

**FORUM OF REGULATORS FOR EASTERN AND NORTH-  
EASTERN STATES (FORENS)**

**Secretariat: C/o-ODISHA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION (OERC)**

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**No.Secy/FORENS(Vol.IV)/ 1498  
Dated 23/10/2017**

To

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**Sub: Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum of Regulators for Eastern & North-Eastern States (FORENS) held from 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 at Puri (Odisha).**

Sir,

Enclosed, please find herewith the minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum of Regulators for Eastern & North-Eastern States held from 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 at Puri (Odisha) for favour of your information and necessary action.

Encl: As above.

Yours faithfully,

  
SECRETARY, FORENS

**Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum of Regulators for  
Eastern and North-Eastern States (FORENS) held at Hotel Holiday Resort, Puri, Odisha  
13<sup>h</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 hosted by  
Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission**

The 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forum of Regulators of Eastern & North Eastern States was held on 13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 at Puri, Odisha.

**Members Present:**

1. Sri U N Behera, Chairperson, FORENS and OERC
2. Sri N. K. Das, Chairperson, AERC
3. Sri N.R. Bhattarai, Chairperson, SSERC
4. Sri S.K. Negi, Chairperson, BERC
5. Sri R.N. Sen, Chairperson, WBERC
6. Dr. Arbind Prasad, Chairperson, JSERC
7. Er. Imlikumzuk Ao, Chairperson, NERC
8. Sri N. Chakarborty, Chairperson, TERC
9. Sri R.P. Singh, Chairperson, APSERC
10. Sri A.K. Das, Member, OERC
11. Sri S. K. Parhi, Member, OERC
12. Sri Dipak Chakravarty, Member, AERC
13. Sri S.C. Das, Member, AERC
14. Sri R.K. Choudhary, Member, BERC
15. Sri Rajeev Amit, Member, BERC
16. Sri R.N. Singh, Member, JSERC
17. Sri Durgadas Goswami, Member, WBERC

**Officials Present:**

1. Sri K.L. Panda (Secretary, OERC), Secretary, FORENS
  2. Sri Ajoy Sahu, Joint Director, OERC
- Attendance Sheet enclosed.

**Inauguration of the Meeting**

The meeting was inaugurated on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 at Hotel Holiday Resort, Puri by Hon'ble Minister, Energy and Steel & Mines, Odisha Sri P.K. Mallik by lighting a lamp in presence of Sri Hemant Sharma, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Deptt. of Energy, Govt. of Odisha.

Sri U.N. Behera, Chairperson, FORENS welcomed the Hon'ble Minister and the Chairpersons and Members of the participant State Electricity Regulatory Commissions and the Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Deptt. of Energy, Govt. of Odisha. Chairperson outlined the functioning of FORENS, regulatory framework of the power sector and benefits accrued because of reform process in Odisha.

Hon'ble Minister, in his address highlighted the rationale of embarking upon reform process in Odisha, establishment of Electricity Regulatory Commission and the objectives of reforms. He enumerated the efforts of the State government in rural electrification programme, system strengthening and expansion through capital infusion for quality power to all. He observed that the present consumer base of 68 lakh is expected to expand to 96 lakh by 2019, therefore there has to be a robust plan for infrastructure development. He also highlighted that Govt. of Odisha has notified Renewable Energy Policy for renewable sources of energy towards long-term energy security and reduction of carbon emission. Under the policy, Govt. of Odisha has envisaged setting up of a 1000 MW Solar Park by giving incentive to Developers towards land, interconnection arrangements and transmission facilities, sale of power, concessions and exemptions from various charges. He informed that presently 99% of the villages in Odisha have been electrified and outlined the plan of the Government to electrify all the remaining villages by 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2018. He wished that the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of FORENS would suggest valuable inputs to overcome issues and to develop an environment friendly ecosystem. A copy of the Hon'ble Minister's speech is placed at **Annexure-1**.

Sri Hemant Sharma, Secretary, Department of Energy in his speech highlighted that Odisha being a pioneer in the power sector to embark on power sector reforms had no legacy in electricity regulation and therefore has evolved of its own. He said that power sector is developing rapidly in terms of technology, solutions and regulations and therefore encounters new challenges daily. This Forum provides a platform to share knowledge and discuss issues to arrive at common solutions. He welcomed the members of the FORENS to the state of Odisha for the 8<sup>th</sup> FORENS meeting.

