

THE OFC MAN AND THE KHADDAA

Venkat, 24 was informed by his superior that there is an OFC (Optical Cable fibre) break at a distance of 35.120 KM in Kolhapur-Panjim section. His superior said as if he was conveying a sad news regarding an accidental death happened to one of his close relative. Venkat was new to the job and this was his first field job assigned to him.

OFC cable is a media which carries information in the form of light and normally laid under the ground using ducts. This is the answer that venkat gave to a question asked by an instructor during his pre-appointment training.

Venkat was standing near the vehicle as the crew started loading their vehicle with all the tools and equipment required to attend the OFC cable break. The crew started discussing about the break distance while loading the vehicle.

Singh, 52 line technician said: Sir, fault woh canal ke paas mey ganesh Mandir ke baadh hoga (Sir, The spot is near the canal just after crossing the ganesh temple as per my knowledge).

Kamble, 50 line technician said: Nahi sir, break distance alag lagraha hey, nadhi ke paas ka aerial mey hosaktha hey. (No sir, the break distance is not matching, I think it may be in the aerial joint near the river).

Patil, 48 line technician said: Nahi Saheb, ayise nahi Kah saktha hey, RID dhekhna padega.. (No sir, We can't make a vague conclusion. We have to look at RID).

RID is used to locate the faults based on previous faults and It contains a diagram with all the joints and Road KM locations for a complete route section.

Venkat asked: yes, where is it?

Patil replied: sir, It is there in the briefcase. He opened and gave it to venkat.

Venkat started looking at the RID. He was never told of RID during his training before his appointment. Holding the RID in his hands, he was having a glance at all the material that was loaded by the crew.

There were few tools mostly used for digging pits. He saw two OFC cable pieces coiled irregularly, few PLB HDPE ducts, a compact generator, a ladder, a small water motor, few joint closures, an extension power supply board, a water can and a petrol can, two metal boxes, two briefcases with some miscellaneous material, an

odometer, an OTDR(optical time domain reflectometer) and a splicing machine.

As they reached the suspected spot at 12 noon, Venkat got down the vehicle and the sun was beating down as if the clouds and the ozone layer never existed.The light from the sun looked like there was no atmospheric absorption.It made the greenhouse effect just an imaginative theory leaving the sun's electromagnetic radiation dominated by Ultraviolet rays.

Venkat was standing on the other side of the road and his crew crossed the road where there was a backhoe(famously known as JCB).It has a long shaft attached to a piston and a big bucket at the end of its arm.The operator was sitting in his seat like a man sitting on a huge elephant with its massive legs gripping the surface changing the ground level by a fraction due to its enormous pressure.

Singh from the other side shouted: sir, edhari tuta hey..(cable broke here itself).

Venkat crossed the road to see the spot.The spot filled with all the short pieces of cable and few cut portions of PLB duct and a huge flow of drainage water filling the pit rapidly because of the hole made to the underground pipe by the JCB, The flow of water looked as if the gates of a huge dam were opened suddenly without a notice.

Venkat sighed the operator to stop the machine, The operator continued his job without noticing him.The piston expanded to lift the arm in routine, swung the bucket, pressed the bucket into the soil, and lifted it out of the excavation with a piece of cable and cut PLB hanging in its bucket.Venkat was watching the bucket with his mouth wide open in surprise as if his life was in that bucket.

Suddenly Singh shouted: sir,jaldh se jaldh PLB ko jodna padega khadda mey paani barne se pehley.(sir, we have to close the opened PLB by using a small cut piece joining both ends of the PLB in the pit before the water is completely filled.

Venkat said: Ok, do it fast..

Singh was seeing the Kamble's face, Kamble was seeing the Patil's face and Patil was seeing the Singh's face, the vicious circle continued for few seconds and none of them showed any interest in doing it.Seeing the emergency, Venkat pleaded a person near the JCB.He was the assistant to the operator and managed him somehow to get the job done under the supervision of Singh.

Later, they closed the opened PLB duct and the three line technicians dug two pits at both ends 20M away from the spot pulling the old cable and inserting a new piece of cable making two additional joints by splicing the fibers of the cable at both ends.

The laborious process completed and for the first time, Venkat experienced the restoration process of an OFC break.

Singh said: Saheb, NOC vaalonko pucho system right hogaya kya?(Sir, Ask the NOC(Network operation centre) team, whether the system restored?)....

Venkat called the NOC and a person from NOC said that the system is still failure.

Venkat came near his crew and told that the system is still failure.

Singh said: Saheb,aisa kaisa ho saktha hey?..Sab kuch teekh tho hua tha..(Sir, how is it possible? we did everything right).

Venkat went inside the vehicle and cross verified with the RID.They did exactly in accordance with RID, and he was puzzled in his mind.

Suddenly, a farmer from a near village came closer and said: sir, aapka cable road ka ustaraf hey(sir, your cable is on the other side of the road).

Venkat was shocked and in surprise he went near his crew and inquired them about the information given by the farmer.

Patil said: Saheb, kabhi kabhi RID mey galath rahtha hey..(sir, sometimes it is wrongly shown in RID).

It was already 6'o clock in the evening and heavy rain started leaving venkat and his crew in despair and for a moment he thought about his engineering study and its purpose....

