

Minutes of the 4th State Broadband Committee (SBC) meeting
held on 28th October 2022 at 3.00 PM,
chaired by the Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya in Main Secretariat, Shillong

The 4th SBC meeting was held on the 28th October 2022 and was chaired by Shri. D. P. Wahlang, IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya. The main objective of the meeting was to enhance coordination to fast track telecom penetration in the State as well as to sort out any issue in order to expedite execution and roll out of the Telecommunication projects in the State. The Chair also welcomed all the members & invitees present.

The following members and Special Invitees attended the meeting.

Attendance sheet of invitees who attended the Meeting physically is placed at *Annexure A*.

The following invitees attended the meeting through VC :

- 1) All Deputy Commissioners of Districts
- 2) All District Nodal Officers (Telecom) of Districts
- 3) Shri. C. K Deka & team from AMTRON
- 4) CGM Powergrid
- 5) Shri. Amjad DGM Powergrid
- 6) CEOs/ EOs of Municipal Corporations, TPOs of Urban Affair Department
- 7) Shri. Harpreet Singh, Northeast Regional Head- DIPA
- 8) Shri. Dhananjay, COAI
- 9) Shri. D. Lato & team from Bharti Hexacom Ltd (Airtel) – USOF 4G project

International Internet Gateway Project (IIG) project

1. The Chair directed AMTRON Representative to make a brief Presentation on the proposed International Internet Gateway Project (IIG) project. Shri C. K Deka AMTRON, informed that the route planned for the proposed project is via Kuakata (CLS)→Dhaka →Tamabil (zero point)→Dawki→ Guwahati which is about 600KM (175 Km from Zero point to Dawki) with 6 Point of Presence (PoPs) along the route. AMTRON also informed that this proposed project shall reduce latency & improve internet speed because it follows the shortest route from landing point. The throughput is also scalable up to 800 GBPS with present SEA-ME-WE-5 Capacity. Redundant route is being explored through the Mumbai Cable Landing Station to ensure reliability of operations.

AMTRON is offering 2Gbps high speed bandwidth to Govt. of Meghalaya free of cost for one year post commissioning of the project. Subsequently 10Gbps high speed bandwidth will also be provided at a discounted price.

AMTRON has requested for the following supports from the Government of Meghalaya:-

- i. Approximate space of 1000-1500 sq ft at Dawki to set up the repeater station.
- ii. RoW permission from Dawki to Guwahati for drawing OFC
- iii. Space requirement at Shillong of about 6000 sq ft for repeater station / POP, NOC, SOC and Office Space for O&M teams.

- iv. Additional link through PGDCIL OPGW, for connecting the Dawki to Khliehriat missing link through OFC, through power lines.

The CGM PGDCIL offered his co-operation for the IIG project of AMTRON.

After the matter was deliberated, an '*in principle*' go ahead was accorded to consider the proposal as above and AMTRON may be invited to Shillong for further detailed discussion to work out the way forward.

DISCUSSIONS ON MAIN AGENDA

Thereafter, Shri. Ashok Kumar Jain, DDG(C) North East Licence Service Area NE-1 Telecom Circle (NE LSA), Department of Telecom Government of India made a presentation as per the agenda. He briefed the vision and objectives of the National Broadband Mission (*PPT enclosed*) and updated on the current status of the various initiatives and targets of the Department of Telecom for the State of Meghalaya.

The following were the points discussed and the decisions taken:

Tower Permissions by various Local Authorities

2. Currently, there are 11 pending permissions in the State of which 10 are pendency from the Parivesh portal <https://parivesh.nic.in>.

The Chair directed the representative of Forest & Environment Dept., Govt of Meghalaya, to check the details in their Portal and close all the above pending cases.

3. Regarding the pending permission through the Gatishakti Row Portal (<https://gatishaktisanchar.gov.in>), IT&C Dept informed all Local Authorities that the deemed approval clause of 60 days is already implemented in the portal. Hence, if no action is taken by any Designated Official in the process flow of the Portal, the applications exceeding 60 days will be deemed to be approved and the Local Authority concerned will have to issue the Approval Certificate as mandated by the Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy (MTIP) 2018 Paras 13 (1), 13(2) & 13(3).

