

संचिति

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National Communications Academy-Finance
Department of Telecommunications
New Delhi

सर्वस्य मूलं संचारः

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS ACADEMY - FINANCE

NCA-F



HIGHLIGHTS OF JULY, 2026

This newsletter is published in online format only
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From Learning to Leadership: IP&TAFS Batch 2025 at NCA-F



The Administration & Management Module for Officer Trainees of IP&TAFS Batch 2025 commenced at NCA-F, marking the beginning of an enriching phase of professional learning and development. The inaugural session was graced by Ms. Vandana Gupta, CGCA; Shri Sanjiwan Sinha, DG, NCA-F; Shri Satish Kumar, Jt. CGCA; senior officers of DoT; and faculty members of NCA-F.



Strengthening ABP & 4G Saturation: NCA-F Brings Stakeholders Together

July 28, 2026



NCA-F conducted a hybrid workshop on Amended BharatNet Program (ABP) and the 4G Saturation Project, bringing together officers from CCAs, BSNL, Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) and Independent Engineers (IEs) across the country. Shri Sanjiwan Sinha, DG, NCA-F, highlighted the importance of efficient claim settlement and stakeholder coordination. Dr. Sanjay Kumar and Shri Sangeet Kumar, Joint Administrators, Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), emphasized proper documentation, procedural compliance and collaborative claim management.



Better Advice, Stronger Governance: IFA Workshop at NCA-F

July 13-July 14, 2026



A two-day workshop for IFAs/RIFAs of the Department of Posts concluded at NCA-F, New Delhi, on 14 July 2026, with 66 officers participating from across the country. The Valedictory Ceremony was graced by Shri Rajeev Kumar, Sr. DDG (PAF), and Shri Sanjay Sharan, DG (Posts) (Retd.). The workshop covered financial management, tariff and costing, GeM procurement, budgeting, expenditure control, and effective IFA advice, strengthening financial decision-making and governance.





Corporate Governance & IBC: A Leadership Perspective

JULY 20-JULY 24, 2026



The 2nd Batch of the 5-day Common-In-Service Management Development Program (MDP) on Corporate Governance, with focus on the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), organised by NCA-F in collaboration with IIM Calcutta, successfully concluded at IIM Calcutta. The program was attended by 19 officers from IP&TAFS and ITS.







