

**Office of the Additional Director General Telecom, Department of Telecommunications,**  
**Kerala LSA, Ernakulam**

**No. DoT/R-12/KRI/NBM/74 dtd 10-11-2023**

**Minutes of Meeting – 4<sup>th</sup> State Broadband Committee Meeting UT of Lakshadweep-24.08.2023**

1. The 4<sup>th</sup> State Broadband Committee Meeting of UT of Lakshadweep was held on 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023 at 11:00 AM, and chaired by the Shri Sandeep Kumar IAS, Advisor to the Hon'ble Administrator UT of Lakshadweep. The list of participants is given in the **Annexure -1.**
2. Shri Shashank Mani Tripathi, IAS Secretary IT, UT of Lakshadweep welcomed the Advisor, Addl DGT DoT Kerala LSA and her team, CGM BSNL and his team, representatives from COAI and DIPA to the SBC Meeting.
3. Smt V Sobhana Additional DGT, DoT, Kerala LSA in her opening remarks, mentioned that the 3 previous SBC meetings were held using the Satellite media, but the VC for 4<sup>th</sup> SBC meeting is held using the KLI Submarine OF Cable media, and the progress of Telecom infra in the islands is clearly visible with this. She emphasized regarding the Socio-Economic benefits that will arise, consequent to the broadband penetration that will happen due to the commissioning of KLI Submarine OFC project. This will positively benefit all spheres of life of the people in Lakshadweep, and there will be many use cases for the people using the broadband internet facilities, like the fishermen who had their business improved in other parts of the country due to access to internet. She also broadly outlined the agenda points for discussions.
4. Shri Sandeep Kumar, Advisor in his opening remarks, welcomed all the participants. He stated that connectivity both physical and digital have been the most challenging aspects for the people of Lakshadweep, and the administration has been working for improving the physical connectivity through expansion in shipping and airways. He also emphasized the importance of Digital connectivity for implementing many of the Government of India schemes, as many of the schemes have linked release of funds to registration in various portals. With the KLI project, the islands will have a robust and very reliable digital connectivity, and it will help a lot to the people of Lakshadweep in their socioeconomic development.
5. He also gave a detailed analysis of the agenda points, and emphasized the need for various USO funded projects to be completed on priority. He also stressed to complete FTTH connections, increase tower density in line with the National Broadband Mission targets of 1 tower per 1000 population. He called upon COAI and DIPA that the message should go their members regarding the opportunities coming up in Lakshadweep, enhanced tourism potentials, and they need to take active part in the development activity using the huge bandwidth available on KLI project. He also expressed hope, that there is a follow up on all the decisions that are taken, and there should be a continuous dialogue



even after the meeting and whatever unresolved issues are there, they should get resolved in the shortest period. He also said that it is a golden opportunity for all telecom ecosystem partners to showcase to the rest of the country as to what a joint partnership of the Department of Telecom, Government of India, BSNL, the UTL administration and the private players through the Cellular Operators Association, Digital Infra Providers association can achieve. He also stated that entire team of officer's present in Lakshadweep are always available for providing all support that is required either to DoT, BSNL or any other cellular operators.

6. Shri N S Deepu, DDG(Rural), DoT, Kerala LSA gave presentation covering the agenda points. BSNL specific points were briefed by Shri Sunil Kumar, CGM BSNL Kerala Circle, and his officers. Copy of the presentation is given as **Annexure 2**. The deliberations against each of the points in brief is also given below.

1	<p><b>Indian Telegraph Right of Way Rules:</b></p> <p>UTL IT Dept had issued a letter dated 07.06.2021 adopting the ITROW Rules 2016 stating that UTL being a UT – all rules notified by Govt of India are equally enforceable in UTL also. A similar letter may be issued adopting the subsequent amendments of 2017, 2021, 2022 and 2023/ future amendments thereof. The RoW rules with amendments also need to be brought to the knowledge of road authorities/local bodies concerned</p> <p><i>Sect (IT) informed that UTL will adopt the subsequent amendments and necessary action will be taken. He also informed that all the authorities concerned like PWD, Power department, others are already on board.</i></p>
2	<p><b>Addendum to Model Building Bye Laws 2016</b></p> <p>As per the addendum, Buildings are to be Digital Connectivity ready. Common Telecommunication Infrastructure (CTI) is to be provided, which could be used by TSPs/IPs for providing access to telecom services (Optical Fibre Cable, In Building Solutions etc). UTL has to incorporate the provisions regarding <b>Common Telecom Infrastructure</b> as part of its Building Byelaws, at the earliest, as already agreed to in the meeting between Hon'ble MoC and Hon'ble Administrator (MoM dtd 03-03-2023)</p> <p><i>Advisor informed that it will be incorporated in the Building Byelaws that is being framed, and expected to be released within a month.</i></p>
3	<p><b>Central ROW Portal(Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal):</b></p> <p>New provisions/ configurations are to be made at regular intervals by UTL, as and when new features are added. Recently Deemed approval configuration flow and 5G application fee configuration has been done by UTL, and it had taken considerable time. Two more new features will be added shortly regarding (i) intimation workflow for applications in private land and (ii) applications for overground OFC. It was requested that UTL may put in place a process where such configuration changes can be adopted in the shortest time.</p> <p><i>Sect(IT) informed that in future as and when the new features come up, UTL will configure them as well.</i></p>