The Chair directed all Local Authorities to take note of the Deemed Approval provisions and to take action accordingly.

4. The Chair also directed all Local Authorities concerned to provide the credentials of all Local Authorities concerned in case of any changes or transfers of the concerned Designated Officials in the process flow of the Gatishakti Row Portal (<https://gatishaktisanchar.gov.in>).

Chair directed the Local authorities and in particular the DC SGH, DNO EKH DNO EWKH, DC WKH, DC WJH, CEO SMB & CEO Tura MB to share personal details including Name, Designation, Aadhaar linked Mobile Nos, email id for updation in the Central RoW Portal.

USOF 4G Project

- 5. USOF 4G PROJECT BY AIRTEL:** As per initial plan, under USOF 4G project, Bharti Hexacom is to set up **889 Towers** covering **1164 villages**. The work is on the verge of completion by Bharti Hexacom and the status is as given below:-

No. of villages to be covered in agreement	No. of Towers as per agreement	Total No. of Towers approved after survey	Tower sites commissioned (On-air)	Villages covered	Remarks
1164	878	317	308 (Additional 9 to be installed)	466 (747)	281 already covered by other TSPs.

The status of USOF 4G Towers along the National Highways (NHs) is as follows:

No. of towers along portions of NHs as per agreement	Total No. of Tower locations finalized	Tower (NH) installed	Tower (NH) commissioned (On-air)	Remarks
11	3	3	3	Completed

6. BSNL USOF 4G Saturation Project Status

Sr	District	Total number of Uncovered villages (As on 30-09-22)	Survey done by BSNL	Letter sent by BSNL to DCs dtd 12/10/2022
1	East Garo Hills	161	118	66
2	West Garo Hills	102	87	42
3	South Garo Hills	265	172	85
4	South West Garo Hills	26	22	5
5	North Garo Hills	107	89	31
6	East Khasi Hills	206	158	93
7	West Khasi Hills	236	178	130
8	Eastern West Khasi Hills	51	30	28
9	South West Khasi Hills	107	61	36
10	Ri Bhoi	138	101	52
11	East Jaintia Hills	52	29	20
12	West Jaintia Hills	32	23	24
TOTAL (ALL 12 DISTRICTS)		1483	1068	612

7. BSNL requested to facilitate Land Acquisition, for 200 Sq. meter land in 612 Villages, Free of Cost (FoC) and the details of the targeted sites (District-wise Lists) was also shared to all Deputy Commissioners vide *letter dtd 12/10/2022*. The Chaird reiterated the decisions taken during the specific meeting with BSNL on the subject held on 30/09/2022, and highlighted the challenges in availing private land on free of cost basis in the State due to the Land Transfer Act prevalent in Meghalaya. Hence, it was decided that a D.O letter from the Chief Secretary to the Additional Secretary & Administrator USOF DoT- Gol apprising the latter on the matter and to suggest for alternative option of executing lease/rent agreement by BSNL with the land owners.

It was also decided that BSNL should send its Field Officials to respective sites and inform the Government of Meghalaya about specific issues in obtaining any of the sites listed above.

BHARATNET PROJECTS

8. Bharat-Net OFC Project (Ph-I) is as follows:

Total sites (GPs) planned	Service Ready GP (SRGPs)	Handed over to BSNL	Up GPs	Remarks
948	122 (tender was short closed)	98	11	Already taken over by BSNL (since 30-06-22)

BSNL informed that they have hired a third party to complete the work and to provide Operations and Maintenance for all the **98** sites handed over to them.

IT&C Department, reiterated the need for BSNL to provide specific plan and tariff so that the potential subscribers can be intimated.

