

Informatics

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From the Desk of Director General, NIC

From the Editor's Desk

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NIC at Elitex 2002

From M.Moni & Sunanda Banerjee, NIC HQ

Department of Information Technology (DIT), Ministry of Communications & IT has been funding research and development projects in the areas of electronics and information technology at various institutions. To disseminate information on Technologies and Products developed among the users and the industry, the Ministry organises ELITEX every year which generates a lot of interest and gives commercial boost. This year, ELITEX-2002, the seminar cum exhibition was organised at New Delhi during April 29-30, 2002 and the event saw an active participation from National Informatics Centre.

• Enhancing e-readiness

The theme of ELITEX'2002 this year focussed on "Enhancing e-readiness" covering e-infrastructure, IT for Masses / People, Domestic Productivity through e-initiatives, e-Learning, e-Commerce & Security, Application in Emerging Areas, Innovation in IT Industry, e-Governance/e-Citizen, including bridging digital divide and e-medicine. The event was inaugurated by Sh. Pramod Mahajan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Communications & Information Technology. Dr.N.Vijayaditya, Director General, NIC presented an overview of National Informatics Centre's activities and also apprised the audience about 'AGMARKNET' - Agricultural Marketing Information System Project of NIC, for the benefit of Producers, Consumers, Traders and Policy Makers. The project is aimed at covering 100 agricultural commodities, all the 7000 principal markets and 34000 rural markets in the country. The NIC Stall at the ELITEX exhibition depicted a colourful display of the various e-governance projects and services being provided by NIC in its endeavour to facilitate informatics development programmes in Government at the national, state and district level. The visitors to the stall could gain a valuable insight into the various services of NIC through multimedia kiosks with the touch screen facility specially set-up for the exhibition. Besides, a large number of posters and brochures, including a special information docket were published for the occasion which provided details of the various software and services on display. The key visitors to NIC's stall included Sh. Pramod Mahajan, Hon'ble Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Communications & Information Technology, Sh. Rajeev Ratna Shah, Secretary (DIT), and renowned scientist and policy maker Prof. MGK Menon.

A highlight of the event was the launch of CollabCAD software of NIC by Sh. Pramod Mahajan. CollabCAD is a CAD/CAM software which could prove very effective and useful for Land Records Computerization. Another highlight was the demonstration of live video-conferencing sessions going on in Chhattisgarh and Bihar using NIC's VC facilities. The various Projects and Services displayed at the NIC Stall during ELITEX 2002 included ...

- National Hazardous Waste Information System (NHWIS)
- Sales Tax Administration Management Information Network Aid (STAMINA)
- Central Civil Pension Accounting and Retrieval System
- Rural Bazar
- Payroll and Accounts Officers 2000
- OfficeSoft
- Composite Payroll System

- Kerala Treasuries Online
- Land Records Online
- DACNET
- Wired Villages - WARANA
- ICT tools facilitating public justice (Bihar)
- Video Conferencing
- WWW Services
- Panchayati Raj Institutions Accounting Software (PriaSoft)
- IT Services at Haldia Dock Complex Haryana Registration Information System (HARIS)
- Rural Soft 2000
- Community Information Centres (CICs) in Northeastern States
- Lokmitra - Govt Citizen Interface (HP)
- IT in Indian Judiciary
- Central Passport System
- IT Solutions for e-governance in Andhra Pradesh
- NAI DISHA (Distt level Integrated Services of Haryana)
- Offerings (Knowledge Management)
- CollabCAD (CAD/CAM Software System)
- IT Training Services of NIC
- Web Enabled Electoral Rolls (Chandigarh)
- Web Enabled Tender System (Chandigarh)
- Public Grievance Redressal System (Chhattisgarh)
- WebCITI/DialCITI
- Property Registration Information System
- Module (PRISM)-Punjab
- Collectorate 2000 (Hyderabad)
- Package for Effective Administration of Registration Laws (PEARL) (Kerala)
- NICSI Services

■ Glimpses



India Habitat Centre the venue for Elitex-2002



Dr. N Vijayaditya, DG-NIC in conversation with Sh. Pramod Mahajan, Hon'ble Minister for Communications and Information Technology



Sh Pramod Mahajan, Hon'ble Minister of Communications & IT glancing through the brochures carrying info on various NIC Projects. Also in the pic (from L to R): Sh M Moni, DDG (NIC) ; Dr R G Gupta, Director (DIT); Dr. N Vijayaditya, DG(NIC) and Sh Rajeev Ratna Shah, Secretary (DIT)



Sh.M.Moni, Deputy Director General (NIC) demonstrating the services on display to Sh Rajeev Ratna Shah, Secretary (DIT) as DG (NIC) looks on



Dr. N Vijayaditya, DG-NIC addressing the gathering at a session during ELITEX-2002



Prof MGK Menon (centre), visiting the NIC stall. Also in the pic (L to R) : Dr.S Banerjee, Sh S N Zindal, Sh Y D Sharma and Sh M Moni



Dr. Y K Sharma, DDG (NIC) and Sh M Moni DDG (NIC) in conversation at ELITEX-2002



NIC Team with the VSAT set up outside the venue of ELITEX-2002



The proud team of NICians who participated in ELITEX-2002



The colourful display at NIC stall during the exhibition at ELITEX-2002

"A great pleasure to see the way NIC has developed: from the vision of a quarter of century ago to wideranging applications of great social significance, giving us hope that technology can play an important role in leap frogging into the future. Keep it up. All the Best...."



Prof. MGK Menon

E - Governance Initiatives

Passport Computerization

From MEA Informatics Division, NIC HQ

External Affairs is a sensitive area of a Country's administration and it is vital to ensure efficiency in all its related work areas. As a part of its endeavor to effectively implement Information Technology in all areas of Government functioning, NIC through its MEA Informatics Division, has been providing active IT support to the Ministry of External Affairs. One of the most important Projects in this regard has been the computerization of Passport Offices located all over India

• Indian Passport- The Background

Prior to World War-I, the Indian Passport as a travel document was not in existence. It was during World War-I that the Government of India enacted the Defence of India Act, 1914 and promulgated rules thereunder, which made it obligatory for a person to possess a Passport for entry into or exit from India. In 1920, the Government enacted the Indian Passports Act, based on the earlier statutory provisions. The Government of India promulgated the present Passports Act in 1967.

