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Ministry of Communications & IT
Department of Telecommunications
(HR and Skill Development Group)

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**Gist of deliberations in the Advisory Groups
on Skill Development in Telecom Sector**

A joint meeting of the Advisory Groups on 'Capacity Building' and 'Content Quality & Examination Framework' was held in the 2nd floor Committee Room of Sanchar Bhawan on 18th June 2014. The List of Participants is placed at Annex 'A'. The meeting was jointly chaired by Adviser (O), DoT and Adviser (T), DoT. The gist of deliberations is as below:

1. **Status of Skill-gap study:**

    - The Advisory Groups were informed that KPMG had shared the first interim report with DOT vide their mail dated 20/05/2014, and some observations on the interim had been forwarded to NSDC/ KPMG on 6th June.

    - Ms Malvika from NSDC intimated that KPMG has reportedly addressed the issues raised in the mail from DoT. M/s KPMG intimated that they have submitted improved draft before coming for the meeting. DDG(SD) promised to revert back after examining the revised draft.

    - Shri Kakkar from TEMA hoped that Manufacturing Sector is being adequately addressed in the Skill Gap Study. Chairman observed that Telecom Service Provisioning and Manufacturing are the two major pillars of Telecom Industry, and indigenous manufacturing in Telecom Sector is going to be the mainstay in the coming years. Hence, Manufacturing must not be clubbed with any other sub-sector in the Study.

    - Adviser (O) hoped that it would be a comprehensive report. Underlining the need for due diligence in the Study, he stressed that the Study would be quoted widely in initiating skill development plans for the sector, and hence, there should be no compromise on the quality of the report. He advised M/s KPMG that draft report be shared with CMAI and other stakeholders so that they may share their comments before the report is given a final shape.

2. **Setting-up a comprehensive repository – Content management and technical set-up**

    - Updating the progress in this regard after the last meeting, the participants were informed that administrative approval of DOT has been accorded on the recommendations on technical framework for the repository submitted by a committee under the chairmanship of Sr DDG TEC. While actions in the Administrative domain are being taken by NTIPRIT, suggestions and recommendations for content management and long-term perspective for technical set-up were solicited from the Advisory Groups.

    - Presentation during the meeting included the Content categories and Sources of content for the repository as recommended by the committee. While generally the listing was considered comprehensive, NSDC requested that content categories should also include National Occupation Standards for the Telecom Sector, and also

information related to accreditation of training and skill providers. TCOE recommended inclusion of TCOE at appropriate place under the Sources of content.

- As regards Content Administration, the committee had recommended a centralized content management structure. Regarding the proposed two layered approach for repository content, Shri Kochhar, CEO TSSC, recommended that keeping in view the size and dynamics of the data, a distributed management will be advisable. Regarding Content development and formatting, he was of the view that relational databases may not be suitable in the present context and distributed database may be the preferred choice in today's context. He advised that while evolving LMS, rapid advances in MOOCs platform may also be kept in view. The Chairman advised that this advice may be conveyed to the technical committee so that they may revisit the issue.

- Regarding Infrastructure requirements, the NTIPRIT committee had recommended establishing a long term project partnership with hardware, software & bandwidth experts in government domain such as NIC, CDAC and BSNL. Shri Kochhar from TSSC advised to include BBNL and SWANs in this list.

- A demo-presentation on Learning Management System e-sikshak, developed by CDAC Hyderabad was made by CDAC. CDAC was requested to make a presentation on the Application Platform for the repository to take the initiative further.

3. **Developing training institutes under DoT and its Organisations**
   - Para 8.2, 8.4 and 8.6 of the strategies from the National Telecom Policy 2012 were shared with the participants. These paras mandate to strengthen and develop NTIPRIT, and to develop other training institutes under DoT and its organisations as National Level Telecom Schools of excellence for imparting training to Govt/ PSU officials and other stakeholders. There is also a mandate to encourage collaboration with premier institutes like IITs and telecom research organisations of excellence for directing research and development to field problems.

   - The mandate from the Apex Body that Skill development initiatives need to be targeted at all levels of the skill pyramid, and BSNL/ MTNL will need to play a pivotal role in catering to the higher skill levels where exposure to the back-end equipment will be a must – was also shared with the participants.

   - The participants were informed that nineteen premier Training centres of BSNL and MTNL have been registered for the skill-building initiatives being spearheaded by NTIPRIT. The said BSNL Training Centres are already spear-heading BSNL skilling initiatives under AICTE mandated EETP scheme.