Sri S.K. Parhi, Member, OERC gave the vote of thanks. He extended his gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister to find time from his busy schedule to be present in Puri to inaugurate the 8<sup>th</sup> FORENS meeting. He also thanked Sri Hemant Sharma for his presence for sharing his insight into the power sector reforms in Odisha. Sri Parhi thanked all the participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> FORENS meeting.

The 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FORENS continued on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of October, 2017.

Sri U.N. Behera, Chairperson, FORENS and Chairperson, OERC chaired the 8<sup>th</sup> FORENS meeting.

**Agenda-1: Confirmation of the minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of FORENS held at Gangtok on 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2017**

The minutes of the above meeting was circulated vide FORENS Secretariat letter No.721 dt.15.05.2017. The members confirmed the said minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the FORENS held at Gangtok, Sikkim.

**Agenda-2: Action Taken Report (ATR) on the 7<sup>th</sup> FORENS meeting.**

**1. Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) target and weak compliance.**

In the 7<sup>th</sup> FORENS meeting at Sikkim, it was decided that Chairperson of WBERC would draft a letter to be written to MNRE, Govt. of India to provide a Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for Renewable Energy projects. Accordingly, Chairperson, WBERC sent a draft letter to FORENS Secretariat for finalization of the same. This draft letter was placed before the members in the meeting for discussion. The members expressed that getting VGF from Govt. of India for SPV plants is not feasible under the present circumstances. Sri R.N. Sen, Chairperson, WBERC clarified that the draft letter envisages VGF only for domestic rooftop plants and no such VGF has been reckoned for ground mounted SPV plants. The Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) has done Rooftop bidding which can be used for VGF allocation to different states. Chairperson AERC Sri N.K. Das said that for North-East states including Assam, the capital subsidy for Rooftop plant is 70%. Sri R.K. Choudhary, Member, BERC said that in few states such as Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra, the CUF of the SPV plants is comparatively high and the land cost is also low in comparison to other states. Sri U.N. Behera, Chairperson, OERC said that cost of generation in any state is of no relevance since all the states of the country have equal access to such power through REC mechanism. The members therefore opined that MNRE may be asked for differential subsidy for different states on the basis of the CUF. Sri S.C. Das, Member, AERC suggested that feed in tariff of SPV could be equivalent to average cost of power procurement of the state.

The members after deliberations broadly agreed that the FORENS may forward an agenda note to the Forum of Regulators (FOR) only for Solar Rooftop plants, for discussion in the next meeting of FOR. It could contain a proposal for recommending a differential subsidy structure based on CUF.

## **2. Inter-state Comparison of Retail Supply Tariff**

In the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting at Sikkim, a presentation was made by OERC regarding the comparison of Retail Supply Tariff of various states including FORENS member states. It was resolved in the said meeting that a questionnaire be devised by OERC and sent to the member Commissions including other tariff elements such as cost of power purchase, distribution loss and other expenses for making a comprehensive comparison.

The OERC prepared the questionnaire on those lines which was placed before the members for discussion and finalization. It was decided that the required data would be sent to the FORENS Secretariat for further analysis and discussion in the next meeting.

## **3. Registration of FORENS under Society Registration Act, 1860**

In the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting at Sikkim, it was decided that necessary modalities may be undertaken.

The FORENS Secretariat studied the Bye-law adopted in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting at Rajgiri, Bihar. It was analysed that certain changes in Bye-law are required for making it compatible for the registration as Society. A modified draft Bye-law was placed before the members for discussion and finalization of the same. Dr. Arbind Prasad, Chairperson, JSERC suggested certain changes regarding the nature of membership. He pointed out whether the respective Regulatory Commissions or only the Chairpersons and Members shall be the members of the Society. Sri U.N. Behera, Chairperson, OERC opined that this is an important point and needs to be studied further. It was decided to study the bye-laws of the Forum of Indian Regulators and ascertain the type of structure that should be adopted for FORENS. The FORENS secretariat will formulate a modified draft, which will be circulated to the members of the FORENS for further deliberations and finalization in the next meeting, scheduled in April, 2018.

