



File No: GUJ/R-1/C4/2025-26/0/

Date: 24-07-2025

Subject: Minutes of Meeting of Gujarat State Broadband Committee for the year 2025-26 (1st SBC) held on 19-06-2025

1st meeting of Gujarat State Broadband Committee (SBC) for the year 2025-26 was held on 19-06-2025 under the Chairmanship of Ms. Mona Khandhar, Principal Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Govt of Gujarat at Committee Room, 5th Floor, Block No. 7, Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar. Shri Girish Kataria, Deputy Director General Telecom (Rural-2), Gujarat LSA, DoT was the convenor of the meeting. The list of participants is placed at Annexure-I.

At the outset, Shri Girish Kataria, Deputy Director General Telecom (Rural-2) welcomed Chairperson and all the participants of the Meeting. He appreciated the cooperation of Gujarat state departments in implementation of telecom projects in the state and highlighted progress in key telecom initiatives, including the 4G saturation project, which is approximately 80% completed. Shri Avinash Khatri, Director (Rural-2), Gujarat LSA, provided a briefing on the detailed agenda points. The points discussed in the meeting and action plan for the issues are as under:

1. 4G Saturation Project:

- A. It was informed that out of 700 planned sites in Gujarat state, 559 sites have been radiated and work is in progress on 72 sites. For the rest of sites, BSNL has reported following issues:

Pending sites / Issues	69	Land Not Available		10
		GP Tharav (Negative)		2
		Gauchar Land diversion /ESZ issue		6
		Access Issue		14
		Forest Pending	Land	12
			RoW	15
		Other Revenue Pending		10

- B. The chair directed BSNL to provide the department wise issues so that it can be taken up at the appropriate level by DST. Representatives of the concerned departments were instructed to ensure resolution of these issues within 14 days. For the forest land cases, the PCCF (Wildlife) informed that working permission has already been granted for 15 sites, and permissions for remaining sites will be issued, once BSNL makes the necessary demand note payments. For the “Land Not Available” cases, the Panchayat Department was advices to explore the feasibility of allocation of land in the government premises, considering that only 200 sqmt of land is required for tower installation.

- C. The Chair expressed the vision for Gujarat to become the first state to complete the 4G Saturation Project and emphasized that all stakeholders should work collaboratively towards achieving this goal.

Action Point:

- a) BSNL to submit a detailed list of all pending issues pertaining to the Revenue and Panchayat Departments; DST to escalate these matters to the respective departments for resolution.
- b) BSNL to expedite payment of all pending demand notes to facilitate necessary approvals, particularly in forest land cases.

2. Right of Way (RoW) issues:

- A. It was reported that there are 66 pending RoW applications before January 1st 2025, as follows: UDD - 21, R&B - 24, and Panchayat - 21. These applications are from the year 2022, 2023, and 2024. The chair instructed the concerned state departments to promptly dispose of the RoW applications submitted before 01.01.2025.

Action Point:

Concerned departments, i.e. UDD, R&B, Panchayat to ensure that the applications submitted before 01/01/2025 are disposed immediately giving highest priority.

- B. Director (R), DoT informed that the BharatNet project has been declared a special project under the RoW Rules, 2024, with the following facilitative provisions:

- No application fee required
- Deemed approval upon submission
- Terms and conditions to be communicated within 7 days

The Deputy Director (ICT) informed that **BharatNet has already been integrated** into the State RoW Portal. For other special projects announced by the Central Government, the API document has been received from NBM, and the necessary portal updates are currently in progress. The integration is expected to be completed within a week.

Action Point:

The Directorate of ICT & e-Governance, DST, shall upgrade the State RoW Portal to incorporate provisions for other special projects."

3. Samriddh Gram Panchayat project: -

- A) The Department of Telecommunications has launched the *Samriddh Gram Panchayat* pilot project to transform 247 Gram Panchayats in Gujarat into digitally empowered model villages through high-speed internet connectivity via BharatNet. In this regards, Gujarat State to formally notify a "Gram Panchayat Digital Access Committee (DAC)" for each Samriddh Gram Panchayat for building awareness about benefits of high-speed broadband access (i.e. FTTH) among rural communities, public institutions, private institutions and village level entrepreneurs/enterprises for socio-economic development of villages. The composition of the committee is as follow:

Chairperson	Elected President of GP (Sarpanch/Gram Pradhan)
Member convener	Panchayat Secretary
Member	Principal/Teacher of Govt. Secondary School/high school or primary school in the Gram Panchayat

