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Minutes of the 3rd State Broadband Committee (SBC) Meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary Government of Meghalaya held on 7th April 2021 at 3.30 PM, in Main Secretariat, Shillong

The 3rd SBC meeting was held on the 7th April 2022 and was chaired by Smti. R.V Suchiang, Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya who welcomed all the members & invitees present.

The following members and invitees attended the meeting.

Attendance Sheet (Annexure – A)

Other Members/Invitees below have attended the meeting through VC:

- 1) Shri. Ravi Goel, Sr. DDG NE LSA & Member Convener SBC Meghalaya
- 2) Shri. Pankaj Das , Principal GM, BBNL
- 3) Deputy Commissioners of Districts
- 4) District Nodal Officers (Telecom) of Districts
- 5) CEOs/ EOs of Municipal Corporations, TPOs of Urban Affair Department
- 6) CEs/ACEs Zonal Divisions MePDCL
- 7) Chief Electrical Inspector, Power Department
- 8) DFOs (Territorial) of all Divisions ,Forest& Environment Department
- 9) Shri. T.R. Dua, DG- DIPA
- 10) Shri. Harpreet Singh, Northeast Regional Head- DIPA
- 11) Shri. Kshem Kapoor, COAI
- 12) Shri. Anand Kajla, Dy GM TCIL
- 13) Shri. D. Lato, Bharti Hexacom Ltd (Airtel) – USOF 4G project

The main objective of the meeting is to increase coordination to fast-track telecom penetration in the State as well as to sort out any issues, in order to expedite execution and roll out of the Telecommunication projects in the State under the National Broadband Mission. This Mission envisages enabling fast track growth of Digital Communication Infrastructure, bridging the digital divide, digital empowerment, and inclusion, and providing an affordable and universal access of broadband for all by the year 2022.

While briefing the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), the Chair enquired about the current progress of Broadband connectivity. NELSA apprised the Chair on the present status and that the broad band connectivity to villages is 76.2% and is calculated based on the number of villages covered with 3G and 4G connectivity.

The Chair recommended that the broadband speed (Mbps) and quality of service need to be improved even as the telecom penetration is improving in the State.

(Action: DoT-GOI NE LSA)

Points discussed and decisions taken:

1. Shri. Dilip Kumar, DDG (Rural) North East License Service Area NE-1 Telecom Circle (NE LSA) , Department of Telecom Government of India made a presentation as per the agenda.

The following were the points discussed and the decisions taken:

Pending Electricity connections from MeECL/MePDCL:

2. As per the latest list submitted by Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA), it was noted that there were 303 cases of electricity connections. The break-up District-wise/Zone wise pendency that has already been shared by IT&C Department with the Nodal Officers of MePDCL is as given below:

Pending Electricity Connections				
ATC	Indus	BHL	RJIL	Total EB pendency
37	35	178	35	303

District-wise Electricity Connections Pendency

Sl.No.	District	ATC	Indus	BHL	RJIL	Total
1	East Garo Hills	6	6	2	5	19
2	West Garo Hills	6	8	6	13	33
3	South Garo Hills	6	5	15	3	29
4	South West Garo Hills	1	0	0	3	4
5	North Garo Hills	2	2	2	1	7
6	East Khasi Hills	7	4	7	5	23
7	Eastern West Khasi Hills	0	0	0	0	0
8	West Khasi Hills	1	2	70	3	76
9	South West Khasi Hills	1	0	32	2	35
10	Ribhoi	2	2	33	3	40
11	East Jaintia Hills	2	3	6	6	17
12	West Jaintia Hills	3	3	5	9	20
TOTAL		37	35	178	53	303

3. In view of the large pendency in Electricity connection, the Chair directed that MeECL must address this issue on top priority. Further, it was also decided that a Working Group for electricity connection should be formed by the Secretary Power Department, which should include Members from MeECL/MePDCL, IT&C Department, Urban Affair Department, NE LSA DoT-Gol, DIPA, COAI, Bharti Hexacom Ltd (USOF) and other concerned stakeholders and action taken should be reported to the Chairperson SBC.

