted and there is no problem at the level of PSPCL in providing the same.

Annexure A

Participants

1. Sh. Vivek Partap Singh, IAS, Principal Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Local Government.
2. Sh. Ajoy Kumar Sinha, Principal Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Housing & Urban Development.
3. Sh. Dilip Kumar, IAS Principal Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Industries & Commerce
4. Sh. Rahul Tiwari, IAS, Secretary to Government of Punjab, Department of Science, Technology and Environment.
5. Sh. Girish Dayalan, IAS, Director, Department of Governance Reforms Punjab.
6. Sh. Harkamjeet Singh, Deputy Secretary, Department of Rural Development & Panchayats, Punjab.
7. Sh. V.K.Johar, Sr. DAG
8. Sh. Kamal Kumar, Sr. DDG, LSA Punjab, Department of Telecom, Government of India.
9. Sh. Sandeep Deewan, Chief General Manager, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. Punjab, Chandigarh.
10. Sh. Sushil Kumar Sheemar, Principal General Manager, Bharat Broadband Nigam Ltd.
11. Sh. Deepak Gupta, representative Cellular Operations Association of India.
12. Sh. T R Dua, Director General, Digital India Providers Association.