## **4. Audit Reports of FORENS Account**

The audited accounts for the years 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16 were adopted. However, the audited account for FY 2016-17 was not adopted as the Balance Sheet for the year was not enclosed. The complete accounts for 2016-17 along with all statements duly audited shall be circulated to the member Commissions for discussion and adoption in the next meeting of FORENS.

## 5. Financial position of FORENS Account

The current position of FORENS account was placed in the meeting.

### **Agenda-3: Modification of Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations of FORENS**

The proposed modified Bye-law was discussed by the members. The FORENS Secretariat will study the same in light of the observations made by the members as discussed in point No.3 of agenda 2 above. Such draft will be circulated to the members of the FORENS for further deliberations and finalisation in the next meeting.

### **Agenda-4: Roof-top Solar plants - Issues & challenges**

A presentation on the topic was made by Sri S.K. Tripathy, Sr. GM, GEDCOL (Green Energy Development Corporation Limited) Odisha. Sri Tripathy highlighted the overall scenario of the Solar development in the state of Odisha. The target for the SPV development in Odisha is 1000 MW and for such development, single window clearance of the project has been introduced, operational issues have been redressed, technology solutions such as allowing rooftop solar PV upto 75% of the DTR capacity, net metering order by OERC and policy intervention by the Govt. of Odisha have been made. The present focus is on the Rooftops of the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack and project scope includes total capacity of 2890.72 KWP. This project would be further replicated in other cities. A copy of his presentation is placed at **Annexure-2**.

Sri Hemant Sharma, Secretary, Deptt. of Energy highlighted few experiences from his latest visit with Chairperson, OERC, to Germany towards PV solar plants. He informed that in Germany the prime focus is on renewable energy integration with the conventional energy and the peak demand is being met by the RE sources of energy. Sri D. Chakravarty, Member AERC said that response of consumers to the Rooftop is very critical. Dr. A. Prasad, Chairperson, JSERC said that the Govt. of Jharkhand is giving another 20% of capital subsidy in addition to 30% subsidy being given by MNRE. He also observed that without battery and inverter, the rooftop solar is not popular. A detailed study report on Bhopal city for Rooftop solar is available, which may be obtained and studied for further deliberation on the issue.

#### **Agenda-5: The support of state governments in the power sector development**

Sri Hemant Sharma, Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Govt. of Odisha, Deptt. of Energy made a presentation on the role of Government of Odisha in development of Power Sector in Odisha. He highlighted the reform process in Odisha, unbundling, corporatization and privatization of the electricity utilities, present structure of the electricity sector. The consumer base has grown four times in last 17 years, therefore there has to be a commensurate growth in the infrastructure. He stated that the State Govt. can intervene by subsidizing tariff to some category of consumers, equity infusion in state owned utilities, infrastructure and administrative support. The Govt. of Odisha has extended support to the power sector in all of the functional segments generation, transmission and distribution. In generation, Govt. has infused equity in thermal plants and in transmission & distribution. The Govt. has provided support for network expansion, network upgradation and modernization. Under all the schemes in the generation, the State Govt. support is Rs.3000 crore, in transmission Rs.4530 crore and in distribution sector Rs.9920 crore. A copy of his presentation is placed at **Annexure-3**.

#### **Agenda-6: Involving non-governmental agencies such as Self-help Groups (SHG) in Distribution business.**

A presentation on this topic was made by Sri Manoj Singh, Sr. G.M.(AT&C), CESU and Smt. Purabi Das, Public Affairs Officer, OERC. The presentation highlighted the provisions of Electricity Act to involve participation of local institutions, associations, cooperative societies, NGOs and franchisees and experience of the state in this. A copy of the presentation is placed at **Annexure-4**. Odisha has successfully involved the Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Nayagarh district with an aim to reduce AT&C loss, improve metering, billing, consumer service, consumer awareness and to reduce cost of operations in rural areas. After about 7 years of operation, it has been observed that the distribution loss has reduced by 29%, AT&C loss reduced by 30%, collection improved about four times and LT realization per unit improved from Rs.0.99 to Rs.2.66. The community participation is thus one the ways forward to increase operational efficiency and curbing power theft through mobilization of general public support. The members deliberated on the issue and shared some of the experience of franchisee operations in their states.



**Agenda-7:    Functioning of distribution franchise**

This topic was discussed along with agenda item No.6 as above.