(Action: Power Department)

4. The proposed Working Group on electricity connection shall also examine the existing workflow for new electricity connection and to streamline the application & approval process so that the timelines at various stages of the workflow process may be re-engineered in order to reduce the service delivery time.

(Action: Power Department)

5. During the meeting, the representative from DIPA & COAI requested the Chair to consider utilization of Street Furniture (EB Poles, Street Lights, Bus Shelters etc.) for use of Electric Posts for installation of 4G/5G Small Cells & aerial fibre. They also apprised the SBC about the practices adopted by organisations like Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) & the State Government of Punjab & requested the Chair to adopt similar practices for Meghalaya. The Chair directed DIPA & COAI to send the details of the same and subsequently the proposed Working Group on electricity connection shall examine and explore adoption of these practices if feasible.

(Action: DIPA/COAI, Power Department)

6. Shri. Kshem Kapoor from COAI requested the Chair to support for rationalization of EB charges and for the priority Grid supply on Utility/Industrial/Favourable tariffs for providing Mobile & Broadband services. In this regard Shri. R Syiem Director (Distributions) MePDCL clarify that the MePDCL has followed the existing tariff as fixed by the Meghalaya State Electricity Regulatory Commission. The Chair directed the Secretary, Power Department to take up the matter with the Commission and to explore the possibilities of accommodating the request from the Telecom Industry.

(Action: Power Department)

7. Also as per COAI, the Rate of Pole Usages charges in Meghalaya are exorbitantly high while using the electrical poles/ Meghalaya Power Distribution Company Limited (MePDCL) Pole. Hence, it is requested that the rates as per Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2018 should be applied by MePDCL. The Chair requests the proposed Working Group on electricity connection to also examine this matter on priority.

(Action: Power Department)

8. Shri. T. R Dua, DG DIPA requested the Chair to support issuance of Company-wise (not site-wise) Online bills on registered email ID (as also decided in earlier SBC meeting), to avoid any delay/penalty and also if Electricity tariff may be charged at industrial rates. Besides, he requested for priority Electricity connection to be provided within 15 days of submission of application and provision of prepaid metering be adopted in the whole State where feasible (this issue was also raised by Shri. D. Lato for USOF project). The Chair directed the proposed Working Group on electricity connection to examine these points and explore implementation of the same if feasible.

(Action: Power Department)

9. Shri. D. Lato of the USOF Airtel Project apprised the SBC about the delay in obtaining charging approval for existing 24 sites in the state from the o/o the Electrical Inspector where work has been completed. The representative from the Electrical Inspectorate informed that because there are only 5 Testers in the entire State and hence the delays. The Chair directed the Secretary Power Department to examine the matter and come up with the solutions to expedite the process of granting charging approval.

(Action: Power Department)

10. Shri. D. Lato requested the SBC to expedite issuing of demand note for 71 sites including Nongstoin SDO(17 sites), Riangdo SDO, Mawsynram SDO(17 sites) and other locations. The Chair directed the Director Distribution MePDCL to expedite the matter.

(Action: Power Department)

11. Bharti Hexacom also highlighted that the capital expenditures (CAPEX) cost for bring HT Line to the new 4G Telecom tower sites is as high as Rs.16 lakhs to Rs. 32 lakhs per site. Presently, there are 15 such sites leading to high cost for implementation. In this matter Bharti Hexacom requested that the State Government to bring HT line nearer to their tower sites location (Annexure- B) through power distribution scheme like IPDS, DDUGJY, Suabhagya. The Chair requests the proposed Working Group on electricity connection to also examine this matter on priority.

(Action: Power Department)

12. DIPA informed that MeECL is charging as per their approved tariff for utilization of electricity poles, which is higher than the rates mentioned in RoW policy. The Chair requests the proposed Working Group on electricity connection to also examine this matter on priority.