4	<p><b>Mapping of Street Furniture in PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan</b></p> <p>Street furniture are utility poles like Electric poles, billboards, lamp posts, traffic signals, and public structures like bus stops etc. These can be used to mount small cells and aerial optical fibre for providing 5G telecom services. These have to be mapped onto the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan through the access given to the Nodal Officer of State Master Plan. Alternatively, the details can be shared in excel sheet (format already shared) to UTL, which will be populated from backend through National Broadband Mission team, DoT HQ. Specific attributes for street furniture have to be captured like ID, Height, Lat, Long, Type, Authority owning it etc.</p> <p><i>Sec(IT) informed that Nodal Department Industries Department is already doing the task of mapping of all the assets of various departments. 23 layers are being mapped. Specific attributes related to Street Furniture will be collected and mapped. Advisor directed that this be completed in a time bound manners, as the geographical area is limited.</i></p>
5	<p><b>Utilisation of Call Before U Dig app</b></p> <p>This mobile App was launched by the Hon'ble PM. It is a tool envisaged for preventing damages to underground assets like Optical Fiber cables, Electric Cables, Water pipe lines etc., The mobile app CBuD will connect Excavators and Asset Owners through SMS/Email notifications &amp; click to call facility, so as to enable planned excavations while ensuring the safety of underground assets. UTL is already onboarded on this platform. In the meeting between Hon'ble MoC and Hon'ble Administrator (MoM dtd 03-03-2023), it was requested to enhance the usage of CBuD app.</p> <p>The actions to be completed are the following (details in PPT)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creation of Taluk level Users (Level 5)</li> <li>2. Departments who own underground Assets – to issue orders mandating its officers to respond to messages from “Call Before u Dig” App .</li> <li>3. Departments who carry out excavation/trenching works- to issue orders mandating their excavators (Contractors) to do any type of digging activity, only after prior intimation through “Call Before u Dig” App</li> <li>4. All authorities (PWD, LSGD etc) giving “excavation permission” for trenching works – has to mention in the permission approval letter to use CBuD.</li> <li>5. Depts/utilities who have underground assets have to map them in PM GATI SHAKTI National Master Plan Portal.</li> <li>6. Randomly monitor digging activities and if not informed through CBuD App, take suitable action and sensitize the excavators to utilize the CBuD App.</li> </ol> <p><i>Advisor informed that in UTL there is only one road owning Agency - PWD and only 3 underground utilities – Water, OFC Electric lines, and hence it should be easier for coordination. Advisor further directed that the pending actions, should be got completed immediately in all 10 islands. If required a workshop can also be arranged. Secretary PWD informed that there was need for more coordination between KLI contractor and FTTH contractor, both are working for BSNL. Addl DGT thanked for the feedback, and asked BSNL to take note of this and do the needful, and to utilize CbuD.</i></p>



6	<p><b>KLI Project Utilisation</b></p> <p>Shri Sukumaran, PGM(CNTx) BSNL informed that trial traffic is being routed through KLI submarine OFC, and is “Provisionally declared fit for commissioning”. DoT informed that Addl Secretary (Telecom) has requested UTL vide DO letter dtd 16 Aug 2023, to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm the Draft tripartite agreement for O&amp;M at the earliest</li> <li>Review continued use of Satellite Bandwidth since Submarine OFC has ring topology for redundancy in case of damage</li> <li>Draw up a plan for utilization of KLI submarine OFC cable with monthly targets of broadband connections starting from Aug 2023.</li> <li>The discussions on above points and the decisions taken is given below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>With respect to the draft tripartite agreement, Sect(IT) informed that it is under scrutiny by Finance department and some queries were raised to BSNL/DoT and that reply is pending. However, PGM (CNTx) BSNL informed that DoT USOF already replied to a query raised and requested for agreement to be executed soon, as otherwise BSNL will not be in a position to go to the next step of operational maintenance. Advisor said that he will review, and expedite to finalize the agreement.</i></li> <li><i>Regarding the Satellite BW, it was stated by BSNL, that it may be better to retain the BW. Advisor informed that it will be examined, and a view will be taken, and conveyed to DoT and BSNL. CGM BSNL also informed that there is need to identify what all services need to be backed up with the Satellite media, as no service will work if entire commercial traffic is routed onto satellite media, during failure of Submarine OFC.</i></li> <li><i>Regarding the utilization plan, Sect(IT) informed that various departments have been asked to prepare utilization plan to avail of the full benefits of BW available, and how they plan to implement, and utilize these services for development of the islands. It was also stated that different departments like Health Department has already made a plan for telemedicine. Similarly, Education Department also has chalked up some plans. Advisor directed to finalize these within one month.</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7	<p><b>BharatNet Project Utilisation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DoT informed that 10 Mbps VSAT connectivity has been provided to 10 GPs – islands. However, the systems are not seen working in 5 islands.</li> </ol>