• Issuance of Passport

In 1954, Regional Passport Offices at five cities namely Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai and Nagpur were set up for the issue of passports. The Consular, Passport and Visa division looks after implementation of the provisions of the Passport Act, Passport Rules, and Policy matters relating to passports and administrative functions of the passport offices.

• Perspective

The computerization of passport offices at RPO Delhi was entrusted to NIC as a pilot project during 1989. It has been extended to various other passport offices over the subsequent years. Presently all the 28 passport offices all over India have been computerized.

The computerization of the individual passport office may be divided into various phases including basic computerization, Index card image capturing, Online Index checking and passport printing.

In addition, the computerization of passport application collection centres, provision for authenticated e-mail services, communication between the passport offices and district offices through authenticated e-mail, electronic storage and retrieval of documents furnished by the applicants are in full swing.

Apart from this, public facilitation services such as web enquiry, tele-enquiry, touch screen kiosks, SMS services, online registration are also in progress.

• Application Areas

Basic Computerization: The Passport Control Issuance System (PCIS) has been designed, developed and implemented by NIC, MEA Informatics Division. The specific tasks include:

- :: Acceptance of application forms
- :: Submission of Supplementary documents
- :: Revenue management
- :: Police verification
- :: PAC checking
- :: Objection letters
- :: Granting of passports
- :: Passport Allotment
- :: Passport Printing
- :: Passport booklet accounting
- :: Despatch of passports
- :: Management of undelivered passports
- :: MIS/Statistical Reports
- :: E-mail /Internet services
- :: Across the counter Enquiry
- :: Telephone/Web enquiry

• **Index card Image Capturing**

NIC has monitored this project to provide an online index checking through creation of an Index data bank and a project to scan index cards at Passport offices has been undertaken. The scanning has been completed in all the 28 passport offices. It will assist in the simultaneous processing of the applications by different sections of passport offices with the availability of scanned images on computers.

• **Machine Readable Passport**

NIC has suggested passport printing, in order to improve the security features and the passport booklet has now been designed to make it machine readable. Its new features



Former Minister of State for External Affairs Sh Ajit Kr Panja releasing the "machine written-readable pasports"

bring it in line with ICAO standards and the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) introduced on the passport booklet will make it easier for our passport holders to clear immigration checks where Passport readers are in use. In Machine Readable Passport, the principal passport details including the name, date of birth, sex, Passport number, date of expiry are captured in two lines which are incorporated in the Machine Readable Zone (MRZ) by a special printer.

MRZ is printed as per the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards and is compatible with any ICAO standard reader at International Immigration counters.

• **Online Index Checking (PIRS)**

NIC MEA division has developed this project and at present the project has been implemented in almost 25 passport offices. This will facilitate index checking using a phonetic search to match the photograph and check for duplicate passports. The entire process of computerized passport index checking starts with the loading of data into the master table of the online database server. Checking the data against the existing index database by matching the soundex codes has been carried out for online index checking. The soundex code combination is made in a cyclic fashion.

• **The figures speak for themselves.**

The number of applicants for passports has been steadily growing. In 1999, 25.8 lakh passports were issued compared to 22.22 lakh in 1998, 22.25 lakh in 1997 and 19.13 lakh in 1996. In the year 2000, the number of passport applications received was 25.88 lakh. In the first six months of 2001, the number of passport applications grew by 17% as compared to the first six months of 2000. In future, as the process of globalization and economic development picks up momentum, the demand for passports is expected to increase. Apart from issuing new passports, the other services include renewal, issue of new booklet, correction of entries, change of maiden name to married name etc. It is estimated that for every 100 passports issued, 10 passports require these services.

• **On the Cards..**

A scheme of providing information regarding the status of passport application on a cellular phone and a touch screen system is on the cards at various passport offices.

:: **Move towards paperless office:** NIC has taken the project of full passport file scanning for the passport offices and the pilot project is on the way at Hyderabad, Chennai and Guwahati Passport offices.

:: **Online Registration:** The applicants can fill up their name and other details and register on the web. They will be allotted a reference number. They can submit their original application, documents and fee from 3rd to 7th working day at passport offices, by quoting this reference number. Then applicants will be allotted the usual file reference number after acceptance of their application.

:: **Decentralization** of the functions of receipt and scrutiny of passport applications to the district level :- The distribution and sale of passport application forms has already been decentralized.



Director General Police, Hyderabad releasing the computerprinted passports at RPO hyderabad

■ **New Services (available in selected RPOs only)**

Single Window Counter for Tatkaal cases wherein the applicant can meet the PRO directly on the first visit and obtain the passport on the second or third day on payment of prescribed "Tatkaal fee".

A special counter for the graduates has been opened to cater to the needs of students and professionals who are unable to visit the office in the morning session. These counters function from 2.30 PM to 3.30 PM.

Help counter has been opened to guide the applicants.

Special Counters have been opened for old passport holders, government servants with NOC, minors and senior citizens. The applications received in these counters are processed speedily and passports issued within a short period.

The Media Says.....

Times of India, Kolkata, Thursday, August 9,2001.

According to the Regional Passport Officer, Kolkata " The passport office plans to go online. This will be implemented in four different stages-online verification of applications, online application, online processing of applications and online scanning of necessary documents", adding that National Informatics centre would be entrusted the job of completing the technical aspect of the project.

The Hindu, Friday, July 14,2000

The Union Minister of State for External Affairs Mr. Ajit Kumar Panja released the first lot of "Machine Written-Readable passports" at the Regional Passport Office, New Delhi. Mr.Panja said "20 of the 28 passport offices in the country had already been computerized by the National Informatics Centre. To further streamline the passport processing procedures at Passport offices, a detailed computerization programme had been approved at an estimated cost of Rs.30 crores. NIC would help the Ministry in this project as well"

Newstime Saturday 10 November 2001

NIC's Technical Director, Dr. B.N.Shetty, explained to newsmen that though a pilot scheme was already introduced in Delhi passport office, Hyderabad passport office became the first passport office in the country to have officially introduced full-fledged machine printed passports. Dr. Shetty said that "with networking of passport offices, issuance of duplicate passports could be completely avoided".

On the WWW.....