Building Strong Foundations: Shaping Future Professionals

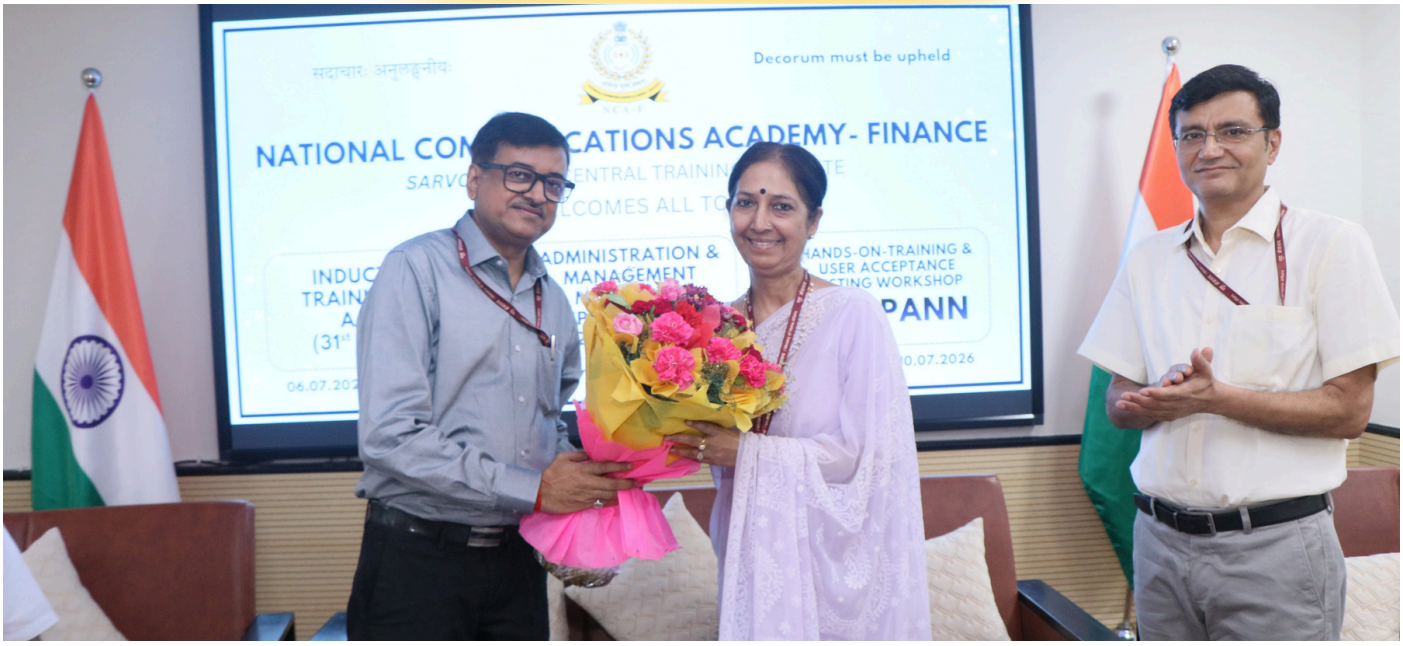


The 8-week Induction Training Programs (31st batch) for the Assistant Accounts Officers of the Department of Telecommunications and Department of Posts were conducted, focusing on key competencies in government accounting, audit, budgeting, and finance-related software.



SAMPANN 2.0:
Shaping the Future of Pension Administration

JULY 6-10 & JULY 13-17, 2026



NCA-F conducted 2 batches of hands-on training on SAMPANN 2.0, focusing on its evolving role in transparent, efficient and citizen-centric pension administration. Ms. Vandana Gupta, CGCA, highlighted its evolution through stakeholder feedback and technological enhancements. Shri Sanjiwan Sinha, DG, NCA-F, urged participants to maximise its potential, while senior officers emphasised effective utilisation for seamless and timely pension services.





42 Officers and Officials underwent hands-on training on SAMPANN 2.0 and participated in User Acceptance Testing (UAT), gaining practical experience and contributing to the platform's validation and improvement.

A Journey into India's Constitutional & Democratic institutions





The Trainees of the 31st Batch of Assistant Accounts Officers had the privilege of visiting the iconic Rashtrapati Bhavan, an enduring symbol of India's democratic values, constitutional heritage, and architectural grandeur.





AAO Trainees visited the Parliament of India for an enriching learning experience organised by the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE). The programme included sessions on Budgeting Procedures, Parliamentary Committees, Parliamentary Questions, VIP References and CAG Reports, along with visits to the Parliament Museum and Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Chambers, providing valuable insights into India's parliamentary processes and democratic institutions.

The visits to Parliament and Rashtrapati Bhavan provided trainees with firsthand insights into India's democratic institutions, constitutional governance, parliamentary processes, and public administration.

Beyond the Classroom: Exploring Technology, Security & Climate Resilience



The trainees visited C-DOT, New Delhi, for a half-day exposure visit. The trainees gained insights into indigenous telecom technologies and digital infrastructure, with demonstrations at the Telecom Security Operations Centre (TSOC) and Enterprise Security Operations Centre (ESOC) covering network monitoring, threat detection, incident response and cybersecurity. The visit provided valuable practical exposure to emerging technologies, complementing classroom learning and strengthening trainees.



The trainees visited Mausam Bhawan, the headquarters of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), and interacted with the Director General, IMD, popularly known as the cyclone man of India. They gained insights into weather forecasting, disaster risk reduction, and early warning systems for extreme weather events. The visit provided valuable exposure to IMD's role in safeguarding lives and property.