	<p>2. Further DoT also informed that Hon'ble Administrator in his meeting with Hon'ble Minister of Communications, had raised the following issues (Refer MoM 03.03.2023)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To connect Kalpeni and Bangaram group of islands, DoT agreed to extend the telecom coverage at Bangaram and Kalpeni islands and also at Suheli island. UTL to provide the details of exact locations in this regard.</li> <li>Connectivity to newly created Panchayats. DoT agreed to cover under the BharatNet project the additional panchayats created by the UTLA. UTL to provide the details of exact locations in this regard. It is understood that creation of new Panchayats has been set aside by Hon'ble High Court.</li> </ol> <p><i>CGM BSNL informed that since FTTH is being provided to GPs, 10Mbps VSAT may no longer be required, and UTL administration may take a decision. PGM, Ernakulam Shri Surendran also emphasized that connectivity to GPs is being provided through FTTH. Advisor informed that a decision will be taken and conveyed in consultation with Govt of India.</i></p> <p><i>Kalpeni group of islands – Cheriya, Thilakkam, Kodithala, Pitti; Bangaram group of islands – Thinnakara, Parali 1 &amp; Parali 2; Islands near Agati – Kalpitti ; BSNL informed that all these islands have mobile coverage; For Suheli mobile coverage will be provided soon. Secretary informed that expectation was to connect these islands through submarine OFC as part of KLI project to provide high speed internet to promote tourism, as these will form part of tourist destinations with about 900-1000 people including the tourists, working staff. CGM BSNL informed that once 4G/5G comes, submarine OFC will not be required. BSNL shall study and submit a proposal.</i></p>
8	<p><b>Progress of USOF Project for Lakshadweep – Towers and OFC</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Augmentation of 225 km terrestrial OFC network in 11 islands for 4G backhaul and FTTH services. Addl Secretary (Telecom) has requested UTL vide DO letter dtd 24-07-2023 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure 100% utilization of the telecom infrastructure created at a project cost of about Rs 1250 Cr.</li> <li>To draw up utilization plan with Monthly targets of broadband connections starting from August 2023 and to implement before the project is formally launched.</li> </ol> </li> <li>18 new towers to be erected; 19 existing towers to be upgraded to 4G from 2G/3G.</li> </ol> <p><i>PGM CNTx BSNL briefed about FTTH Progress – 65% trenching completed; 76% Pipe laying completed; 50% of Govt offices covered. 90% of the material was transported to the islands Furthermore, the tasks encompassing cable blowing and termination is in progress at all other islands. Along with that pipe laying and cable laying connectivity to the government office are in progress. PGM CNTx BSNL also informed that they still have problem of transportation. Secretary informed that first preference will be given to this activity, as per the barge schedule.</i></p>