Check out the procedures involved in getting an Indian Passport and download the required application forms from <http://passport.nic.in>

For further information, please contact
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New Delhi-110003 :Tel No. 91-11-4362753
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State in focus

KERALA: God's Own Country

On the Path to Progress

From Dr. S. Raman & Peter Francis, NIC Kerala

Kerala, God's Own Country, the 100% literate state in India, with its rich greenery and backwaters provides a very pleasant working ambience. Kerala is silently making a revolution in the field of IT, like the waves of the ocean on a 'new moon' day. Comprising 14 districts spread across a long shoreline, with internationally renowned beaches, historic monuments, backwater stretches and a rich cultural heritage, Kerala has the unique distinction of having 0% growth rate in population for more than 10 years. On the contrary, growth in the IT sector is increasing year by year ever since the inception of National Informatics Centre in the State.

Major Projects for State Government.

- NIC, identified as one of the 'Total solution providers' for the Kerala State Government effectively assists the state government functionaries for timely decision-making through the implementation of various e-governance projects. The citizen-oriented projects includes civil supplies (TETRA-PDS), registration (PEARL), treasury banking and also office maintenance tools like budget monitoring system, MIS for animal husbandry , water billing system for Kerala Water Authority, computerization of housing board, AGMARKNET, online election system and others..

- **Treasury Online**

The benefit of IT revolution has reached the common man by the computerization of treasuries. The system is designed to automate entire operations of treasuries from the counter stage to the accounting stage.

"Kerala will be the first state in the country where Treasury computerization has gone beyond mere account keeping".

Shri E.K. Nayanar the then Hon'ble Chief Minister during inaugural ceremony

"The Treasury project was designed to launch the Department of Treasuries as a modern vehicle to provide banking and financial services to the people of Kerala. The Treasury online System has now been very successfully implemented in all the 30 pilot sites in Kerala "

Dr K.M. Abraham, IAS, Secretary-Finance



Salary calculation, pension processing, SB & FD transactions and all other payment and receipt transactions are made online. Pay order cheque system, teller system and 'any bill any counter' system are also implemented.

■ **Budget Computerization**

The Secretariat cell of NIC is playing a major role in extending an IT tool for the formulation of the State Budget every year. This includes all the consolidated fund, contingency fund and the public accounts. The Secretariat cell provides IPA connectivity at Secretariat to browse the Internet and use the e-mail facility.

■ **PEARL (Package for Effective Administration of Registration Laws)**

A tool, providing a transparent, efficient and vibrant public interface, bringing in efficiency at the Sub Registry Office level by doing away with the dreary manual routine of filing, searching, accounting, reporting etc. thereby enabling SRO to provide prompt and reliable response to the General Public. The main emphasis is on the issue of Encumbrance certificates, Registration of all categories of documents and issue of certified copies.

"I was thrilled and delighted to see the excellent work done in this Registration office"

Shri N Vittal I.A.S Central Vigilance Commissioner



PEARL has been successfully implemented in 54 of the total 308 Sub Registrar offices of Kerala. The rest of the SROs will be computerized by the end of this financial year.

■ **Computerization of SSLC and Plus 2 Exam Related Activities**

: Pre Examination and post examination activities of SSLC (10 th) and Higher Secondary are successfully computerized in Kerala. The software takes care of issue of admission tickets, tabulation work and result preparation, printing of mark-sheets, certificates and statistical reports.

■ **Computerisation of Housing Board**

About 20 branches and the head office of the State Housing board have been computerized to handle :

- * Cash loan accounting (Disbursement and repayment)
- * Estate accounting and monitoring System
- * Cash Counter management system
- * Payroll and Personnel Information System

■ **Projects for Revenue Department**

1. Land Records Computerisation
2. Land Lease Management System
3. Land Survey Database Management System
4. Revenue arrears monitoring system

All the Block Panchayats are provided with the computer system and through modem connected with the respective district NIC centres for effective mail transactions between their offices.

■ **Kerala Water Authority**

The Billing, Revenue Collection and Accounting System of the Kerala Water Authority has been introduced in Trivandrum, Kochi and Calicut divisions of Kerala Water Authority, covering three corporations areas of Kerala State. The average transaction time per consumer has been reduced from 10 minutes down to only two minutes. The systems are being introduced in another 13 locations. The system can analyze the collection patterns and defaulters are identified. The monthly total revenue collection has touched Rs.10 crores after the computerization, compared to just Rs. 2.5 crores before computerization.

■ **TETRA-PDS**

The Targeted Efficient Transparent Rationing Allocation (TETRA) software is a total solution to the management of Public Distribution System (PDS). The Public Distribution System has been totally automated by the introduction of this bilingual software. The software is based on a multi-tier architecture. The bottom layer supporting the functions at the Taluk Supply Office / City Rationing Office level and is the core part of the software. The software has many modules like, Ration Card Management, ration allocation, preparation of automatic indents and authority lists, collection of various fee, calculation of differential costs, licenses and permits, etc. Along with the Ration Card Renewal process, a statewide database of 67 lakhs families and 3.2 crores family members has been successfully created and the new computerized ration cards are being issued. TETRA-PDS has been fully tested and successfully introduced in one of the city rationing offices. The complete roll-out of TETRA-PDS will be by the end of July.



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala Sri. A.K. Antony distributing the new ration card to an Aadhivasi Family.

■ **AGMARKNET**

There are 7 markets selected in the first phase of this project and 14 more Markets have been identified for the implementation of the Project. The AGMARKNET portal is updated on Daily basis from these 7 markets.

■ **Animal Husbandry Department Computerisation**

The software related to various activities of Animal Husbandry department has been developed and includes Cattle Breeding Information System, Animal Products Price Monitoring System, Rearing of Calves Scheme, Live Stock Census, MIS for Animal Health Administration, Farm Information System and Budget Monitoring System with various reports modules.

■ **NIC-CM Cell at Secretariat**

A separate NIC cell has been established in the Chief Minister cell of the secretariat to cater to the needs of the cell and is effectively involved in

- Petition Monitoring System
- File Movement Information System
- Tapal Monitoring System
- Notes Monitoring System
- Plan Scheme Monitoring System

■ **Elections**

All the 14 district centers provide assistance during the election right from the filing of nominations by the candidates and staff allocation to result declaration. In a unique way in all prominent places of cities, a huge LCD display system is being connected with the NIC server so that the results are displayed whenever the data is updated. This is made possible by connecting all the RO's office and the CEO office.