9. **Status of Bharatnet Phase-II VSATs Project of BBNL**

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

10. Status of Phase-II BharatNet VSATs in Schools:

Vide letter dated 22/09/2022, Ministry of Education, Dept. of School Education & Literacy, GoI, instructed Secretary - Education Department, GoM to utilize all the VSATs installed in Schools in the state. As per decision in MoM chaired by Commissioner & Secretary – Education on 27/09/2022, the site-wise status of V-SAT at **480** schools was emailed by BBNL on 10/10/22 to IT&C and Education Depts. The Status is as per follows:-

Sl No	Status	No of Schools
1	Online	99
	(No Wifi equipment is being provided as part of the project, hence schools are not able to fully leverage the VSAT facility)	
2	Offline	380
	(Offline VSATs <60 days =79 VSATs)	
	(Offline VSATs > 60 &< 90 days = 62 VSATs)	
	(Offline VSATs > 100 days = 239 VSATs)	
3	Damage by Elephant	1
TOTAL		480

11. Status of Phase-II BharatNet VSATs in Police Stations

Sl No	Status	No of Police Stations
1	Good	8
2	Poor Network	11
3	No Network	9
4	No Adapter/ Solar Panel issues	7
TOTAL		35

12. The Chair directed that a separate meeting shall be convened by IT&C with BBNL, TCIL, Education Dept, Home (Police) for BharatNet Phase-II issues.

13. The Chair also directed BBNL to provide Dashboard access on live status of BBNL VSAT to State IT&C/ Education/ Police Departments, **on top priority**, as decided in the Review Meeting chaired by **Additional Secretary, DoT, GoI**, in July 2022 at CTO BSNL Building, Shillong which was also attended by Sr. GM BBNL i/c Meghalaya, BSNL, IT&C Dept.

Digital Communications Readiness Index (DCRI)

14. DDG(C) NE LSA DoT- GoI informed that DCRI survey is being conducted by DoT-GoI. DCRI is a tool for states to attract investments and address Right of Way (ROW) challenges recommended by the National Digital Communication Policy (NDCP) 2018. DCRI indicates factors like underlying infrastructure, human resources, policy regimes, & investment climate.

Since inputs on the DCRI will involve multiple line departments like PWD, Education, UAD, Power, Home (Police), H& FW, Commerce & Industries, IT&C Dept, it was decided that a separate meeting on DCRI will be chaired by the Chief Secretary.

Meanwhile, the Chair also requested NE LSA DoT-Gol to provide the information to the Commissioner & Secretary, Education Department, GoM on the current ICT Courses that may be implemented through ITI, Polytechnic as part of the DCRI indicator relating to Education Department.

15. Working Committee on 5G Roll-out to be Notified under the SBC as per DoT guidelines

The Objectives of this Working Committee is as follows:

- i. Work out modalities to ensure Broadband for all under National Broadband Mission
 - ii. Key emphasis on the rollout of 5G network in Meghalaya and use of “**Street Furnitures**”
- (a) The Chair directed that the draft Notification along with the detailed Terms of references and proposed composition of the Working Committee shall be put up by IT&C on file for approval.
- (b) Since, State Planning Department is the Nodal Department handling GIS mapping of Poles and other Street Furnitures, etc.; the Chair directed that the Secretary Planning cum State Nodal Officer of the Gati Shakti Project shall also be included as Member of the Working Committee for 5G roll out in the State.
- (c) Once the Working Committee on 5G Roll out, etc., is notified by the State Government, the committee shall immediately work on the necessary amendments to the Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy (MTIP) 2018 and to align the same with the GoI ROW (Amendment) Rules 2022 and other DoT, Gol, guidelines.
- (d) It was also decided that the Working Group, as per decision of the 3rd SBC held on 07/04/2022, shall be subsumed under the Working Committee for 5G Roll Out, etc.

Addendum to Model Building Bylaws, 2016

16. The meeting also discussed about incorporation of Addendum to Model Building Bylaws, 2016 as per provisions in IBS issued by MoHUA having the following salient points:

- (a) The National Digital Communications Policy (NDCP) 2018 mandated installation of Telecom infra & associates cabling, IBS (In Building Solution) in all Commercial/ Residential/ Govt Buildings as per National Building Code of India. In this regard, the State needs to incorporate Model Building Bylaws so that Digital Infra deployment/ Digital Connectivity ready provisions are part of their Common Telecom Infra (CTI) such as:
- i. Telecom Duct
 - ii. Common Pathways
 - iii. Runways for Cables, etc

(b) As per the suggested Addendum, any Occupancy-cum-completion Certificates are to be granted only after ensuring that CTI as per prescribed standards is in place. Besides, necessary Provisions of visit for DoT/ TRAI Officials along with joint inspection with TSP/ISP who might suggest relevant modifications in the CTI Plan to ensure common access.