Nurturing Competence, Character & Professional Excellence



The 6-week intensive Induction Training Programme for newly appointed Junior Accountants and Lower Division Clerks from DoT and its field units focused on building a strong foundation in rules, procedures, ethics and core competencies. The trainees also underwent specialised training at Mahatma Gandhi State Institute of Public Administration (MGSIPA), Chandigarh, and participated in various sports and recreational activities. The programme further emphasised behavioural, communication and presentation skills, fostering professional competence, teamwork and overall personality development.



Building Financial Excellence through Capacity Building

JULY 23-24 & JULY 28-31, 2026



NCA-F conducted a Specialized Training Program on Finance for Heads of Accounting Units (East & North-East Zone) of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) from 23.07.2026 to 24.07.2026, bringing together Deans, Medical Superintendents and Regional Directors. The programme focused on financial management, procurement and public financial administration.



A Specialized Training Program on Finance for Jt. Directors/Deputy Directors of ESIC (East & North-East Zone) commenced at NCA-F from 28.07.2026 to 31.07.2026 . Dr. Mandeep Singh, DDG, NCA-F, highlighted the importance of sound financial stewardship, transparency and continuous learning in strengthening accountable public institutions.

From Rules to Practice: Strengthening ESIC Financial Governance

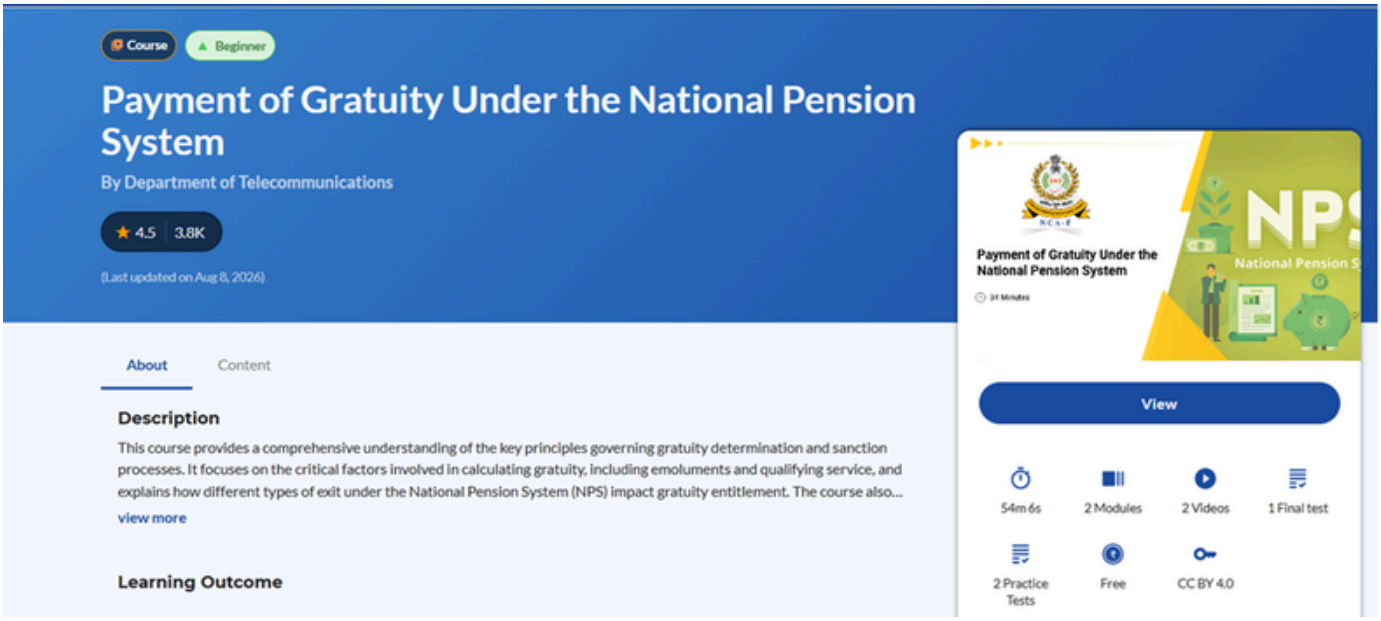
JULY 07-JULY 09, 2026



A 3-day training programme on “General Financial Rules & GeM” for 37 ESIC Chief Medical Officers, Deans and Medical Officers concluded at NCA-F with a feedback and valedictory session. Participants appreciated the engaging sessions on Financial Propriety, Procurement Rules, ESIC Procurement Framework and hands-on GeM functionalities. The programme, organised by NCA-F in collaboration with National Training Academy (ESIC), strengthened financial governance capabilities and promoted efficient, compliant and transparent public service delivery.



New iGOT Courses by NCA-F

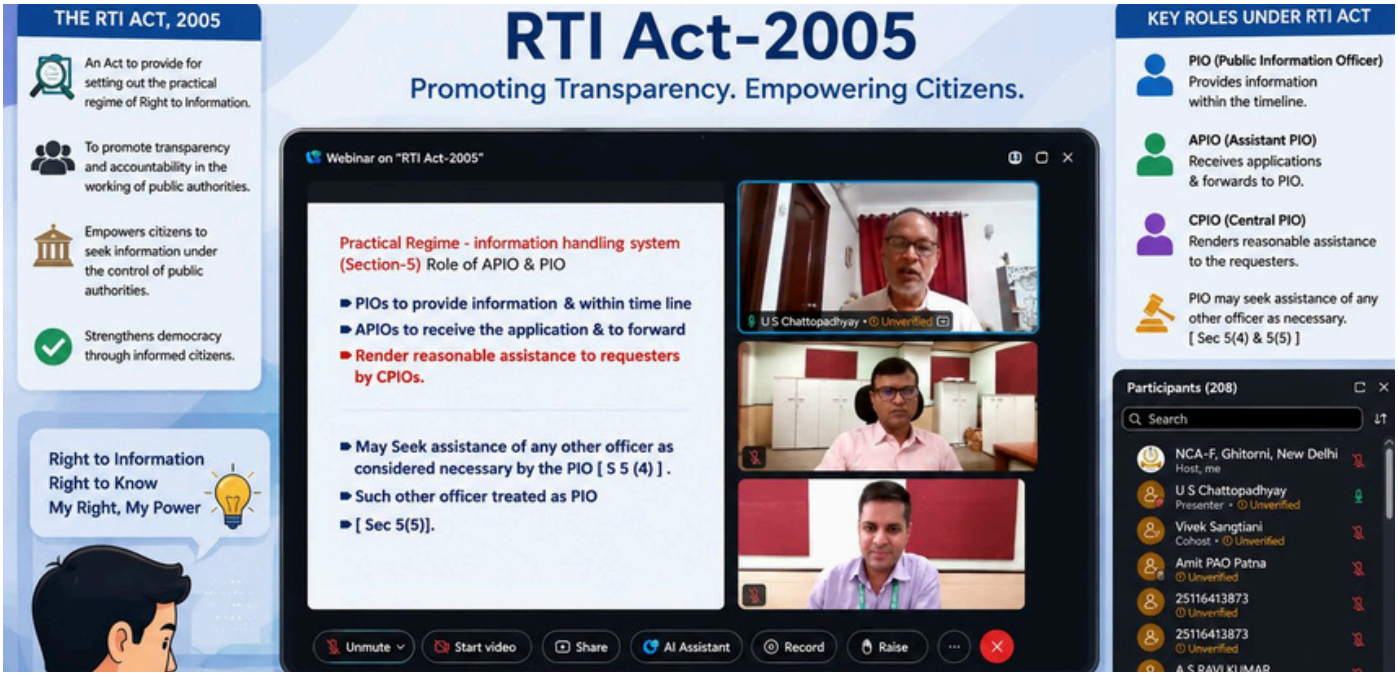


NCA-F published a new iGOT course on Gratuity Determination and Sanction, providing comprehensive guidance on gratuity calculation, qualifying service, NPS exit scenarios, nomination rules and sanction procedures. The course also covers provisional gratuity, safeguards against delays, and conditions for withholding gratuity, enabling officials to effectively administer retirement benefits in accordance with applicable rules.