■ **National Level Projects**

High Court and District Court Computerization

IT Support is given to the High Court and District Courts of Kerala. The Application areas covered under DCIS software are case file monitoring, notices generation, certified copies, report generation, pay roll accounting system, personnel information system, JUDIS(Judgement information system), Library information system and e-mail connectivity.

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- **Passport office computerization at Trivandrum, Kochi and Calicut.**
- **Central Excise and Customs Computerisation in all the Nine Divisions in the state.**
- **DGFT project at Kochi**

- **District Centres**

Kerala State is having 14 districts and all of them are actively involved in the e- governance activities for the district administration.

All the district NIC centers are effectively involved in the computerization of

- Revenue Recovery details related to Demand Collection and Balance
- Land Acquisition - Pay roll Preparation
- Tapal Section Information system
- Natural Calamity Monitoring System
- Social Beneficiary schemes (OAP, NFBS, NMBS etc.)
- Arms Licensing
- Guest House reservation system
- MIS on Electrical Inspectorate
- Information System for the Total Literacy Programme.
- Haj Applications Info. System
- Public Grievance Monitoring system
- Seniority List of Revenue Staff
- National Savings Scheme information system

■ **Training**

Training is provided for all state government and central government officials at the Training center of the state unit. More than 300 participants benefited during the last year apart from large number of hands-on training being given by the district centers.

■ **E-Governance Projects Under Way..** **Transport Department**

All the Regional Transport Offices of Kerala are being modernized. Comprehensive software is under finetuning stage catering to the Registration of Vehicles, Issue of licenses, Permits & Collection of Taxes. Good network connectivity among all the RTO offices is also proposed.

■ **KRISHIKER**

A MoU has been signed with the Department of agriculture for computerization down to the grass-root level (up to Krishi Bhawans) for global database development. The 6 Krishi Bhawans under the Chengal Block of the Trivandrum district has been taken up for pilot phase and the work is expected to be completed within 8 months. The total cost of the project is Rs.1.5 crores for the Trivandrum District.

■ **Employment Exchange Computerisation:**

Software has been developed for computerizing employment exchanges of the state. As a pilot phase, the employment exchanges at Trivandrum are to be taken up for computerization initially.

■ **NIC Kerala State Web Site**

A comprehensive dynamic website with Knowledge base is under development for the Kerala State and is expected to be launched shortly. The website for the Kerala Water Billing system is also under development. It is heartening to see how well NIC-Kerala State Unit is integrated with the state government in its e-governance initiatives. 'God's Own Country' is sure to blossom with many more citizen oriented programmes with the help of Information Technology.

Words of IT Secretary, Mrs Aruna Sundararajan I.A.S.

"NIC, Kerala State Unit has been closely associated with the IT Department for implementing various projects for the State. Many of the IT projects undertaken by NIC have been successfully implemented and development work is underway in a number of new projects as well. Some of the projects include Treasury Computerization, RD-NET 2000, Computerization of Registration Department [PEARL], MIS for Animal Husbandry etc. In this context I would like to place on record the excellent work done by NIC in the State. I hope that NIC would continue to extend similar assistance and support in future as well."

NIC KERALA STATE at a glance

- NICNET VSAT Connectivity with State and District headquarters
- NIC Centres in all the 14 Districts
- Video Conferencing facility at State Centre.
- Internet and e-mail facility in all Districts.
- NITPU Centre at Cochin
- NIC Cell at Secretariat
- NIC-DPC Cell for the Finance and Treasury Department Computerization.

For further information, please contact

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IT in the Emerald Islands Andaman & Nicobar

From Anubha Goyal & Gautam Gupta, NIC Andaman & Nicobar Islands

The NIC, Andaman & Nicobar Islands UT unit was setup in the year 1988. This UT unit provides total informatics services to Andaman & Nicobar Administration, Central Government Departments and other organisations. NIC Port Blair has taken up various projects in different Departments. The nature of projects vary from designing simple Personnel Information system for Personnel Wing of Secretariat to complex projects like computerizing the entire Budgetary and Work Allocation System for APWD. Apart from developing software, services are also extended to interested departments for providing training to Government officials so that they can effectively use computers in carrying out their official work. In addition to email and Internet service, videoconferencing facility is also provided to the administration.

■ The Background

The beautiful Islands of Andaman & Nicobar islands are located at Bay of Bengal in an area of 8,249 sq.kms and at a distance of around 1200 kms from Calcutta, Visakapatnam and Chennai.

This Union Territory has two Districts namely Andaman and Nicobar. Andaman District has Two Sub-Divisions and Six Tehsils and Nicobar District has Two Sib-Divisions and Three Tehsils.

Since pre-historic times, these islands were the home of aboriginal tribes. But the first settlement by the British took place in 1789, which was later abandoned in 1796. The second settlement was basically a penal settlement, taken up in 1858, after the First War of Independence, followed by the settlement of convicts, Moplahs, some criminal tribes from Central and United Provinces, refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan and Sri Lanka as well as ex-servicemen.

■ Major Projects

1. Seat Allotment System for A & N Administration (Education)
2. Accounts & Budget System for Pay & Accounts Office
3. Budget & Works Monitoring System for Andaman Public Works Department
4. Public Distribution System for Civil Supplies
5. Court Cases Monitoring System for All Departments of A & N Administration
6. Govt. Guest House Allotment System for Tourism Department

■ Seat Allotment System Implementation for Directorate of Education

Since Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands does not have any Engineering/Medical Colleges and lacks facilities for training in some specific fields of technical education, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education) reserves seats in Professional/Technical/Non-Technical Courses at the level of degree and diploma in the institutions approved by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

The Andaman & Nicobar Administration allocates these reserved seats to the candidates who have studied in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. To make the seat allocation more efficient and effective and to avoid the complaints of dissatisfaction from the public, the administration has introduced the computerization for the allocation of seats and institutions. National Informatics Centre, Andaman & Nicobar Unit has developed the software system which meets the requirements of the

administration to make the allotment process transparent to the students as well as parents in order to avoid any duplication and malpractice.

