

Minutes of the 19th Task Force Meeting held on 5.10.2012 at 3.30 pm regarding Implementation of DAS in the Cable Television Network

Joint Secretary (Broadcasting) welcomed the Members of the Task Force and commenced the meeting with a short presentation providing the progress made towards implementation of DAS in the four Metros of Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata & Chennai.

She informed the Members that over 200 TV channels gave blackout ad in a synchronized manner on 14th to 16th, 21st to 23rd and 29th & 30th September. She informed that the one minute blackout ad had been prepared which would commence broadcast from 12th October, three times a day, at 8am, 2pm & 8pm and moreover 3 TV spots developed through DAVP are being played by all TV channels 4 to 6 times a day. She also informed that Print ad was published on 9th September, 2012 and the messages on mobile phones were being sent on 16th and 29th September, & 7th October as well. There is also another message focusing on the benefits accruing from DAS which will be sent on 14th October, 2012. It was informed that all the five National Level MSOs have also given wide publicity to their packages and in this regard the national level MSOs have published their advertisements, **DEN** in Hindustan Times in Delhi on 10th October, 2012, **IMCL** in MIDDAY newspaper in Mumbai on 13th October, 2012, **Siti Cable** in DNA newspaper in Mumbai on 13th October, 2012, **Hathway** in Hindustan newspaper in Delhi on 12th October, 2012, **DigiCable** in Asian Age Mumbai on 13th October, 2012.

It was informed that the broadcasters and MSOs had planned to block analog signals in a phased manner in Delhi and Mumbai as per the following schedule:

- Blocking of GEC channels between 2 to 4 on 12th Oct on an experimental basis
- Other channels:
 - 10th Oct: English movies

- 15th Oct: Hindi Movies
- 18th Oct: Hindi, English & Business news
- 22nd Oct: GECs

The Ministry had also given Press Releases on the issue of power consumption by STBs on the 5th of October, on the issue of DTH penetration on 9th of October and on the Status of digitization and the source of data on the 10th of October, 2012.

Joint Secretary (Broadcasting) informed the Members that 4 rounds of field visits had been completed wherein all slums have been covered. She said that field visits will be undertaken to monitor the ground level situation. She said that field visits were also planned in Mumbai. Task Force was informed that control room was being set up in the Ministry which would be operational from 8am to 10pm on all days including Saturdays & Sundays and would operate in two shifts from 8am to 3pm and from 3pm to 10pm. It was also informed that a meeting with the Delhi Government officials was held on the 13th of October, 2012 where the officials of Delhi Government assured the Ministry of their full support.

The representative from the consumer forum raised the issue of varying prices of STBs which were being sought from the consumers. JS (B) informed that the toll free number had been set up where such complaints can be registered and would be sorted out.

Smt. Roop Sharma, President, COFI said that the packages announced by the MSOs are lacking in some or the other popular channels, and moreover the MSOs have not provided the a-la-carte prices. She also said that the prices of STBs and the packages should be clearly communicated to the consumers and that there should be more clarity and transparency in this so that the

consumers are facilitated. She also expressed the apprehension that the ground level cable operators are fearing that they were moving towards MSO monopoly.

Responding to the issues raised by the President COFI, Shri Ashok Mansukani of IMCL said that the prices are dependent on the prices of channels announced by the broadcasters and in so far as the issue of a-la-carte is concerned the prices are still to be decided on. He said that the matter was discussed with officials of TRAI and they had stated that they would wait for TDSAT's order before devising a framework for the pricing of a-la-carte channels. He said that the prices of STBs are being widely published at the rate of Rs.799/- and the scheme of rental etc. is also being shown on their websites.

JS (B) said that there should be more information on the rental schemes for STBs and that MSOs must call meetings with Cable operators and share this information. She said that during the course of the field visits the Ministry had been apprised of the ground level realities. She also informed the Members that the Cable TV Networks Rules made it very clear that information furnished to the Ministry has to be reliable, accurate or else action as enjoined in the rules can be taken.

Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.