Member	Representative from Primary Health Center (PHC)/ Primary Agriculture Cooperative Society (PACS)/ Krishi Vigyan Kendra
Member	Representative from village level entrepreneur/SHGs/ NGOs
Invitee	BharatNet Udyamis (BNUs)

B) The timeline for the pilot project and targets are as follow:

SN	FTTH Users	Target for FTTH per GPs	Target Date
1	Public Institutions	At least 05 Nos. of FTTH Connections	31.12.2025
2	Private Enterprises/ Entrepreneurs	At least 05 Nos. of FTTH Connections	
3	Households	At least 5% of total Households in GP	

Director, GFGNL informed that they have already started work in this line to extend the connections to Govt institution and household and will reach the target before time.

Action Point:

- DoT Gujarat to provide the list of 247 Gram Panchayats and the DAC composition letter to DST and GFGNL.
- The Department of Science and Technology(DST) to request the Panchayat Department for formulation of Digital Access Committees (DACs) in 247 villages of the State.

The Head/Director (Technical & Infrastructure), GFGNL, assured that under this project, FTTH connections will be provided, at the earliest, to at least 5 public institutions, 5 private enterprises / entrepreneur and minimum 5% households of the total households in the Gram Panchayat.

4. Call Before You Dig (CBuD) Mobile Application:

- It was informed that a total of 3,615 excavation enquiries have been made through the CBuD platform in Gujarat since 01.01.2025, out of which less than 20% made from State Government departments/their excavators, while the majority were submitted by TSPs/IPs and other central agencies. A district-wise breakdown of excavation enquiries was also presented.
- The Chair observed that the number of excavation enquiries is significantly lower than the actual digging activities taking place across the state. Accordingly, all State Departments were directed to mandate the use of CBuD by including it as a condition in all RFPs, work orders, and agreements related to excavation work.
- Director (R), DoT informed that out of 33 districts in Gujarat, DLT users have been created on the CBuD platform for only 5 districts, while for the remaining 28 districts, they are yet to be created.

Action Point:

- All line departments(Water, Gas, Electricity, drainage etc) to issue a notification making the use of the CBuD app mandatory for all digging works in Gujarat state.

- b) The Revenue Department will create DLT users, and the Department of Science and Technology (DST) will formally request the Revenue Department to initiate the necessary action.

5. Sanchar Saathi Awareness: -

It was suggested that Sanchar Saathi, being a citizen-centric initiative, should be prominently highlighted on State Government websites to enhance its visibility and promote wider public awareness across Gujarat. The Chair further recommended that Sanchar Saathi content may also be displayed at Science City to reach a broader audience and encourage digital engagement.

Action Point:

- a) DST to display the content on all major state Govt websites and in Science city Ahmedabad.
- b) DoT Gujarat to provide content on Sanchar Saathi to DST.

6. Other Issues by DIPA/COAI: -

A. Property Tax on Mobile Towers:

DIPA highlighted that despite the state government's notification on 13th January 2025, implementing ROW rules, local authorities continue to impose property taxes on mobile towers. DIPA cited Telecommunication Rule 14(3), which prohibits levying such fees, Tax, Cess on mobile towers.

The Chair acknowledged the concern and directed all State Departments and local authorities to strictly adhere to the RoW Rules and ensure compliance.

Action Point:

All State Departments and local authorities to strictly adhere to the RoW Rules 2024.

B. Change of Land Use (CLU) Fees >

DIPA raised concerns about local authorities demanding CLU fees for telecom infrastructure, despite provisions in Telecom Act Sections 11 and 12, which authorize telecom installations on public or private property. DIPA emphasized that ROW rules do not permit CLU fees for telecom infrastructure.

Director(R), DoT informed that it was agreed in the earlier SBC, however the notification is yet to be issued from Revenue department.

Action Point:

The Revenue Department to issue the necessary notification in this regard.

C. Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) Non-Compliance with ROW Rules>

DIPA pointed out that AMC is not adhering to ROW rules by demanding physical NOC applications instead of accepting online submissions, causing delays for telecom operators.

Action Point:

UDD to take necessary action in this regard and strictly adhere to the RoW Rules 2024.

D. GIDC Tower Regularization

DIPA submitted that GIDC demands excessive documentation for regularizing existing telecom towers, beyond the requirements outlined in the General Development Control Regula-

tions (GDCR). This issue was raised in previous meetings but remains unresolved, impacting operational towers providing services.

The Chair noted that while these towers are functional, they are not compliant with GIDC norms, resulting in potential revenue losses for GIDC. It was directed that the process of regularization should be simplified.