This software has been successfully running from 1992 onwards. Allotment process has been made transparent. The Lt. Governor lauded this project by saying

"The software package developed by NIC Port Blair for allotment of seats to various medical and engineering and other technical institutions was instrumental in completing the complicated seat allotment process in time, in a transparent manner"

■ **Training Programmes**

National Informatics Centre, A & N UT Unit has been conducting training programmes for the officials of administration as well as central government departments. NIC is providing training for the purpose of developing computer awareness and to spread information technology culture in government departments.

Training for central Govt. & administration are held round the year as described in training calendar, on computer awareness & introduction to Information Technology, Office Tools, E-mail & Networking etc
Special Training programmes on request from departments have been taken up for the

- **Panchayat Secretaries**
- **Police personnel**
- **ANIIDCO & ANFPDC personnel**

All the courses are being offered free of cost. The course material is also provided. The course contents have been carefully designed to meet the emerging needs of the users in order to make optimum use of computing facilities. At the end of each training programme, strengths and weaknesses of the course are discussed and participants' feedback is taken. Improvements based on their feedback are incorporated in the subsequent courses. NIC is conducting tests and issuing certificates.

■ **IT Culture in Panchayats**

As per the 73rd Amendment of constitution, 67 Gram Panchayats, 7 Panchayat Samities and 1 Zilla Parishad started functioning from Oct. 1995. Two five-day training programmes in computer awareness and office automation were conducted for 67 Panchayat Secretaries. The knowledge of computers imbibed by Panchayat Secretaries during the training programme would contribute towards computerization of Gram Panchayat in all the islands of Andaman & Nicobar. The participants, came from panchayats starting from the northern most tip of Andaman i.e. Diglipur to the southernmost tip of Nicobar i.e. Campbell Bay. The training programme was widely appreciated. The Panchayat Secretaries are the key functionaries of the Panchayat because they can guide the people of the area about networking with the outside world. The role of computers and connectivity is more important to these islands because of their remoteness and the shortage of transport and communication facilities.

Payroll software has been implemented in the Directorate of Panchayat and Zilla Parishad. Budget and Expenditure Monitoring System has been implemented in the Directorate of Panchayat and Zilla Parishad. The data of total 75 PRIs i.e. 67 Gram Panchayats, 7 Panchayat Samities and 1 Zilla Parishad is being maintained. This interlinking of Panchayati Raj Institutions would be a major step to spread Information Technology culture in the islands, which is one of the main objectives of NIC.

■ **Video Conferencing in A & N islands**

A major land mark was achieved by the A & N Islands UT Unit of NIC when the Lt. Governor, A & N Islands launched the Video Conferencing Setup for the Andaman & Nicobar Administration on 25th July, 2001. He had a talk with Director

General, NIC, New Delhi, over VC. The Lt. Governor lauded the efforts of NIC for moving one step further in the IT Sector and said Video conferencing will enable the Administration to cut down unnecessary travelling and speed up the decision making process.

The Lt. Governor later wrote the following to Dr. N. Vijayaditya "It was a pleasure to inaugurate the videoconferencing facility and have a videoconference with you. I am hopeful that this facility would prove to be of immense use to these islands especially considering their remoteness".



There have been a number of video conferences held after its set up. A few among them are the video conference held between MANAGE, Hyderabad and Officials and Scientists of CARI, Agriculture, Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry; Chief Secretary and Secretary (IT), A&N administration with DG(NIC) to discuss plans for implementation of IT policy in these islands; Officials from Directorate of Agriculture with NIC Officials on AGMARKNET implementation. Senior officials and working staff of the Directorate of Accounts and Budget also attended training on PAO2000 software over VC. Apart from this, the NIC officials at A&N UT unit have been attending, over VC, the training programmes and seminars held regularly at NIC Headquarters.

■ **VC-with DAMA**

Recently Video Conferencing with DAMA Modem has also been successfully installed in NIC, A&N UT Unit with a brief talk between SIO, A & N UT Unit and VC Division, NIC (HQ). SCPC uses a dedicated bandwidth whereas DAMA uses bandwidth on demand by multiple users. With SCPC, connectivity is through New Delhi whereas with DAMA, the sites on INTELSAT are connected to each other directly. The other sites in India on INTELSAT, using DAMA facility, are Pondicherry, Goa and Ranchi. Those sites on PANAMSAT have to be connected through New Delhi. VC through DAMA at Port Blair was demonstrated to the Japanese delegation in a function at NIC Headquarters, New Delhi.

■ **Workshop on BioMedical Research and Internet**

NIC, A & N UT Unit, in collaboration with the MEDLARS division, NIC Headquarters, New Delhi has organized a workshop on "Biomedical Research and Internet" on the 11th and 12th of August, 2001. This workshop was organized to impart knowledge to the doctors and medical researchers of Port Blair about this facility of NIC. Directorate of Health Services appreciated the step taken by NIC, UT Unit .

"Website is comprehensive, illustrative, informative and user friendly. The website would go a long way in disseminating information and promoting tourism in these islands".

Apart from the websites hosted at New Delhi, there is a local web server with URL 'www.and.nic.in' at Port Blair, which hosts the electoral roll of Andaman and Nicobar Parliamentary Constituency, telephone directory and citizen's help desk. It is also used for hosting the departmental websites before they are finally hosted on New Delhi server.

A & N POLICE WEBSITE

www.and.nic.in/police

The official website of Andaman & Nicobar Police was formally inaugurated by the Chief Secretary, A & N Administration, Dr. R.Padmanabhan on 22nd January 2002 at Police Head Quarters, Port Blair.

Shri. Manish Kumar Aggarwal, Superintendent of Police, Nicobar District in his brief presentation thanked NIC for the co-operation in launching the website. The website gives information about history, mission, citizen's charter, forms, crime trends, immigration, island communication and services like fire service and tourist police.

LABOUR WEBSITE

This is the official website of Department of Labour, Employment and Training. The website explains the various procedures involved in obtaining licences, registration, lodging complaints/ claims, enforcing Labour Laws and payment of Workmen's Compensation in respect of Labour Commissioner's office. All the utility forms prescribed under various Acts/ Rules are readily available in the website and can be downloaded even without approaching the office. The relevant statutory provisions have been quoted for their enlightenment as well as for verifying the correctness of the procedures. This website also highlights the various functions of Employment Exchange and Industrial Training Institute.

