

COAI lauds Manipur Government's directives to safeguard telecom infrastructure in the state

Manipur, December 20, 2021: COAI, the leading representative body for the Indian telecommunications industry, appreciates the Government of Manipur for their efforts to safeguard and secure telecommunication infrastructure in the state. The Government of Manipur has issued a memorandum to all Deputy Commissioners, Director (IT) and Joint Director (IT) directing them to be vigilant in taking quick and necessary action in safeguarding the Telecommunication and Digital Infrastructure in their jurisdiction.

COAI in a letter to Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur, had highlighted the importance of protecting the telecom and digital infrastructure in the state for the benefit of the general public. Supporting the directives proposed by COAI, the Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur has instructed all Deputy Commissioners in Manipur to take legal action against people damaging or obstructing the duly approved existing/upcoming telecom infrastructure. He has also requested the concerned authorities to take strict legal action against miscreants spreading false information related to EMF emission from mobile towers to obstruct the installation of telecom infrastructure. In addition to this, the Government has also instructed the concerned authorities to share the approvals for Tower / OFC installation with the nearest SHO to prevent any delays in the administrative jurisdiction. Thereby, easing the process of tower installation.

Lt. Gen. Dr. SP Kochhar, Director General, COAI said, *"Telecommunication services have played a vital role in maintaining uninterrupted connectivity during the pandemic. The essential nature of the telecommunications sector has been recognised and highlighted by the Government in their policies. The telecommunication sites are constructed for a greater public interest at hand. But, unfortunately, due to prevailing EMF myths and misconceptions regarding radiation from telecom infrastructure, Telecom Service Providers face challenges in maintaining/upgrading the telecom infrastructure despite having all the necessary permissions from the concerned departments. We have been working with the authorities to also break down myths surrounding telecom towers such as EMF radiation etc. We hope that this step take by Manipur Govt. will help in continuing to work towards developing a digitally connected country."*

Telecom Services is a public utility and growth engine for the socio-economic development of the country. For socio-economic progress, there is a need for a strong telecom industry that forms the bedrock by providing a robust network of mobile towers to boost connectivity. Under the new vision shared by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi of building a new Atmanirbhar Bharat by 2022, it is important to develop a robust and secure state-of-the-art telecommunication network providing seamless coverage.

Today, as the country creates pathways for 5G and the following digital revolution, it is important to understand that seamless connectivity is the roadmap to our vision of 'Digital India.' The service providers will be working closely with the state for the infrastructural enhancement of the state and creating a digitally connected ecosystem.