(Action: Power Department)

13. It was highlighted that the weight bearing capacity of Electric Poles is limited hence, the Chair directed that proper care needs to be taken while installing the optical fiber cables and adequate ground clearances need to be ensured to prevent accidents.

(Action: DIPA/COAI/ All TSPs/IPs)

Pending Telecom Towers Permissions

14. The current pendency in the Meghalaya is as shown below, where 1135 out of 1165 pending cases are regularization of existing old towers and 30 new pending cases:-

Pending Permission of Towers				
ATC	Indus	BHL	RJIL	Total pendency
323	242	38	562	1165*

District-wise Pending Telecom Towers Permissions

Sl.No.	District	ATC	Indus	BHL	SDIPL	Total
1	East Garo Hills	31	12	0	58	101
2	West Garo Hills	52	39	0	212	303
3	South Garo Hills	10	13	0	48	71
4	South West Garo Hills	2	4	0	44	50
5	North Garo Hills	21	17	0	36	74
6	East Khasi Hills	82	41	38	17	178
7	Eastern West Khasi Hills	0	17	0	2	19

8	West Khasi Hills	15	8	0	24	47
9	South West Khasi Hills	8	8	0	10	26
10	RiBhoi	36	24	0	53	113
11	East Jaintia Hills	27	29	0	2	58
12	West Jaintia Hills	39	30	0	56	125
TOTAL		323	242	38	562	1165

15. It is reported by DoT - GoI NE LSA that 1135 pending cases are the existing towers that are already operational and required only formalization of permissions to conform to the Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy 2018. Hence, the Chair requested the respective DCs through District Level Digital Connectivity Monitoring Committees (DLDCMC) to find out ways and expedite regularizing of these old towers which are still in operation. At the same time the DLDCMC must examine and take necessary steps to also dismantle and get those sites which are non-functional and such site must be vacated by the concerned TSPs/IPs. Further, the Chair requested DoT-GoI NE LSA to depute 1(one) representative to attend such DLDCMC meetings convene by the respective DCs. As notified, such DLDCMC meetings must be convened and meet at regular intervals, at least once every quarter.

Action taken by the respective Deputy Commissioners should be reported to the Chairperson SBC.

(Action: DCs/DLDCMC)

USOF 4G Project

16. As per initial plan, under USOF 4G project, Bharti Hexacom is to set up 889 Towers covering 1164 villages. The survey work was completed by Bharti Hexacom and status given below:-

District	Total Villages	Survey Completed (RF+TX)	Reports Submitted to USOF	Villages Covered with Existing TSP	Partially covered Villages	Uncovered Villages Identified	Sites Planned	Covered from USO to USO	Approval to deploy Received from USOF A	Dropped due to Acquisition challenges	Final Towers Planned
East Garo Hills	120	120	120	27	28	65	44	21	44	2	42
East Jaintia Hills	33	33	33	3	17	9	8	1	7	2	5

East Khasi Hills	88	88	88	26	46	15	10	5	10	3	7
Eastern West Khasi Hills	70	70	70	18	38	14	8	6	8	0	7
North Garo Hills	89	89	89	16	15	58	43	15	42	1	40
Ribhoi	117	117	117	25	47	45	36	9	38	5	31
South Garo Hills	220	220	220	50	37	126	75	51	74	5	69
South West Garo Hills	17	17	17	13	2	2	2	0	2	0	2
South West Khasi Hills	129	129	129	22	19	88	47	41	48	4	43
West Garo Hills	88	88	88	47	25	16	11	5	11	0	11
West Jaintia Hills	39	39	39	15	8	15	11	4	11	2	9
West Khasi Hills	154	154	154	24	48	77	57	20	57	1	56
Total	1164	1164	1164	286	330	530	352	178	352	25	322
National Highways	8	8	8	0	0	0	8	0	6	2	3
Grand Total	1172	1172	1172	286	330	530	360	178	358	27	325

From the above table, only 325 Towers were finalized by USOF after the survey work is completed by Bharti Hexacom as compared to 889 sites initially planned to be installed in Meghalaya. After deliberations on the matter, it was decided that a D.O letter from the Chairperson SBC shall be sent to the Secretary DoT & Administrator USOF to request to relocate the allotted 564(889-325) sites to cover the inhabited uncovered 1615villages in the State.