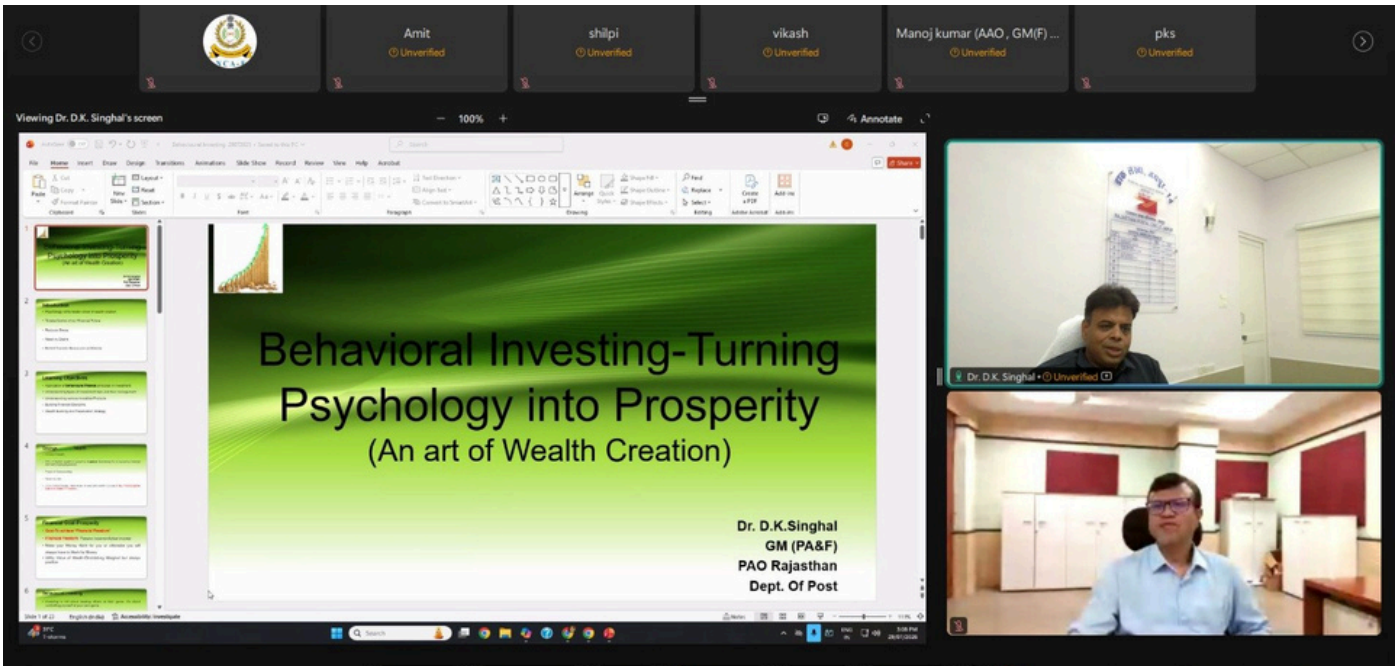


NCA-F published a new iGOT course on India Post's Digital Transformation, tracing the evolution from Core System Integrator (CSI) to Advanced Postal Technology (APT) 2.0. The course explores key technological advancements, including cloud infrastructure, automation, enhanced cybersecurity and AI, highlighting their role in improving operational efficiency, system reliability and seamless service delivery across postal networks.