■ **Electoral Roll computerization**

The entire voters' list of Andaman & Nicobar Islands Parliamentary Constituency comprising three lakh voters in 370 Polling Stations have been put up the net. People can log on the site to check if one has been correctly listed on the electoral rolls. The district administration has computerized electoral roll in the year 1995. This is the first time it has been published on the net with the help of NIC, Port Blair. Voters can search their name in the desired Polling Station by selecting the locality in which they reside.

■ **Internet Services**

Internet services have been provided to the central government offices and offices of Andaman & Nicobar Administration using Local Area Network and Dial up connection through the SCPC VSAT installed at Secretariat Complex. So far, 30 dial up connections have been provided including those at Raj Niwas. 100 nodes of the Secretariat and neighbourhood offices viz. Directorate of Tribal Welfare, High Court, District Court, Directorate of Information Publicity and Tourism, District Administration etc. have been provided with Internet connectivity through LAN.

For further information, please contact
State Informatics Officer, NIC, A&N UT unit
Room No. 11, Old Pradesh Council Bldg Secretariat Complex,
Port Blair - 744 101

Tel: 03192-32733

Email : sio@and.nic.in, andaman@hub.nic.in

Bio-medical Information Services of NIC for the Medical Professionals

Naina Pandita, NIC HQ

Indian MEDLARS Centre (IMC) was set up in 1986, as a collaborative project between Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi and National Informatics Centre (NIC), to provide biomedical information services from the MEDLARS databases of National Library of Medicine (NLM), USA. The Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval Systems (MEDLARS) have over 40 biomedical/health related databases amongst which MEDLINE (MEDLARS Online) is the largest and the most commonly used bibliographic database in the field of medicine.

■ The Background

In the beginning, information needs of the users were catered to from MEDLINE CDROM database and to some extent from Online searching of the database, directly from NLM. These services were expanded to include information services from Internet resources and CDROM databases as well as support services like providing of full-text of journal articles, training programmes and user-awareness programmes. IMC developed a database of peer reviewed Indian biomedical journals and it was developed keeping in view the poor coverage of Indian journals in international databases. At present, this database houses information from 76 journals from 1986 onwards. This IndMED database is a bibliographic database developed on the lines of the MEDLINE database using the concepts of both keyword as well free-text searching. A user-friendly search engine has been designed enabling the users to access the database using "Simple" or "Advanced" search modes.

■ Going the WWW Way !!

The Centre launched its webpage in August 2000 (<http://indmed.nic.in>), which caters specifically to the information needs of the medical researchers in India. There are innumerable webpages/portals that are targeting the needs of the medical practitioner or the consumer. IMC's page thus has been developed keeping in mind the needs of the researcher. Since its launch in 2000, the page has received a large number of hits and links to it feature in reputed international sites such as the Public Health Library, University of Berkeley, University of Portsmouth's Online Information Service and University Hospital Benjamin Franklin Medical Library (University of Berlin). The IndMED database has been accepted as a competing IT-project in the 2002 Stockholm Challenge Award (a prestigious IT award). The Google Directory has ranked the site amongst the top 5 Indian health websites. The site is ranked as "Excellent" by the Netscape Netcentre's Website Garage; this evaluation is done based on HTML design, Load Time, Browser Capabilities, content etc.

IMC's webpage provides an easy access to biomedical/health information available from IMC and from other biomedical Internet resources. The main features of the webpage are:

Access to IndMED database.

Live Chat (a special chat room for medical specialists)

Links to Internet biomedical / health resources (both for the professional and the consumer, nursing

professionals, health librarians). **This includes links to NLM's resources.**

Links to medical journals available on the Internet.

Lectures by medical specialists

Details of IMC's services (databases, training, etc).

Web-enabled training BRS/SEARCH tutorial.

Downloadable Training Manual Search Request forms (which can be submitted directly from the webpage) as well as a feedback form

Links to Internet resources on diseases that are prevalent in the country (Malaria, Japanese Encephalitis, Hepatitis, Cholera and Typhoid).

Links to Biological/Chemical Warfare

A chat room has been created on NIC Chat server for medical specialists. Known as Live@IndMED this room would enable easy communication between specialists. A feature of the room also includes "Celebrity Chat" wherein doctors can chat with renowned medical experts.

With the launch of the webpage, IMC has been able to reach out to the users in the remotest areas of the country. Doctors, medical students and researchers can log on to the website and get the information they need right from their homes, offices or NIC State/District Centres. The page has been described as a "treasure trove" for the Indian medical researcher in the Economic Times of 10th March 2002.

	The Indian MEDLARS Centre's website has also received tremendous recognition from international associations and has received awards both for its content and design. Partial list includes ...
Superior Resource Community Site Award" - Nu-Horizons Design Studio	
Best "Education site" - Site Design, USA.	
NSO Topsite Award - 2002	
Bronze Neovizion Award	
Golden Web Award for 2002-2003 - International Association of Webmasters and Designers	
APC Web Development Excellence Award (for the IndMED search engine)	
Majon Web Select "SEAL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD"	

Training

Training programmes are conducted in "Online Searching of Biomedical Information" for medical professional as well as for the NIC state centres' and district centres' staff. These 5-day programmes include lectures as well as hands-on practice sessions and aim at helping the participants in effective searching of the MEDLINE database.

IMC also conducts special 2-3 days workshops on "Biomedical Resources and Internet" for medical professionals as well as medical library professionals. These workshops have been conducted at NIC offices in New Delhi, Pune, Bhubaneswar and Port Blair.

The centre also organizes special teleconsultation sessions for doctors in North East and Sikkim using NIC's VC facilities and in these sessions medical specialists are invited to interact with these doctors.

With a clear aim to effectively meet the information needs of the professionals in the country. IMC plans to forge ahead of other health/biomedical websites by providing informative and concrete content to the target audience.