Action Point:

GIDC to reassess the current documentation requirements for tower regularization and explore the possibility of aligning them with GDCR provisions to avoid unnecessary documentation within a period of one month.

E. Smart Meter Installation

DIPA thanked the Gujarat state government for supporting smart meter installations but highlighted that only 4,000 of the required 14,000 smart meters have been installed at telecom towers. DIPA requested MDVCL and PGVCL to expedite installations, noting that other DISCOMs are more cooperative.

The chair directed DISCOMs to accelerate smart meter installations to meet the target for telecom towers.

Action Point:

DISCOMs to accelerate smart meter installations to meet the target for telecom towers within a period of one month.

F. Annual Lease Rental Charges:

COAI submitted that despite Right of Way (RoW) Rules, 2024, which explicitly exempts annual lease rentals for underground Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) laying, authorities such as AUDA, R&B Division Vadodara continue to issue demand notes for annual charges.

The Chair directed that no rental should be levied effective from 01.01.2025, and all concerned authorities must adhere strictly to the RoW Rules, 2024.

Action Point:

All State Departments and local authorities to strictly adhere to the RoW Rules 2024.

G. Utility Duct Charges by Smart City Partners:

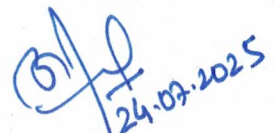
COAI informed that Municipal Corporations in Surat levying unreasonably high charges for the use of utility ducts – at some places, up to four times the standard rates. These charges are not aligned with the RoW Rules, 2024 and hinder affordable and rapid infrastructure deployment.

Action point:

UDD to review the existing utility duct charges to facilitate their use by telecom service providers and ensure compliance with the RoW Rules, 2024.

The meeting was concluded with vote of thanks by Director(R), DoT.

Encl: Annexure-1



(Avinash Khatri)

Director (Rural-2),

Gujarat LSA, DoT, Ahmedabad.

dirr2.gj-dgt-dot@gov.in

To:-

All participants

Copy to-

1. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Gujarat.
2. Additional Chief Secretary, Revenue Department
3. Additional DGT, D.O.T., Govt. of India, Gujarat LSA.
4. Principal Secretary, Panchayat, Rural Housing & Rural Development Department.
5. Principal Secretary, Energy and Petrochemicals Department.
6. Principal Secretary, Forest and Environment Department.
7. Principal Secretary, Department of Science & Technology
8. Commissioner of Land Reforms and Ex-officio Secretary to Government, Rev Dept.
9. APCCF - Land, Forest and Environment Department.
10. CGM BSNL, CGM BBNL, Gujarat.
11. Joint Managing Director, Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC).
12. Director, ICT & e-Governance, Department of Science & Technology.
13. Deputy Secretary, Urban Development & Urban Housing Department.
14. Chief Engineer, Roads & Building Department
15. DDG(R1)/DDG(R2), Gujarat LSA, DoT
16. COAI, DIPA
17. Director (GFGNL), Gujarat

Annexure- I

1. Shri Girish Kataria (ITS), DDG, DOT
2. Shri Avinash Khatri (ITS), Director, DOT
3. Shri Mukesh Parmar, Dy. DC, Panchayat, Dy. DC.
4. Ms. Apexa Pateliya, Deputy Secretary, DST
5. Shri Vipul Prajapati, AD (IT), I.M.D.
6. Shri Hardik D Patel, AD (IT), Roads & Building Department
7. Shri Nilesh M Modi, US (inc), I.M.D.
8. Shri S. V. Bhabhor, US (TD), SC TD
9. Shri Vijayrajsinh Jhala, SO (T), QST
10. Shri Vijay Bhaliya, ICT Officer, Urban Development & Urban Housing Department.
11. Ms. Ankita Shah, US (Pro), Urban Development & Urban Housing Department.
12. Shri J. K. Shah, ICTO, Panchayat, Rural Housing & Rural Development Department.
13. Shri Rakesh Patel, Manager, GIDC
14. Shri Rahul Sarvaka, SO, Energy and Petrochemicals Department
15. Ms Hansa Dharaniya, US, Energy and Petrochemicals Department
16. Shri Amit Mehta, SDE, BSNL
17. Shri Sanjay Gaden, Director, GFGNL
18. Shri Kamal Panwar, AD (Consultant), DOT
19. Shri. Greesh Kumar, DIPA (Through VC)
20. Shri Deepak Kumar Gupta, COAI (Through VC)