17. The Chair directed that a separate meeting be held amongst Director, Urban Affairs, Director IT & Communications, Director MUDA, Chief Urban Planner, Govt of Meghalaya to work out the way forward for incorporating the changes in the Meghalaya Building Bylaws as per provisions for Addendum to Model Building Bylaws, 2016, In Building Solutions (IBS) issued by MoHUA, Gol.

"Call before you Dig" Policy

18. TSPs/IPs raised concerns of **damages to OFC** along the roads due to ongoing activities by Government Agencies / Utilities. To prevent such damages, the DoT- Gol suggested adopting a **"Call before you Dig" Policy** by all State Government Utilities.

The Chair directed that the Working Committee, to be constituted as decided in this meeting and mentioned above, shall examine the same and to include it as an Amendment in the Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy (MTIP) 2018.

EB Related Issues

19. Pending EB Connections:

- (a) There are a total of 120 pending electricity connection by MePDCL, of which 32 are Airtel USOF sites, in which demand notes have already been submitted to MePDCL.
- (b) The Chair directed MePDCL to expedite granting of necessary permissions to concerned TSPs/ISPs.

20. One TSP raised the issue of pre-approval and mandatory inspection for solar power generation of capacity more than **9.5KVA** by electrical inspector. In view of the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), this issue shall be taken up by Working Committee on 5G where C&S, Power Dept cum CMD MeECL shall be invited.

21. The meeting also highlighted the need to provide inputs to the Meghalaya State Electricity Regulatory Commission (MSERC) specially on the draft MSERC Facilitation of Telecommunication Network Regulations 2022. It is understood that a public hearing has been fixed by MSERC on 11-11-2022.

Issues raised by DIPA & COAI:

22. The following issues were raised by DIPA & COAI:

- (a) Streamlining the guidelines for development of future street infrastructure to support small cells and aerial fibre & power systems. Special committee / task force to be constituted with DIPA as member.
- (b) Implementation of Meghalaya RoW guidelines by all the authorities. Convening of District Level Telecom Committee meetings under the chairmanship of DC on quarterly basis.
- (c) Availability of Electricity Poles for deploying Small Cells and Aerial OFC (also prescribed in amendment dt. 21-10-2021 for IT RoW Rules 2016)
- (d) Company-wise (not site-wise) online bills to be provided on registered email ID, to avoid any delay / penalty. EB tariff should be charged at industrial rates. Priority EB connection to be provided within 15 days of submission application. Prepaid metering to be encouraged.
- (e) Support required for addressing DG restriction sites especially in capital city Shillong.
- (f) District Level support from the Law enforcement agencies in case of public issues stopping work at cell site. Special committee to be constituted to handle such cases.
- (g) No permission been granted by the local DISCOM for deploying BTS on the poles.
- (h) Support required rationalizing EB charges and for the priority Grid supplying on Utility/Industrial/Favourable tariffs for providing Mobile & Broadband services.
- (i) Telecom infrastructure to be treated under "Utility Category" and to direct State Electricity Boards (SEB) to provide priority Electricity Boards (EB) connection to Telecom Towers at Utility/Industrial/favourable rates.
- (j) Also, the electricity bills may be provided on the company's registered email id to avoid physical collection and downloading of thousands of bills from portal etc. Further, if possible consolidated bills area wise/zone wise may be provided under the same DISCOM.
- (k) Rate of Pole Usages charges in Meghalaya is exorbitantly high while using the electrical poles/ Meghalaya Power Distribution Company Limited (MePDCL) Pole.
 - i. As per Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy (MTIP), 2018, the charges for using the distribution system of the electricity distribution company (MePDCL) for telecom infra, are as follows:
 - a. One time administrative/ Permission charge for the route (subject to the limitation of one jurisdiction) is Rs. 10,000/-
 - b. Rental per Pole per year is **Rs 200/- for urban areas** and **Rs. 50/- for rural areas**.
 - ii. MePDCL vide its Order dated 22nd Mar 21 imposes the following rates w.e.f 1st Apr 21:
 - a. **Rs 3000/- per Pole per annum** for urban areas and **Rs 1500/-** for rural areas
 - b. Above rate of pole usages shall be increased 5% per year
 - c. Above rates are exclusive of taxes

- iii. Hence, in view of MePDCL rates being exorbitantly high as compared to MTIP 2018, DIPA & COAI requested that the rates as per Meghalaya Telecom Infrastructure Policy, 2018 should be applied by MePDCL.