For further information, please contact
Indian Medlars Centre, Bibliographic Informatics Division
National Informatics Centre
A-Block, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road
New Delhi-110003 :Tel No. 91-11-4362359
Email : medinfo@hub.nic.in

Technology update

E-Learning :

From Dr S.C. Gupta, NIC HQ

Evolution of information technology has given rise to new ways of imparting education, particularly Distance Learning, which can now be effectively enriched with computer communication technology. E-learning is basically distance learning augmented by computer communication technology. It is more effective distance learning anywhere, anytime. This new mode of learning also addresses the issue of interaction with instructor. The participants in e-learning can become a part and get the feel of a virtual classroom, where interaction with instructor and other participants is possible

Issues in e-learning

In order to understand the pros and cons of e-learning solutions, one needs to grasp the various aspects in traditional class room learning, which even today is the most effective way of learning. Once these issues are understood, one can see how these are being addressed in an e-learning solution which is being examined for adopting in the organization.

The issues involved in instructor based classroom education are listed as follows

Contents:	Content Preparation Home Work Preparation
Delivery	Lecture delivery Student presentation
Access	Contents (Lecture, HW) Teacher Peer/group
Interaction	Between Students :: Synchronous (class, lab, telephone) :: Asynchronous (voice mail, e-mail) Between Faculty & Students :: Synchronous (class, office, lab) :: Asynchronous (voice mail, e-mail)
Assessment /Feedback	Exams Home Work Individual and group presentations
Administrative Issues	Course information Registration Assistance Library Resources

In the above list, access to teachers, peer group and interaction among them, which play an important role in the

learning process are the challenges for the e-learning solution providers

Spectrum of e-learning solutions

E-learning solutions form a wide spectrum as discussed below

Self learning material: On one side, we have instructional material on CDs or retrievable through the web. The learning is totally driven by the participant.

Instructor led e-learning: Next, we have instructor driven e-learning; where the material / exercises are delivered through the web, lecture by lecture. The student browses through the material and submits the exercises for review by the instructor. Query by students of the virtual classroom are addressed by the instructor in offline mode and are visible to the entire virtual class.

On-line learning: On the other extreme, we have a virtual classroom having online session with the instructor through satellite based broadcast. The student can receive the broadcast online using DirectPC kind of equipment or other broadband medium. The student screen shows the slides as well as the instructor video in a window. The instructor can pose a yes / no question to the class, which the students can answer; the cumulative answer is immediately available to the instructor. Students can raise hands (logically) for asking on line questions. After permission from the instructor, the student can speak out the question which can then be addressed by the instructor. Questions can also be asked using e-mail, which can be compiled by the instructor assistant, and then addressed by the instructor.

E-learning Materials

E-learning material is available at a variety of levels. At the simplest level, it could be purely text oriented. The concepts are presented as text pages, which are followed by quiz to test the understanding of the learner. Next level could use product screen dumps to provide look of the product in various usage conditions. More advanced products provide a look and feel of the product to the learner. The learner is demonstrated a certain feature, and then asked to perform a simple task using the product interface. The latter provides a more effective learning experience.

Just in Time E-learning

E-learning material is organized in terms of skillets, i.e. a simple well defined skill is taught / learnt at a time. After learning the basic skills, one can start using the product. Advanced features can be learnt as and when required. Thus the need to learn all the advanced features at a time is not present. Moreover whatever is learnt, if not used, tends to be forgotten. Thus the effort spent in acquiring knowledge which cannot be immediately applied in work environment is lost. Just in time learning makes it possible to learn the required skills as and when needed.

In most training programmes, which are time bound in nature (3-5 days), one is only able to gain awareness and introductory skills. The chance to learn advanced features is rare and hence usage of products remains at a low level. Possibility of learning new features as and when needed, makes it possible to upgrade one's skill on a continuous basis.

Changed Role of the Instructor :

It has been realized that in product based learning, much of the time is spent in learning the various features / aspects of the product, for which effective guidance can be provided by e-learning material. The instructor's time can thus be devoted to conceptual level input and problem discussions, reducing the demand on instructor's time.

Learning Management System (LMS):

E-learning environment in an organization or training institution providing this mode of learning requires management of the entire e-learning process. LMS should support registration of participants for various modules, keep track of sub-modules covered, quiz results etc. E-learning supporting instructor led learning, should also support delivery of modules, exercises, submission of solutions and questions and answers in virtual class mode. It should also support integration of third party e-learning material etc.

Blended e-learning solution for organisations

In an organization, e-learning solution has to be identified after studying the training requirements, ICT and other training infrastructure available and the scale of training needed. No single e-learning product can satisfy the requirements of all. E-learning solution has to be properly blended with classroom education / training.

E-learning Limitations:

Self learning has several disadvantages. Learning is left entirely to the initiative of the individual. The success of learning thus depends on the motivational level of the learner. Remote instructor involvement or monitoring of some kind or time bound registration etc can bring some level of discipline required for effective learning. Social impact of peer group in learning and personal development is also lacking.

Not all aspects of training can be covered using e-learning techniques. For examples, disciplines which required development of sensory/motor skills, like in machine operations, surgical operations etc cannot be taught using e-learning techniques. However, e-learning can help in reducing the time required on campus for practical experiments and hence the demand on the physical resources; as the academic part can be pre-delivered through the e-learning mechanism.

E-learning Status in India:

E-learning has made inroads in India. E-learning solutions are being offered by various training institutions. Several multinational products are also available through Indian tie-ups. Many organizations have opted for e-learning solutions to meet their corporate training needs.

E-learning in Govt.:

The users trained in NIC in 3-5 days training get an introductory exposure to variety of office automation products, but do not get much time to practice. E-learning CDs of these products can be prepared / acquired from outside sources and provided to the participants for later re-learning or self learning of more advanced features. Instructor lectures can be video recorded and broadcast through satellite as per pre-announced time schedule, which can be received at user locations for instructional guidance of the trainees followed by the use of e-learning material.

E-learning at NIC:

The training requirement of NIC professionals is quite large i.e around 2 weeks of training per year for each technical

personnel which is required for learning at least 2 products in a year. This scale of training need can be best met by a blend of class room training at NIC HQ, a few selected state level training facilities and e-learning solutions. E-learning products are in the process of being identified to promote distance e-learning. Live satellite broadcast of technical seminars; video recording for later transmission and conversion to e-learning materials etc. are also being implemented.