(Action: IT&C Department)

Bharatnet

17. Bharat-Net OFC Project (Ph-I):

As per DoT-GOI NE LSA the current status is as follows:

Total sites (GPs) planned	Service Ready GP (SRGPs)	Handed over to CSCs	Up GPs	Remarks
948	122 (tender was short closed)	98	11	CSCs will look after upto 30-06-22 then BSNL will take over.

18. Bharat-Net VSAT Project (Ph-II) – 31.03.2022

Sl.No.	Implementing Agency	Total no of GPs (Existing+ Add-on)	Total DSPT sites	Total Sites (GP+DSPT)	Commissioned	Commissioned
					GP sites	DSPT sites
1	BBNL (executed by TCIL)	521	30	551	486	30
2	BSNL	78	0	78	70	0

19. The Chair enquired about the plan to utilize the Commissioned V-SAT Sites from BBNL. However, since no concrete plan was available, it was decided that the Chairperson SBC shall write a D.O Letter to the Secretary DoT and Administrator USOF to get clarity on this issue.

(Action: IT&C Department)

20. Shri. Pankaj Das, Principal GM BBNL flagged the issues faced by TCIL including missing of VSAT components at 10 sites as per remark by BBNL (**Annexure- C**). The Chair directed the concerned DCs and their Local BDOs to provide necessary support to BBNL/ TCIL resolving these issues on priority.

(Action: BBNL/TCIL/ DCs & BDOs)

21. Miscellaneous:

21.1 Urban Affairs Department and PWD Authorities to explore provision of common ducts for underground electrical cables and OFC during new/ widening road construction Sub-clause 14 of clause 11 State Telecom Infra policies may be followed.

(Action: Urban Affairs Department, PWD)

- 21.2 A 'Dig-once' and 'Call before you Dig' policy should be encouraged as part of State's Policy – Urban Affairs Department and PWD Authorities may examine the point.

(Action: Urban Affairs Department, PWD)

- 21.3 Laying of OFC as per National Building Codes to be made mandatory- Urban Affairs Department and PWD Authorities may examine the point.

(Action: Urban Affairs Department, PWD)

- 21.4 BSNL request to allot land and granted requisite permission to construct towers in these villages for expanding 4G Services under forth coming GSM expansion Project. The Chair requested BSNL to provide the specific tower locations after their tendering process is completed.

(Action: BSNL)

- 21.5 DDG(Rural), NE LSA, DOT informed the committee about the master database being prepared by the department and its usefulness in creating national fiber grid Data of latitude and longitude, as given by the state, for inhabited villages has been incorporated in master database of Meghalaya. Regarding the latitude and longitude of remaining 689 inhabited villages, NE LSA, DOT shall share the Block-wise list of such Villages with the IT&C Department so that this may be taken up with the respective Deputy Commissioners. The SBC decided to finalize the master database based on villages as per Census 2011 data only.

(Action: DoT NE LSA, IT &C Dept)

21.6 Broadband Readiness Index

NE-LSA DoT explained the importance of Broadband Readiness Index. The State Government requested DoT NE LSA to inform the State on the various questions related to finalization of the BRI score as an when the next round of evaluation take place.

(Action: DoT NE LSA, IT &C Dept)

Onboarding on the "Centralised RoW Portal" by Local Authorities and TSPs/IPs Users

22. It was noted that the IT&C Department, in collaboration with Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and the Madhya Pradesh State Electronics Development Corporation (MPSEDC) is in the final stage of rolling-out the Meghalaya Tower App with automated workflows for Telecom tower permissions. While the all necessary work for this has been completed, DoT-HQ in the meanwhile got ready with the "Centralised RoW Portal" informed the IT&C Dept. that onboarding directly on this Portal would be beneficial instead of going live on a separate State-specific portal. In view of this the IT&C Dept. decided to opt for the latter and will be onboarding on the "Centralised RoW Portal" once the integration of the same with the e-Grass System of NIC is completed.

