

was constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Subodh Kumar, Additional Secretary, Department of Telecommunication to consider various options for providing a reliable and secure telecommunication connectivity to Andaman & Nicobar Islands and make appropriate recommendations after examining the existing bandwidth capacity vis-a-vis the projected demand for the bandwidth.

☐ The Committee, in consultation with A&NI Administration has, inter-alia, recommended the following:-

a) Six Islands viz Port Blair, Little Andaman, Havelock, Car Nicobar, Kamorta and Great Nicobar should be connected to mainland by submarine optical fibre cable (OFC) through a branching cable. Cable landing stations at these six locations will meet the branching cable. Cable landing stations at these six locations will meet the communication needs of all the 18 islands other than Katchal and Teresa Islands.

b) The Katchal and Teresa Islands can be served by 1 satellite transponder. As a result the remaining 13 transponders can be released back to ISRO.

c) The cost of OFC connectivity providing 10 Gbps bandwidth (as against 1 Gbps bandwidth presently available through transponders) has been estimated to be Rs. 355.50 crores for a 15 years period plus O&M charges @ 5% i.e. about Rs. 20 crores per year. In addition, the cost of hiring 1 transponder will be Rs. 6 crores per annum. The total cost over the 15 years period is estimated to be Rs. 745.50 crores. This is substantially lower than the present cost of Rs. 1260 crores. Further, adjusting for the increased 10 Gbps bandwidth which would be provided through OFC connectivity, the cost of using transponders would be prohibitive.

d) The project should be implemented by the A&NI Administration through one of its Corporations so that there is complete ownership of the project.

☐ Planning Commission has accorded "in principle" approval to the recommendations of the Committee and has directed the Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration to take immediate necessary steps in accordance with the extant rules and guidelines for implementing the recommendations of the Committee for providing submarine optical fibre cable connectivity to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

☐ In order to ensure complete ownership of the project, the project would be implemented by the A&NI Administration either directly or through the Andaman & Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation (ANIIDCO) as considered appropriate.

Talk to
Sec MCI

25.	Setting up of a Medical College in A&NI in	With a view to augmenting health infrastructure in A&NI, it has been decided to set up a medical College in a PPP mode. ☐ The Administration approached MCI on the following issues vide Hon'ble Lt.	Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission will write to the Minister of Health and Family Welfare seeking expeditious approval to the proposal of
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