

State Broadband Committee 2nd Meeting

No. 2063/HP LSA/National Broadband Mission/100

Dated: 25/08/2022


Minutes of Meeting

The 2nd meeting of State Broadband Committee of Himachal Pradesh on National Broadband Mission was held on 21st July, 2022 at 11:30 AM, under Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Secretary, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh. List of participants is enclosed as Annexure-I.

At the outset, Advisor (Telecom) DoT, HP LSA, welcomed Hon'ble Chairman of State Broadband Committee & the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh, followed by Members and other senior officers were also extended warm welcome by Director (Rural) DoT.

In the beginning, Pr. Secretary (IT), HP Govt. briefed the committee about the National Broadband Mission (NBM), SBC composition and mandate to the committee. Thereafter, Shri Mohan Lal, DDG (Rural), DoT made a presentation to the committee on agenda points. The discussions held during the meeting are summarized as below:

1. Vision and Objective of National Broadband Mission and Functions of State Broadband Committee were discussed along with the status of telecom infrastructure in Himachal Pradesh and importance of Broadband. In Himachal Pradesh 98.66% inhabited villages are covered with telecom services and 96.20% villages are covered with 3G/4G services. The Chairman raised concern that 585 villages are either uncovered or have partial coverage and 307 villages in the State are connected with only 2G technology having no internet in these villages. The Chairman desired that action may be taken on fast-track mode to cover the uncovered villages with the telecom services and internet facility. The CGM, BSNL informed that BSNL has already submitted the DPR for 207 towers along with 2997Km of OFC to cover 585 villages under special assistance to the State from Central Govt. Scheme.
2. Progress of BharatNet project and issues related to implementation of BharatNet were discussed. It was informed by BBNL that out of 3615 GPs of the State, 408 GPs are covered under BharatNet Phase-I. The



Chairman raised concern about slow progress of BharatNet in the State. It was informed by BBNL that tender in PPP model for the phase II of BharatNet could not be materialized at USOF HQ/BBNL HQ due to no participation from bidders. Fresh bids are to be called by USOF/BBNL HQ and a revised proposal is to be sent to the Cabinet. Further, CGM BSNL informed that about 2044 Villages are already covered with the BSNL OFC.

3. Present Status of National Broadband Mission parameters & targets were presented by DDG (Rural), DoT. It was discussed that the average internet speed available in the State is only 9 to 12.7 Mbps. A total 30100 Km fiber has been laid in the State by the different stakeholders. As far as Fiberization of BTS is concerned it is around 27%. The Chairman raised concern that present status is much below the targets set for NBM for 2022. The committee was apprised that there is a planning of 1,29,341 Km of OFC laying for the State in the phase II of BharatNet. With this Fiberization target for the State would be achieved. Backhaul on OFC along with the 5G roll out in the State would improve the speed and help in achieving the desired targets.
4. Status of USOF mobile tower installation was discussed. Under USOF-354 scheme 38 towers were planned to be installed to cover 43 villages. So far 25 towers are already installed and working. State Govt asked that infrastructure created with help of Government funding (such as USOF or any other scheme) should be shared amongst all TSPs. There should not be any exclusivity of one TSP. The representative of DOT informed that as per USOF agreement, sharing of these towers is based upon mutual consent between TSPs and not mandatory.
5. The Committee was apprised about Broadband Readiness Index being prepared by ICRIER (Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations) on behalf of Govt. of India. DoT informed that the questionnaire has already been shared with the State Govt and the State has already submitted the information. The index is yet to be released. It was discussed that a meeting of different stakeholders may

be planned and if needed State may formulate a policy for improving the BRI.

6. The status and plan for early roll out of 5G in the state was discussed. A task force consisting of different stakeholders on 5G rollout need to be formed by the State Govt to work out modalities for use of State Govt. infrastructure/Street Furniture. State Govt informed that proposal to constitute committee for the same is under process.
7. Regarding Aspirational District, Chamba, out of 1591 villages, 1254 villages are covered. The Chairman raised concern that 58 inhabited Villages are still uncovered. The Chairman desired that these uncovered villages needs to be covered on fast-track mode. It was informed by HP LSA, DoT that the list of uncovered villages has already been sent to USOF for coverage under appropriate USOF scheme.
8. The coverage status under Village Vibrant Program (border villages) was discussed. The Chairman raised concern that 24 villages are still uncovered. HP LSA, DoT informed that list has already been sent to USOF. State Govt desired that DoT need to fix a roll out plan with target for covering these villages. HP LSA informed that it needs to be fixed in consultation with the USOF, DoT HQ. CGM BSNL informed that BSNL has 10 towers in these villages and requested to cover these towers under USOF. BSNL may take up the same with USOF.
9. Committee members were apprised about facts related to Electromagnetic Emission from Mobile Towers. It was discussed that sometimes towers are being sealed or stopped from installation due to rumors of harmful EMF emissions. From DoT side it was informed that the norms set by Govt. of India are 10 time more stringent than international norms. DoT tests BTS on regular basis and emissions are found well within the safe limits. In addition, there is a provision of huge penalty on the service providers for the violation of these norms. Committee desired that DoT may run campaign for information to public. DoT informed that they are running campaign periodically using different media.

