ORDER

OF THE

WEST BENGAL ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

IN CASE NO. OA – 492 / 24 – 25

IN REGARD TO THE APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY WEST BENGAL STATE LOAD DESPATCH CENTRE FOR APPROVAL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SAMAST PROJECT (SCHEDULING, ACCOUNTING, METERING AND SETTLEMENT OF TRANSACTIONS IN ELECTRICITY) ALONG WITH ITS RELATED EXPENDITURE IN THE STATE OF WEST BENGAL

DATE: 11.07.2025

Facts in brief:

1.0 The West Bengal State Load Despatch Centre (hereinafter referred to as "WBSLDC") has submitted an application on 02.08.2024 for approval of implementation of SAMAST Project (Scheduling, Accounting, Metering and Settlement of Transactions in Electricity) along with its related expenditure in the State of West Bengal. The application has been admitted by the Commission and registered in Case No. OA – 492 / 24 – 25.

2.0 The application of WBSLDC inter-alia states the following:

2.1 In terms of Section 32 of the Electricity Act, 2003, the State Load Despatch Centre (SLDC) shall be responsible for optimum scheduling and despatch of electricity within a state, in accordance with the contracts entered with the licensees or the generating companies operating in the state. SLDC is also responsible for keeping accounts of the quantity of electricity transmitted through the state grid.

2.2 Accordingly, WBSLDC has implemented intra-state Availability Based Tariff (ABT) system and is in operation since 01.01.2008. The IT infrastructure for implementation of ABT system comprise of application software and associated hardware for scheduling, metering and energy accounting of Intra-State Entities. The activities related to Scheduling and Despatch, Meter Data Collection and Analysis, Energy Accounting are performed under the intra-state ABT regime in semi-automated mode.

2.3 WBSLDC submitted that the legacy system being operated in the semi-automated mode has its limitations in providing desired performance particularly on account of increasing number of meters, incompatibility of software to address regulatory changes, non – availability of web-based scheduling and automated meter reading system, etc. Further, the existing meters are incompatible for integration with AMR system and incapable for transition to 5 minutes scheduling and settlement system.

2.4 The difficulties faced by SLDCs across the country were addressed by the Technical Committee of the Forum of Regulators (FOR) in its report of Scheduling, Accounting, Metering and Settlement of Transactions in Electricity (SAMAST) dated 15th July, 2016 and accepted by the FOR in its 55th meeting held on 22nd July, 2016.

2.5 Accordingly, WBSLDC has decided to have a paradigm shift in the energy accounting procedure by adopting comprehensive IT solution for ABT framework at State Level with 100 percent boundary metering along with AMR system, web-based scheduling and state level data management as per the recommendations of the SAMAST report.

2.6 The SAMAST project is broadly divided into the following parts:

(i) ABT metering with AMR compatibility with provision of regulatory changes

(ii) Scheduling software with web-based application module

(iii) Open Access software module

(iv) Energy Accounting software module

(v) Billing and Report module

(vi) Renewable Energy forecasting module

(vii) Financial Accounting and statutory compliance module

2.7 The total project cost for implementation of SAMAST as per Letter of Award (LoA) is Rs. 28.53 Crores of which Rs. 10.08 Crores has been sanctioned by the Government of India from the Power System Development Fund (PSDF) as grant and balance Rs. 18.45 Crore is proposed to be met from the WBSLDC Fund.

Amount in Crores

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Particulars</th><th rowspan="2">Project Cost</th><th colspan="2">Funding Modalities</th></tr>
<tr><th>PSDF as grant</th><th>WBSLDC Fund</th></tr>
<tr><td>Development of ABT metering with AMR at WBSLDC</td><td>15.57</td><td rowspan="2">10.08</td><td rowspan="2">15.48</td></tr>
<tr><td>Development of Scheduling web-based application, Open-Access solution, Energy Accounting, Billing and Report, RE forecasting, Financial and Statutory Compliance modules</td><td>9.99</td></tr>
<tr><td>Procurement of SAMAST meters</td><td>2.97</td><td>-</td><td>2.97</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total SAMAST Project Cost</td><td>28.53</td><td>10.08</td><td>18.45</td></tr>
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It also stated that Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of the SAMAST project and other related operational expenditures as per the LoA is also payable by WBSLDC.

2.8 WBSLDC also submitted that assets of the Project will be recognised in the books of WBSETCL under the head of SLDC and no depreciation of such asset shall be claimed by WBSETCL in its Tariff or APR petitions.

2.9 In view of the above, WBSLDC prayed to approve the implementation of SAMAST project in the state of West Bengal amounting to Rs. 28.53 Crores. WBSLDC also prayed to allow the expenditure of Rs. 18.45 Crore of the project along with AMC and operational expenditures from the WBSLDC Fund.

Observations of the Commission:

3.0 The Commission observes that the SAMAST project will benefit WBSLDC for its efficient functioning in operation in terms of Section 32 of the Act with regard to deployment of 100% ABT compliant interface meter, automation in transmitting ABT meter data to WBSLDC, development of web-based application for intra-state scheduling with minimum manual intervention, development of comprehensive intra-state settlement system, management of Open-Access applications with automated processing, statistical data management and customized demand based report generation.

4.0 The Commission observes that the project cost for implementation of the SAMAST scheme is Rs. 28.53 Crore. The Government of India has sanctioned Rs. 10.08 Crore as grant from PSDF and the balance cost of Rs. 18.45 Crore shall be borne by WBSLDC from its WBSLDC Fund. Further, WBSLDC also proposed to bear the expenditures related to AMC of the project along with other operational expenditure from the WBLDC Fund

In this regard, the Commission notes that in terms of clause (h) of regulation 3 of the WBERC (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations, 2013, all expenditures for operation of SLDC shall be incurred from WBSLDC Fund exclusively.

5.0 Thus, the expenditures related to the SAMAST project is to be borne from the WBSLDC Fund for efficient operation of WBSLDC.

Order:

6.0 In view of the above, the Commission after considering the above facts and submissions made by WBSLDC approves the implementation of SAMAST project amounting to Rs. 28.53 Crore which is to be partly funded by the Government of India as grant from PSDF Fund and balance from WBSLDC Fund. The yearly expenses of SAMAST project are also to be borne from the WBSLDC Fund exclusively.

7.0 The Commission also directs WBSLDC to show the expenditures related to the SAMAST project separately in its Accounts and submit the same to the Commission for approval as per provisions of WBERC (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations, 2013.

8.0 With this order, the petition filed by WBSLDC stands disposed of.

9.0 A copy of the order shall be posted in the website of the Commission.

10.0 WBSLDC shall download the copy of the order from the website of the Commission and act on it. Certified copy of the order, if applied for, be given to the parties on completion of formalities laid down in the West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission (Conduct of Business) Regulations, 2013, as amended and on submission of necessary fees.

Sd/-
(DR. MALLELA VENKATESWARA RAO)
CHAIRPERSON

Dated: 11.07.2025

Sd/-
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, WBERC