The Chair directed that the abovementioned Working Committee on 5G and usage of Street furniture etc. shall examine all the above concerns and take necessary steps to resolve the same.

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



(D. P Wahlang)
Chief Secretary
Government of Meghalaya

Copy to:

Members of SBC

1. PS to the Chief Secretary & Chairman State Broadband Committee (SBC) for kind information of the Chief Secretary.
2. Sr. Dy Director General, NE LSA, Department of Telecommunications (DoT), North East-I & Member Convener (SBC Meghalaya)
3. PS to the Commissioner & Secretary, IT & C Department for kind information of the Commissioner & Secretary.
4. PS to the Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt, of Meghalaya, Power Department for kind information of the Commissioner & Secretary.
5. PS to the Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt, of Meghalaya, Urban Affairs Department for kind information of the Commissioner & Secretary.
6. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest, Government of Meghalaya.
7. The Secretary, PWD, Government of Meghalaya.
8. The Chief Engineer, PWD (Roads), Government of Meghalaya.
9. The Chief Engineer, PWD (NH).
10. The CGM BSNL NE- 1 Circle CTO Building, Shillong.
11. The CGM /Sr. GM (Project) & State Head BBNL Meghalaya .
12. The Chairman cum Managing Director, MeECL.
13. Shri. Harpreet Singh, NER Head, Digital Infrastructure Provider Association (DIPA).
14. The DDG Cellular Operations Association of India (COAI).

Special Invitees

15. PS to the Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt, of Meghalaya, Education Department, Investment Promotion Board, etc., for kind information of the Commissioner & Secretary.
16. All Deputy Commissioners cum Chairman DLDCMC, East Khasi Hills/East Jaintia Hills/ West Jaintia Hills/ Ribhoi/West Khasi Hills/South West Khasi Hills/ Eastern West Khasi Hills/ East Garo Hills/West Garo Hills/ South West Garo Hills/ North Garo Hills/ South Garo Hills District.
17. All District Nodal Officers, DLDCMC, East Khasi Hills/East Jaintia Hills/ West Jaintia Hills/ Ribhoi/West Khasi Hills/South West Khasi Hills/ Eastern West Khasi Hills/ East Garo Hills/West Garo Hills/ South West Garo Hills/ North Garo Hills/ South Garo Hills District.
18. The Director, IT&C,Meghalaya,Shillong.
19. The Director (Distribution) MePDCL, Lum Jingshai.
20. The Chief Electrical Inspector, Power Department.
21. The CEOs, Municipal Boards, (Shillong/ Jowai/Tura/ Baghmara/Williamnagar/Resubelpara) .
22. Shri. E Lyngwa, Head SeMT Meghalaya.
23. The Divisional Forest Officer (T) East Khasi Hills & Ribhoi Division, Shillong / West Khasi Hills (SF&T) & South West Khasi Hills Division, Nongstoin / East Jaintia Hills & West Jaintia Hills (T) Division, Jowai/ East & North Garo Hills (T) Division, Williamnagar/ West & South West Garo Hills (T) Division, Tura. / South Garo Hills Division, Baghmara.
24. The GMTD BSNL NE- 1 Circle CTO Building, Shillong .
25. The Dy. GM & State Level SPOC, BSNL for USOF 4G Tower Project
26. Shri. Sib Kumar Sarma, Legal & Regulatory Head, BHL (Airtel).
27. Shri. Daman Lato, BHL (Airtel) .
28. The Sr GM (Project) State Head, BBNL (Assam & Meghalaya) .
29. The Dy. GM (TS), TCIL .
30. Shri. Ashwini Madhab Dutta, Principal State Coordinator, Reliance JIO - Assam & NE .
31. The MD, AMTRON Government of Assam.
32. The CGM, Power Grids Shillong.
33. _____

By order, etc.


Under Secretary to the Government of Meghalaya,
Information Technology & Communication Department