10. Pending RoW approvals was discussed in the meeting. Advisor, HP LSA, DoT stated that RoW cases may be approved on priority to meet the mission target and improve the telecom infrastructure in the State. Pr. Secretary (IT) informed that IT Deptt. is holding regular meetings with the TSP/IPs in this matter.

11. DDG (Rural), DoT finally summarized presentation with way forward to increase coverage and data speed for achieving National Broadband Mission Targets:

- a. Expedite Approvals of RoW applications.
- b. Restoration charges needs to be rationalized. Additional levy of 25% in tribal areas needs to be reviewed.
- c. Priority Electricity Connections and Subsidised power tariff
- d. 221 Villages Lat. Long need to be provided by State Govt.

12. DIPA representative Sh. Harpreet Kainth hailed the State RoW policy and informed that they are regularly holding meetings with IT Deptt of State for any RoW issues. He has requested State to simplify the process for issue of NoC. DIPA also informed that rates of using electric poles for laying overhead cables are very high in HP. State Govt requested DIPA to share the rates in other States to examine the case.

13. COAI representative Sh. C.L. Kapoor informed that RoW policy of the state is aligned with that of DoT except the provision of deemed approval of 60 days clause and Self restoration facility to TSPs in case of road digging while cable laying. With regard to deemed approval clause in RoW policy, State Govt informed that proposal is already under consideration. As regard self-restoration facility to TSP/IPs, State's PWD Deptt to examine the case. To start with one case may be proposed by COAI to PWD Deptt for self-restoration.

COAI further requested that NBC Byelaws as amended in March, 2022 by MoHUA may be incorporated in the HP policy. He further requested that for the use of street furniture for providing telecom services, DoT has published a draft policy, same may be considered by State Govt while framing the policy in the State.

Action Points

The following directions were conveyed by the Chairman:-

1. DOT to submit fiberisation plan in order to achieve the targets defined in the NBM for the year 2022

(Action by DOT)

2. The uncovered 585 villages may be covered on priority.

(Action by DOT)

3. The 307 villages which are still connected with only 2G technology need to be connected with 3G/4G on fast-track mode

(Action by BSNL/USOF)

4. Laying of OFC & Connecting all the remaining GPs Under BharatNet Phase-II project.

(Action by BBNL/USOF)

5. Commissioning of all the remaining mobile towers as planned under ongoing USOF-354 Scheme.

(Action by RJIL)

6. Providing coverage in the 58 uncovered inhabited villages in Chamba District under Aspirational District Programme.

(Action by USOF)

7. Providing coverage in the 24 uncovered villages under Villages Vibrant Program (border villages).

(Action by USOF)

8. Pending RoW approval cases to be disposed off on priority.

(Action by DCs of HP/TSPs)

9. Provision of self-restoration facility to the TSPs in case of damages to the road while laying the telecom infrastructure. One sample case to be studied

(PWD Deptt/ COAI)

10. Constitution of Task Force for roll out of 5G in State.

(Action by IT Deptt, HP State)

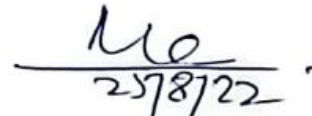
11. Campaign in media to allay the rumor of harmful emissions from mobile towers.

(Action by DoT/TSPs)

12. Villages whose lat-long details are not available need to be provided by State Govt.

(Action by IT Deptt. HP State)

At the end, Hon'ble Chairman stated that the uncovered villages need to be covered on priority. There is a need to increase the Fiberization to improve the broadband speed and coverage in the State. At present the, connectivity speed and Fiberisation is lagging as per NBM Targets set for 2022. The State Govt will provide all support for rolling out 5G in the State. He further laid emphasis for sharing of towers/ telecom infrastructure in order to avoid cluttering in the State.