   - During deliberations, it was intimated by the chair that more training centres may be considered for registration as the ecosystem evolves. These training centres will function as premier Institutions at State/ Regional level under the aegis of NTIPRIT and will play a lead role in the decentralization of Government's Skill-building initiatives in the Telecom Sector. They will also act as DOT's Points-of-Presence (PoPs) at regional level.

   - Shri Pankaj Mohindroo from ICA opined that the Government should invest in capital intensive infrastructure for Skill building.

   - Agreeing with above, the chairman observed that these PoPs of DoT at regional level will be best placed to percolate Government's initiatives at the grassroots level, and Government would be able to invest in capital intensive labs and equipment through these PoPs, and open them up for skill development initiatives in the niche areas on a

larger scale. Further, these Telecom Schools of Excellence at regional level will help in evolving a mechanism for standardisation of curriculum for the lower NSQF levels.

- The chairman deferred the Agenda for designating these Institutes as Telecom Schools of Excellence till suitable benchmarks are evolved.

4. **Synergy in the Skill Development Initiatives of various players**

- The participants were informed that as per the deliberations in the earlier meeting, a committee to bring synergy in the Skill Development Initiatives in the Telecom Sector has been constituted - with representation from NTIPRIT, BSNL and TSSC. The committee was expected to submit its recommendations segmentation of skill-verticals between BSNL/MTNL and Skill Councils so that any possible overlap between efforts of Government and private initiatives is avoided. The committee was requested to expedite its recommendations.

- CEO, TSSC was of the view that such segregation may not be useful till a comprehensive framework is in place. He expressed his apprehension regarding equipment bias and also currency and variety of equipment in the PSU training centres.

- DDG(SD) expressed that at this stage, such segregation will help in identifying the core competence areas of different players, and the respective players will be better positioned in developing National Occupation Standards in their respective areas.

- GM (Training) BSNL opined that such segregation should not be aimed at training delivery. While the NOS may be developed by TSSC or BSNL or any other identified players, training delivery should be open to all the willing training providers across the board.

- The Chair was of the view that such segregation will help avoiding overlap in the skilling initiatives by different players, but In view of various observations expressed it was agreed to keep the issue for further discussions.

5. **Standardization and Certification framework**

- Apex Body had directed the Advisory Groups to work out the standardization and certification framework so that the certificates have proper recognition.

- A draft Concept Paper on aligning Skill Development Initiatives in Telecom Sector with the NSQF mandate and Institutional mechanism for Standardisation, Certification and Assessment was circulated in advance to all the members for informed discussions in the meeting.

- The participants were also given a brief regarding the mandate from recently promulgated National Skill Qualifications Framework, which mandates the concerned central ministries to provide the leadership to ensure that all stakeholders align the programs being offered by institutions/ bodies under their aegis to the NSQF.

- CEO, TSSC emphasised that certification should be by independent assessors. While there was a general consensus on independent assessors, the Chair added that keeping in view the capacity constraints, we may restrict independent assessment to fewer NSQF levels as proposed in the Concept paper circulated.

- TSSC intimated that they have skilled approx 1.7 lac candidates till now. The chairman appreciated and termed it as an excellent progress. TSSC intimated that presently they are not keeping a track on the placement ratio of the skilled manpower.

- NSDA intimated that the importance of placement ratio cannot be underestimated in evaluation of the various skilling initiatives. CEO TSSC remarked that employment scenario in the Telecom Sector is not very good. While accepting this contention of CEO, TSSC, the chairman remarked that apart from employment, skilling initiatives will also help build up the ecosystem in the unorganized sector. Since placement in the organized sector will vary among different sectors, the placement ratios will be different for different sectors. Hence, while benchmark for placement ratio may be low for the Telecom Sector, nevertheless - in the absence of any other indicators - this is a good indicator for comparative evaluation of various skill development models within the sector.

- NSDA intimated that they have recently circulated some guidelines/ consultation paper on regulatory framework for affiliation and accreditation of Skill providers. These may also be seen before finalising the Standardisation and Certification Framework.

- CEO, TSSC intimated that some work for empanelment of training providers and Assessors has been done by them also. The chairman advised that while giving a final shape to the framework circulated during the meeting, inputs from TSSC initiatives and the NSDA consultation paper may also be incorporated,

6. In their concluding remarks, the Chair and the co-chair exhorted the need for cohesiveness among the various stakeholders, and stressed that we all must move forward in a structured manner – consolidating the strengths of various players – and thanked all the participants for free and frank exchange of views in a truly participative environment.

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10. Director General, COAI/ AUSPI/ TEMA/ICA/TAIPA
11. DDG (SD)/DDG NICF/ GM Trg, BSNL/ Dir(HR) MTNL

List of participants
(Meeting of Advisory Groups on Skill Development in Telecom Sector on 18 June 2014)

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