**Agenda-8:    Consumer Indexing – Purpose Energy Audit**

The proposed consumer indexing system was discussed by the members. Dr. A. Prasad, Chairperson, JSERC observed that the proposed system is a good system; however, it requires more study. It was resolved that the member Commissions may study the same with respect to practice in their states and this topic may be discussed in the next meeting of FORENS.

**Agenda-9:    FORENS Website Link**

A demonstration was made on proposed “FORENS” link in the homepage of OERC website [www.orierc.org](http://www.orierc.org). It was decided that the access to the FORENS Website link may be password protected. The password for all the Chairpersons and Members of the SERCs (FORENS) shall be sent to their e-mail.

**Agenda-10:    Venue for the next meeting of the FORENS with tentative date.**

The earlier meetings were conducted in the following manner.

Sl. No.	Meetings	Dates	Venue	Host Commission
1	1 <sup>st</sup> meeting	26 <sup>th</sup> – 27 <sup>th</sup> October, 2013	Puri	Odisha ERC
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting	7 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2014	Kaziranga	Assam ERC
3	3 <sup>rd</sup> meeting	13 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> November, 2014	Rajgiri	Bihar ERC
4	4 <sup>th</sup> meeting	18 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> November, 2015	Sundarbans	West Bengal ERC
5	5 <sup>th</sup> meeting	5 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> May, 2016	Ranchi	Jharkhand ERC
6	6 <sup>th</sup> meeting	8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> September, 2016	Imphal	Jt. ERC (Manipur & Mizoram)
7	7 <sup>th</sup> meeting	27 <sup>th</sup> – 30 <sup>th</sup> April, 2017	Gangtok	Sikkim SERC
8.	8 <sup>th</sup> meeting (the current one)	12 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> October, 2017	Puri	Odisha ERC

Sri R.P. Singh, Chairperson, Arunachal Pradesh SERC volunteered to conduct the next meeting (9<sup>th</sup>) of FORENS in his state during the month of April, 2018. He was requested to communicate the dates and venue for the meeting early so that the meeting can be planned accordingly.

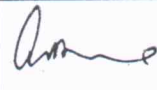
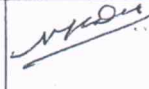
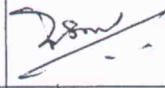
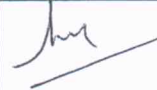
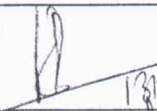
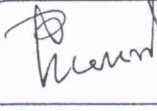
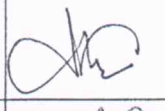
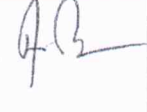
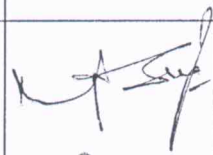
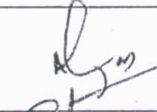
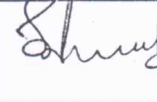
The Chairperson, FORENS thanked the members of the FORENS for their participation in the meeting.


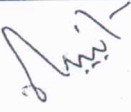
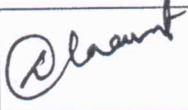
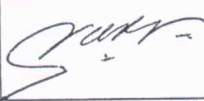
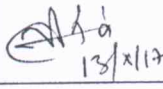
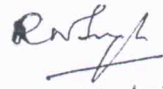
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## ATTENDANCE SHEET

### 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Forum of Regulators for Eastern and North-Eastern States (FORENS)

12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2017  
Venue: Hotel Holiday Resort, Puri, Odisha

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11.	Sri S.K. Parhi, Member	Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission		98688 66597	skparhi58@ gmail.com

Sl. No.	Name & Designation	Name of the SERC/JERC	Signature	Contact No.	E-mail ID
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14.	Sri Dipak Chakravarty, Member	Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission		9435054225	dchakravarty@gmail.com
15.	Sri S. C. Das, Member	Assam Electricity Regulatory Commission		99549-44044	subhodhas55@gmail.com
16.	Sri Durgadas Goswami, Member	West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission	 13/11/17	9830077713	19ddg57@gmail.com
17.	Sri R. N. Singh, Member,	Jharkhand State Electricity Regulatory Commission	 13/10/17	8084722828	rabindranarasayan@gmail.com