25/8/22

(Mohan Lal)
Dr. Director General (Rural)
HP LSA, DoT, Shimla

Copy to:

1. The Chairman SBC & Chief Secretary HP Govt. for kind inf. Pl.
2. The Members SBC for kind inf. Pl.
3. The Administrator, USOF DOT HQ New Delhi for kind inf. & n/a.
4. All the other Participants for inf. And n/s pl.

Annexure-I

List of Participants

1. Sh. R.D. Dhiman, Chairman SBC & Chief Secretary, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
2. Sh. Subhash Chand, Member Convener SBC & Advisor (Telecom) DoT, HP LSA Shimla
3. Sh. Sh. Bharat Khera, Member SBC & Pr. Secretary (PWD) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
4. Sh. Rajneesh, Member SBC & Pr. Secretary (IT) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
5. Sh. C.P. Verma, Member SBC & Sp. Secretary (forest) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
6. Sh. Vinay Kumar, Member SBC & AS (UD & TCP) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
7. Sh. J.S. Sahota, Special Invitee & CGM BSNL Himachal Pradesh
8. Sh. Sanjay Gupta, Special Invitee SBC & Sr. GM, BBNL Himachal Pradesh
9. Sh. Harpreet Kainth, Special Invitee SBC from DIPA joined through VC
10. Sh. C.L. Kapoor, Special Invitee SBC from COAI joined through VC
11. Sh. Mohan Lal, DY. Director General (Rural) DoT, HP LSA Shimla
12. Sh. Anil Bhatia, Director (Rural), DoT HP LSA Shimla
13. Sh. Pavan Gupta, Director (Rural-2), DoT HP LSA Shimla
14. Sh. Tourl S Raveesh, SS (IT & PWD) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
15. Sh. Mukesh Respal, Director (IT) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
16. Sh. Chander Mohan, DGM Mobile, BSNL Shimla
17. Sh. Rajeev Sharma, Addl. Director (IT) Govt. of Himachal Pradesh
18. Sh. Ajay Kumar, ADG (Rural) DoT HP LSA Shimla
19. Sh. C.R. Chauhan, Consultant, BBNL Shimla

Summary

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List	No.	Remarks
Uncovered	1225	Includes 381 out of 585 reported by state
RJIL Expansion Plan	40	
USOF Plan	30	
Out of 585 referred by state	204	Out of 585 referred by Sate
Unbanked reported by RBI	21	
VIP references	230	
BSNL 2G_3G	399	
Others uncovered	1	
Others 2G_3G	1	
Total	2151	
less USOF/RJIL Expansion plan	70	
Grand Total	2081	532 Already reported to be covered with 4G
Zero Population	213	
Zero population as per census 2011 however Inhabited as per State	834	
Population data not available	195	

All villages need to be physically surveyed except USOF/RJIL expansion plan to arrive at final list



सत्यमेव जयते

भारत सरकार
Government of India
संचार मंत्रालय, दूरसंचार विभाग
Ministry of Communication, Department of Telecommunication
कार्यालय सलाहकार (दूरसंचार), हिमाचल प्रदेश लाइसेंस सेवा क्षेत्र
O/o Advisor (Telecom), Himachal Pradesh License Service Area
टेलीफोन एक्सचेंज बिल्डिंग छोटा शिमला, शिमला 171002
Telephone Exchange Building, Chhota Shimla, Shimla 171002

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आज़ादी का
अमृत महोत्सव

No.: 2063/HP LSA/ National Broadband Mission/104 Dated 16/08/2022

To

The Director (Information Technology),
Govt. of Himachal Pradesh,
Shimla

Subject: Regarding actionable points discussed during 2nd SBC

Please refer to HP Govt. letter No. E-24169 -SITE-F05(6)/2/2019-IT SECTION-GoHP- 199 dated 25.07.2022 on the subject above. The parawise comments are as under:

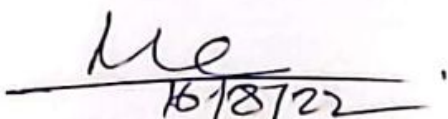
1. The cabinet has approved to provide coverage to uncovered villages across India including Himachal Pradesh, under 4G saturation scheme. This scheme also has provision for 20% additional villages. The scheme is being implemented by BSNL. All the uncovered villages falling under Aspirational District Programme, Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP) under Border Area Development Programme (BADP) as well as other uncovered villages in whole of HP would be covered. This office will share the tentative list of villages to be covered shortly with IT department for finalization of list to be further shared with BSNL for survey and planning of mobile sites to be erected under 4G saturation scheme as approved by Cabinet.
2. As regard EMF awareness, HP LSA DOT has been conducting EMF awareness camps on regular basis. Recently, awareness camps have been conducted in Kala Amb, Kangra and Bilaspur. A talk on EMF emissions was also given on All India radio, where in, it was explained in detail that EMF emissions from mobile towers are not harmful to humans.