	<p><i>Secretary also raised the issue of manpower for splicing. PGM CNTx BSNL informed that this issue is addressed and corrective action has been taken and splicing teams are being sent to the islands with splicing machine.</i></p> <p><i>Secretary IT informed that FTTH to Government offices needs to be expedited, and that they had provided a list of 800 offices. PGM CNTx BSNL informed that they have received a list of 469 offices and leading in of cable has been completed in 279 buildings. DoT asked these figures of Govt offices to be reconciled. PGMT BSNL Ernakulam informed that every action will be taken to provide connections as quickly as possible.</i></p> <p><i>4G &amp; Towers : BSNL informed that all the new sites have been acquired and ready to hand over for implementation. The tender for tower and other infrastructure works is floated by corporate office and is under evaluation. All the new tower and the upgradation works are expected to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> of Dec 2023. Presently there are 10 4G towers; Out of 19 planned for upgradation to 4G, upgradation have been completed for 5 sites, and another 5 is in progress with diverted equipment at present. After completion of the project, all the 47 towers will be having 4G services. i.e., all the inhabited Islands and the other Islands like Bengaram and Suheli Islands also will be having 4G coverage</i></p>
9	<p><b>Digital Communication Readiness Index</b></p> <p>Created by DoT to map and rank the States based on initiatives and policies for the telecom sector like ROW, policy for shared duct infrastructure, 5G rollout, telecom skilling etc.</p> <p>Addl. Secretary(Telecom) vide DO letter dated 17.02.2022 has requested CS/Advisors to start preparatory exercises.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Formation of an Inter Dept. Co-ordination Committee (IDCC) under chairmanship of CS/Advisor and IT as Nodal Dept.</li> <li>b) IDCC should meet quarterly and DoT representative should be member/special invitee for all meetings.</li> <li>c) IT Dept. should start collecting documents and documentation of best practices under each sub-pillar to be initiated</li> </ul> <p><i>Advisor stated that all steps required be taken to ensure UTL achieves good DCRI rating.</i></p>
10	<p><b>Skill Development Activities:</b></p> <p><i>Addl DGT Informed that skilling is also one activity that needs to be done. The lack of cable splicers was discussed earlier, and it could be addressed through skilling programs with the help of the Telecom Sector Skill Council.</i></p> <p><i>Advisor asked to share the details, so that skill gap in the telecom sector can be resolved, and training can be organized through our Industrial Training Institute or in the school premises.</i></p>

11	<p><b>Other points</b></p> <p>a) Bill Payments to BSNL pending.</p> <p>b) BMH and JMH in private lands – Acquisition of land by UTL is pending</p> <p><i>CGM BSNL pointed out regarding the need for agreement signing for Satellite BW; and remaining pending payments are also to be cleared. Secretary IT informed that some queries have been raised by their Finance wrt Agreement, and BSNL has to resolve the issue; Additional Budget has been sought and once received, payments will be settled.</i></p> <p><i>Regarding BMH, JMH, Secretary wanted BSNL to directly acquire without involving UTLA.</i></p>
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7. Representatives from COAI and DIPA in their addresses thanked the Advisor for inviting them, and assured to carry the message to their association members for providing Telecom and Internet services in the islands, and to augment the towers.
8. Addl DGT in concluding remarks thanked the Advisor, Members of SBC, CGM BSNL and representatives from DIPA and COAI, and also informed that we can have quarterly meeting of SBC as envisaged.
9. CGM BSNL in his closing remarks, expressed gratitude to the UTL administration for the excellent support being given, and further requested UTL administration to provide the list of addresses where FTTH connection has to be provided in Govt offices, and the contact person. FTTH provisioning will happen in full flow in the next 3-4 weeks.
10. Advisor in his winding up remarks thanked all the participants, and stated that SBC can plan to have a physical meeting in Lakshadweep in near future.
11. The meeting concluded at 12:20 pm.



V. Sobhana, ITS  
Addl DGT & Convenor SBC,  
Department of Telecommunications, Kerala LSA,  
Ernakulam



**Annexure I: Participants in 4<sup>th</sup> SBC Meeting -UT of Lakshadweep**

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
<b><u>UT of Lakshadweep Administration</u></b>		
1	Shri Sandeep Kumar, IAS,	Advisor to Hon'ble Administrator & Chairman SBC
2	Shri Shashank Mani Tripathi, IAS,	Secretary -IT - Member SBC
3	Shri Vikrant Raja, IAS,	Secretary -Power – Member SBC
4	Shri Arjun Mohan, IAS,	Collector
5	Shri Satyanand Jha,	CTO, LITSS
<b><u>Department of Telecommunications, Kerala LSA</u></b>		
1	Smt V Sobhana ITS	Additional Director General Telecom & Convenor SBC
2	Shri N S Deepu, ITS	Deputy Director General (Rural)
3	Smt Anita Ramadass, ITS	Director (Rural)
4	Smt Manju N	Assistant Director
<b><u>Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited</u></b>		
1	Shri B Sunil Kumar, ITS	Chief General Manager, BSNL, Kerala Circle & Special Invitee SBC
2	Shri V Surendran, ITS	PGMT, BSNL, Ernakulam Business Area
3	Dr K Francis Jacob, ITS	PGM, NOW-CM, BSNL, Kerala
4	Shri N K Sukumaran	PGM, CNTx-S, BSNL, Ernakulam
5	Shri N Kunhikoya	GM, BSNL Kavaratti
<b><u>Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI)</u></b>		
1	Shri Dhananjay Gawanday	Head Infrastructure Division, COAI, Special Invitee SBC
2	Shri Mukesh Kumar	Advisor, COAI
<b><u>Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA)</u></b>		
2	Shri Harpreet Singh	AVP (Operations), DIPA, Special Invitee SBC