WEBINAR SPOTLIGHT



NCA-F organised a webinar on the Right to Information Act, 2005, focusing on transparency, accountability and effective implementation. Shri Uday Sankar Chattopadhyay, Retd. Deputy Secretary, GoI and Ex-Faculty, ISTM, DoPT, covered key provisions, statutory timelines, exemptions and responsibilities of Public Authorities. The interactive session witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and officials.



NCA-F organised a webinar on "Behavioural Investing – Turning Psychology into Prosperity", conducted by Dr. D.K. Singhal, GM (Finance), Jaipur. The session explored behavioural finance, psychological biases and disciplined investing for long-term wealth creation.

HEALTH TALK



NCA-F organised a Health Talk on 28 July 2026 at Tarang Hall, in collaboration with Narayana Health, Gurugram, for Group-B and Group-C trainees. Dr. Mudasir Mushtaq Shah, Senior Consultant (Interventional Neurology), highlighted the importance of early recognition and timely intervention in stroke. Dr. Smriti Singh, Associate Consultant (Nephrology, Hypertension & Renal Transplantation), addressed diabetes and its impact on kidney health. The interactive session enhanced awareness of preventive healthcare, early intervention, healthy lifestyle practices and management of common health risks.

FIRE SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM

NCA-F organised a Fire Safety Awareness Programme featuring expert guidance, evacuation procedures, emergency preparedness, and hands-on training on fire safety equipment, promoting vigilance and workplace safety.





A CPSR PERSPECTIVE

Contracting for Digital Infrastructure: A Model RFP Framework

Introduction

Large-scale digital infrastructure projects are built as much through contracts as through cable and towers. Where a project spans a decade, hundreds of districts, and coordination with multiple government authorities, the contracting framework itself becomes critical infrastructure. A well-conceived Request for Proposal (RFP) does more than allocate work — it establishes the financial discipline, risk architecture, and administrative processes that will govern the relationship for the life of the project.

Public procurement must balance protecting public funds, ensuring timely delivery, and sustaining competitive participation. Excessive risk transfer tends to be absorbed into bid pricing or delivery quality rather than eliminated, while excessive flexibility weakens the certainty needed for disciplined execution. The features below should therefore be calibrated to a project's specific risk profile, duration, and public interest.

The central proposition of this article is that a Model RFP for long-term digital infrastructure should be designed not merely as a procurement instrument, but as a lifecycle risk-management framework — organised across four dimensions: financial and risk allocation, contract flexibility and lifecycle management, fair contract administration, and dispute and adverse-action management. It then considers, as a case study, how these principles are reflected in BSNL's BharatNet Middle-Mile RFP (Tender No. MM/BNO&M/BN-III/T-791/2024).

Essential Features of a Model RFP

A. Financial and Risk Framework

At the foundation of any well-structured infrastructure contract lies a principle of balanced risk allocation: risk should rest with whichever party is best placed to control or mitigate it, rather than being assigned by default to the contractor simply because it is the executing entity. This principle is easier to state than to apply. A balanced framework requires the contracting authority to distinguish between risks that the contractor can genuinely control and those that are better managed by the authority or shared between the parties. This principle should, in turn, inform the contract's financial architecture. Payment structures should be progressive and time-bound, so that the contractor is not required to finance substantial completed work for prolonged periods. Defined timelines should govern not only payment itself but also the inspection, verification, and certification processes that precede it. A well-

secured mobilisation advance, with recovery aligned to the project's expenditure cycle, can further facilitate early procurement and deployment, provided the associated security does not itself impose a working-capital burden that offsets the advance's benefit.

Liquidated Damages deserve particular care. They should be calibrated to the legitimate loss or contractual interest protected and distinguish contractor-attributable delay from delay beyond the contractor's control, including authority-side delay where relevant. The interaction between Extension of Time and Liquidated Damages should be stated expressly: an approved extension should identify the revised completion date and, where relevant, the period for which LD remains applicable, particularly where separate provisions govern default notices, cure periods, extension decisions and LD recovery.