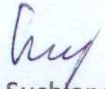
(Action: SeMT/IT&C Department)

23. COAI informed the committee that despite the availability of deemed approval clause in the Row policy, local authorities are not allowing the infrastructure installation to commence work even after 60 days without certificate. The Chair suggested that the deemed approval clauses may be adopted after the Centralised RoW Portal is ready and the Users have become fully familiar with the online application and approval process.

(Action: All Nodal Officers of Local Authorities)



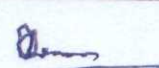
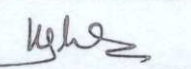
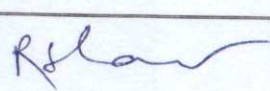
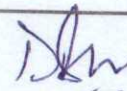


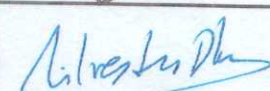

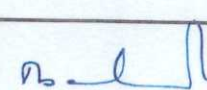




24. For the purpose of managing the Administration of the "Centralised RoW Portal" Shri. Cherikrak R. Marak, JIO has been appointed by the IT&C Dept as the State Admin and the same was informed to DoT-HQ and MPSEDC. **(Action: SeMT/IT&C Department)**
25. The Chair also directed all concerned users (i.e. all Local Authorities under MTIP 2018 and their Nodal Officers and TSPs/IPs users) to onboard themselves on the "Centralised RoW Portal" once it is ready and to completely stop offline processing of new applications once the system goes live.
- (Action: All Nodal Officers of Local Authorities and of TSPs/IPs along-with IT&C Department)**

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair.


(R. V. Suchlang)
Chief Secretary
Government of Meghalaya

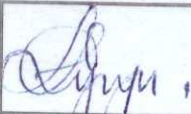
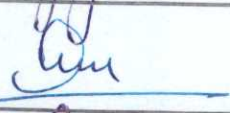
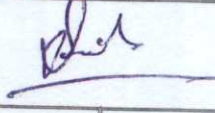
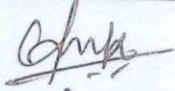
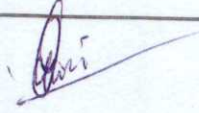
Attendance: State Broadband Committee Meeting to discuss matters related to Telecom Services in Meghalaya

Dated: 07th April 2022 Time- 3 :30 PM Venue - Main Secretariat Building, Shillong

Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Signature
1	Smti. R.V. Suchiang, IAS	Chief Secretary & Chairman, State Broadband Committee (SBC)	
2	M.R. Suman	Com ITC	
3	Dileep Kumar	DDS, DOT	
4	K. S. Madanpuri	CGM, BSNL, NE1	
5	R. S. Ram	GMTD Meghalaya	
6	DEBAPRIYA DEB.	CEO, NEUNE	
7	L. D. Suchiang	CE PWD (Roads)	
8	R. Syiem	Director (Dist) MADA	
9	SILVESTER PHANBUH, MCS	EAC, EKH	
10	Stelson Majhary	Khari & Rikhi ACF (I) Division	
11	Pravin Bahshi	c & s Power	
12	Lamanda Lalm.	DC EKH	
13	L. Hyamwite	Deputy Model officer EKH	
14	B. S. Solliya	CEO, SMB Secy. MUDA	
15	K. L. Nongthni	Joint Secy, ITCL Dept.	

Attendance: State Broadband Committee Meeting to discuss matters related to Telecom Services in Meghalaya

Dated: 07th April 2022 Time- 3 :30 PM Venue - Main Secretariat Building, Shillong

16	E. Lyngdoh	DC SMT	
17	D. Dikhar	SIO DITC Meghalaya	
18	K. SAIKIA	SL-TN, SMT Meghalaya	
19	C R. Marak	JIO DITC	
20	I. Tariany	Inspectorate of Elect	
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