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However, in order to further create EMF awareness on larger scale it is planned that we can carry out following activities in order to dispel myths regarding EMF emissions from mobile towers in the minds of general public.

- a. HP LSA has planned to issue public notices in leading national daily newspapers explaining that EMF emissions from towers are harmless to humans.
 - b. HP LSA has planned to organize awareness camp at Ridge Shimla (preferably after monsoon season) to create awareness in general public about the EMF emissions. In this awareness program we shall be showing small presentation on "EMF radiation from mobile towers" and also shall be distributing pamphlets.
 - c. HP LSA has proposed to show one hour presentation on "EMF emissions from mobile towers" in engineering and polytechnic colleges (private and govt.) in state of HP.
3. As per the USOF agreement, USP (universal Service Provider) may share the telecom infrastructure with other TSPs. The sharing of telecom infrastructure is as per their mutual agreement/consent.
4. As referred in Para 1, Cabinet has already approved coverage of the uncovered villages.

Please refer to this office email dated 27/07/2022 & reminder dated email dated 05/08/2022 vide which draft MoM of 2nd SBC were sent for approval of the Chairman SBC. The same may be returned at the earliest so that final MoM can be released to all the participants along with copy to the Administrator USOF for inf. and n/a.


(Mohan Lal)
Dy. Director General Rural

No. E-24169 -SITE-F05(6)/2/2019-IT SECTION-GoHP- 199
Department of Information Technology
Government of Himachal Pradesh

From

Director,
Department of Information Technology,
Himachal Pradesh.

To

✓ The Advisor,
HPLSA, Ministry of Communications,
Department of Telecommunications,
O/o Sr. DDG HPLSA,
Telecom Enforcement Resource and Monitoring (Term) Cells,
T.E. Building, Boundary Estate,
Chhota Shimla-02.

Dated: Shimla-171013, the 25th July, 2022

Subject: Regarding actionable points discussed during 2nd SBC

Sir,

Kindly refer to the 2nd State Broadband Committee meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary to the Government of Himachal Pradesh on 21-07-2022. As discussed during the meeting, please find below the points on which further inputs/ intervention of DOT is required:

1. It was decided in the meeting that Mobile Tower installation work to cover 46 villages of Aspirational District needs to be done on war footing. Also, telecom coverage works in 24 Border Villages of Kinnaur and Lahaul & Spiti under the Vibrant Villages Program be given a push so that both the activities are completed by March, 2023. During the meeting, BSNL also informed that they have 10 Mobile Towers in Border Areas and the same could be used to extend telecom connectivity if funds are made available for their functioning through USOF. Therefore, as decided in the meeting, you are requested to follow up the matter with Government of India for early sanction and execution of these works. Any relevant correspondence may also be shared with the State Government so that the matter can also be pursued with GoI by the State Government as well.
2. In order to dispel EMR related rumors among masses, DOT has been asked to prepare and launch a comprehensive IEC programme for the State. The IEC plan must include coverage of social media, cable media, print media and electronic media for removing the doubts people have regarding radiation from towers. Same may be started from the month of August, 2022 itself.
3. DOT Informed that RJIL is installing 38 Towers in the State under USOF project. However, it was observed during the meeting that RJIL does not share the telecom infrastructure created under USOF with other Telecom Service Providers, although it is mandated to do so. Therefore, DOT was asked to ensure that any infrastructure created using government funds should be made available to all TSPs for use. Necessary action taken in this regard may also be intimated to the DIT please.



I/147565/2022

4. DoT informed during the meeting that they have submitted proposals to USOF for the expansion of telecom connectivity in the State in order to cover 100% villages of the State. It is, therefore, requested that list of such proposals along with the letters submitted to the Government of India, may also be shared with IT Department so that State Government may also pursue the matter with Government of India.

It is, therefore, requested to kindly submit action taken report on above mentioned points at the earliest.

Yours sincerely,


(Anurag K. Repaswal, IAS)
Director (IT),
Department of Information Technology,
Himachal Pradesh.

25th July, 2022

Endst. No.: As above
Copy forwarded to:

Dated: Shimla-13, the

The PS to the Principal Secretary (IT) to the Government of Himachal Pradesh, HP Secretariat, Shimla-02 for favour of information please.

Director,
Department of Information Technology,
Himachal Pradesh.