Where the project is predominantly brownfield in character — involving the upgradation or augmentation of existing infrastructure — the contract needs to address asset condition, latent defects, site information, and interface risk between new and existing systems. Responsibility for right of way, permissions, and other statutory approvals must be expressly allocated, with appropriate time and cost relief where delay arises from authorities or circumstances outside the contractor's control.

Finally, for contracts of long duration, a balanced price-adjustment mechanism can help address exceptional movement in key input costs — particularly imported equipment — while guarding against unjustified escalation. A defined mechanism should separately address the time and cost consequences of changes in law, taxes, duties, or regulatory requirements arising after the contract date. Both mechanisms warrant careful, symmetrical drafting.

B. Contract Flexibility and Lifecycle Management

A Model RFP should anticipate that the scope, technology, and operating environment of a long-term project will evolve, while recognising that flexibility, if left insufficiently structured, can itself become a source of dispute. A clear change and variation management mechanism should govern how changes in scope, additional or omitted work, unforeseen conditions, and technological changes are authorised, valued, and adjusted for time and price. Given the pace of change in networking and telecommunications equipment, the contract should also address technology and obsolescence management — equipment end-of-life, interoperability, and technology upgrades — without requiring wholesale renegotiation each time such issues arise.

Unlike conventional civil infrastructure, digital infrastructure may remain physically serviceable while becoming technologically obsolete, interoperationally constrained, or commercially inefficient. The contract must therefore manage technological change alongside physical assets and construction risk over the project's life.

Long-term contracts also need to address termination, short closure and, where

appropriate, step-in arrangements. These mechanisms must distinguish contractor default from circumstances in which continuation is no longer commercially, operationally, or technologically viable, and prescribe their financial and procedural consequences.

Subcontracting should be permitted to support efficient execution, provided that accountability remains firmly with the principal contractor and that critical activities remain appropriately controlled. Finally, the contract should provide for an orderly transition at the end of its term, including handover of assets and documentation, knowledge transfer, and a defined transition period, so that continuity of service is not put at risk by the change in contractor.

C. Fair and Effective Contract Administration

The day-to-day administration of a long-term contract depends as much on the clarity of its drafting as on the substance of its terms. Defined terms, timelines, and cross-references should be used consistently throughout, with financially significant concepts — Liquidated Damages, Extension of Time, suspension, short closure, and termination — clearly distinguished and their interaction expressly addressed.

The parties should communicate relevant information, take timely decisions, and exercise contractual discretion reasonably, with cooperation and, where expressly agreed, good faith, without limiting substantive contractual rights. Indian courts have historically been circumspect about implying a broad, free-standing duty of good faith into commercial contracts; where intended, an explicit, carefully bounded clause is therefore the more reliable route.

Reasonable timelines must similarly govern the contracting authority's own decisions — approvals, certifications, extensions, and variations — with a relief where authority-side delay affects the contractor's performance. Performance obligations are best supported by clear key performance indicators, defined measurement methodologies, reporting requirements, and proportionate consequences for non-performance, together with a mechanism through which a contractor may contest an incorrect determination.

D. Dispute and Adverse-Action Framework

A structured escalation process — supported by negotiation and conciliation and, where appropriate, an independent dispute board or adjudication mechanism — should generally precede final recourse to arbitration or litigation. For Indian public procurement, however, the model should reflect the Department of Expenditure's current policy approach on arbitration and mediation rather than importing an international dispute-board model without adaptation.

The financial consequences of termination, whether for default, convenience, Force Majeure, or short closure, need to be defined in advance, including the treatment of completed work, materials procured, and reasonable demobilisation

costs. A defined formula can reduce the need to establish recovery through an evidentiary process after termination.

Where contractual action may carry serious financial or reputational consequences — most notably debarment or blacklisting — the contract should provide appropriate procedural safeguards, including notice, a reasonable opportunity to respond, and a reasoned decision, with review or appeal where appropriate. Blacklisting or debarment should be treated as a distinct adverse-action process rather than merely as another contractual remedy, with applicable public-law requirements preserved.

Case Study: BharatNet Middle-Mile RFP

The BharatNet Middle-Mile RFP is a useful case study for how the principles above operate in a large, long-term digital infrastructure contract. The purpose is not to assess the RFP as a whole, but to identify model features already reflected in its architecture.

On mobilisation and cash flow, the RFP provides a three-stage mobilisation advance of up to 20% of capital expenditure, secured against a 110% bank guarantee, giving the Project Implementing Agency (PIA) significant initial liquidity. Payment thereafter follows a structured, milestone-linked schedule, releasing funds progressively as network sections are completed. This also illustrates a broader design point: a milestone may trigger payment entitlement, but inspection, verification and certification determine when that entitlement becomes actual cash — for a long-term project, clear timelines for these upstream processes matter as much as the payment schedule itself.

On risk allocation, the RFP includes a relatively detailed right-of-way framework under which BSNL reimburses specified charges and provides LD relief for qualifying right-of-way delay. Subcontracting is likewise permitted, with the principal contractor remaining responsible for performance and subcontractors required to meet minimum technical-eligibility criteria.

On lifecycle management, the RFP provides a defined Exit Management Plan governing handover of the network and documentation at term end, supporting continuity through transition. On performance and dispute management, it establishes measurable O&M requirements — network availability, repair-time, cable-cut parameters — providing an objective basis for monitoring, alongside a structured, multi-stage dispute-avoidance process of negotiation, committee review, and conciliation.

On adverse action, a banning or blacklisting mechanism is present; given the consequences, its operation should be read alongside applicable procedural safeguards, including notice and an effective opportunity to respond. The RFP also provides a Performance Bank Guarantee and related security instruments — including an insurance surety bond as an alternative to a conventional bank guarantee — and a contractual Force Majeure mechanism addressing major disruptions to project timelines.

Conclusion

The objective of a Model RFP should not be to shift risk systematically towards either party. It should identify risks clearly, allocate them rationally, provide predictable payment and decision-making processes, and establish workable mechanisms for unforeseen events and contractual disagreements. Clarity at individual contractual interfaces matters as much as the presence of headline clauses. An extension of time should ordinarily determine the period against which Liquidated Damages apply, so that a contractor is not left liable for delay during a period for which an extension has already been granted; leaving that relationship ambiguous shifts financial risk in a way the parties may not have priced at the outset. Price variation and Change in Law mechanisms should likewise be symmetrical and clearly triggered, so that exceptional movements in input costs or regulatory obligations — in either direction — are addressed by defined procedure rather than left to be absorbed unpredictably by one party.

A Model RFP is not one that eliminates risk; it is one that makes risk visible, allocates it rationally, prices it transparently, and provides a workable mechanism for responding when the assumptions underlying a long-term contract change.

The objective of a Model RFP should not be to shift risk systematically towards either party. It should be to identify risks clearly, allocate them rationally, provide predictable payment and decision-making processes, and establish fair mechanisms for dealing with unforeseen events and contractual disagreements.

NCA-F



Certificate No.
APP/22/N00004-2

CAPACITY BUILDING COMMISSION

Certificate of Accreditation

The training Institute **National Communications Academy - Finance** is accredited as **सर्वोत्कृष्ट/Outstanding** under the Capacity Building Commission's National Standards.

The Accreditation shall remain in force subject to continued compliance with the National Standards.The Accreditation needs to be renewed before the expiry date by the training institution following the due process of assessment.

The Accreditation granted on **14/11/2025** is valid until **13/11/2027**

S.P. Roy
Jt. Secretary
Capacity Building Commission

S. Radha Chauhan
Chairperson
Capacity Building Commission

National Communications Academy-Finance proudly secured the ***Sarvotkrisht*** (highest) rating from the **Capacity Building Commission (CBC)**, becoming one of the first institutes to receive this recognition under the National Standards for Civil Services Training Institutes 2.0 Framework.