More than 800 websites of the various entities of Government of India are now being hosted on NIC's web servers, located all across the country. These sites, along with other Govt of India websites are also listed at <http://goldirectory.nic.in>. Here's a glimpse of some of the new websites launched on NIC's web servers during the last quarter

District Lahaul Spiti, Himachal Pradesh

<http://hplahaulspiti.nic.in>

From Ajay Chahal, our HP Correspondent

Prof Prem Kumar Dhumal, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh launched the official website of District Lahaul Spiti on 10th April'2002. The website assumes significance in view of the fact that this remote tribal district is cut off by road for more than 6 months in a year during the winter season and the site is a major source of information for the people who wish to visit the District.



The website provides information about the history, culture, tourism, facts, monasteries, trek routes, administration etc. The tourism section is very elaborate and covers everything like tourist maps, important distances, adventure tourism, fairs & festivals, monasteries, accommodation availability, places to visit etc. The role of the district administration has also been highlighted along with various achievements during the recent years despite the hostile geographical conditions. The website has been developed jointly by the district administration and National Informatics Centre, Himachal Pradesh.

Citizen's Charters Online

<http://goicharters.nic.in>

From Anil Rathore, NIC HQ

A Citizen's Charter represents the commitment of an Organisation towards standard, quality and time frame of service delivery, grievance redress mechanism, transparency and accountability. Department of Administrative Reforms and

Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India, in its efforts to provide more responsive and citizen-friendly governance coordinates the efforts to formulate and operationalise Citizen's Charters. These citizen charters have now been put on the WWW on a website designed and developed by NIC in association with the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. The site already contains citizen charters of around 70 Depts/Ministries/Organisations and more are being added regularly. An important feature of the site is a list of Nodal Officers of various departments who may be contacted for any query/clarification.

HP Board of School Education, Dharamshala

<http://hpeducationboard.nic.in>

From Ajay Chahal, our HP Correspondent

This website provides comprehensive information about activities being carried out by the Himachal Pradesh School Education Board including examination regulations, downloadable forms, scholarships, affiliation procedures, searchable lists of affiliated schools/exam centres, schedule of fees, dates of declaration of exam results and the results of 8th, 10th, Plus One and Plus Two classes.



The website and results' interfaces have been developed by NIC Himachal Pradesh State Unit, Shimla and the site was formally inaugurated by Prof Prem Kumar Dhumal , Hon'ble Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh on 9th May, 2002

Baran District, Rajasthan

<http://www.baran.nic.in>

From Amit Agarwal, DIO Baran

The website of Baran District in Rajasthan presents useful information about the district like historical background , geographical information, 2001 census, social life, administrative setup, tourist information, fairs & festivals, government telephone directory, road & rail network in the district, scope of industries, development activities under DRDA, ICDS & DPIP, brief notes about the 'Sahariya' primitive tribe and information technology developments.



One can also download various useful application forms from the website. Besides, the option has been provided in the website for lodging grievances to the District Collector. The website, designed & developed by NIC Baran District Unit was launched by Shri. R. K. Jain, IAS, Collector & District Magistrate, Baran, on the occasion of 11th Baran District Foundation Day

Malappuram District, Kerala

<http://malappuram.nic.in>

From Basheer Ahammed, DIO Malappuram

The Website of Malappuram District in Kerala has been designed and developed by NIC District unit with the support of NITPU Kochi.. The site contains in-depth details about the history, geography, administration, departments, infrastructure, education, tourism, elections, basic statistics, personalities, maps, telephone and email directories of the district. The site provides an opportunity to the public to send their grievances directly to the District Collector who ensures timely action. There are plans to include the daily news of the district and government tenders on the website shortly. The site was formally launched by Sh. E.T. Mohammed Basheer , M.L.A and Former Education Minister of Kerala State.

Web Enabled Electoral Rolls

<http://mcepkl.chd.nic.in>

From Sunil Kumar, our Haryana Correspondent

Web Enabled Electoral Rolls [WEER], designed and developed by NIC, is an attempt to facilitate an electronic interaction between the citizens and the Government regarding the electoral rolls prepared for the conduct of Municipal Elections in Panchkula, Haryana.



Public can query draft electoral rolls on various parameters, submit their claims & objections online, check in which ward their house lies, download forms for manual submission of claims & objections. Apart from this, municipal act/ election rules, election schedule, official directory and feedback form is also available. The site was launched at Panchkula by Sh. L M Goyal, IAS , Chief Secretary, Haryana.

Rural Bazar, Goa

<http://ruralbazargoa.nic.in>

From C Chandran, SIO Goa

The rural artisans in Goa produce a number of beautiful products from coconut shells, sea shells, cotton threads, clay etc. However, lack of marketing is a serious set-back to their promotion in the commercial arena. Rural Bazar Goa is an endeavour of the Department of Rural Development to provide an avenue for the Goan artisans to present the rich traditional and cultural arts and crafts of Goa to the world community over the Internet.



The website, designed and hosted by NIC will act as a link between the prospective buyers and the artisan. People can see the pictures of the products put up on the website and place orders through email which are then passed on to the artisans. The web site intends to help the rural artisans by publicizing, promoting and marketing their products thus enabling them to actively participate in the global market. Future plans of the site include an introduction of online order booking and payment. The site was formally inaugurated by Sh. Manohar Parrikar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Goa at a special function.

Sambalpur District, Orissa

<http://ori.nic.in/sambalpur>

From A K Hota our Orissa Correspondent

Sambalpur District, the gateway to the bewitching western zone of Orissa, went online with the launch of its Official Website on 2nd May 2002. The website, developed by NIC Sambalpur Unit, in association with the District authorities is a good endeavour towards making people aware about the ancient center of diamond trade and the Hirakud dam, one of the longest mainstream dams in the world. The Website comprises comprehensive information about the various facets of District Administration, Welfare Programmes, Statistical Figures, Cooperative Activity, Self-Help Groups, Social Organisations etc. Apart from information about the profile, demography, history, topography, communication, important telephone numbers, maps, etc an attractive photo gallery provides pictures of the religious and historical sites, important landmarks and sons of the soil of the District. The site was inaugurated by Shri Susil Kumar Lohani, I.A.S, District Magistrate & Collector, Sambalpur who appreciated the role played by the NIC District Unit's team in the development of the website.

Cyber Police, Bangalore

<http://cyberpolicebangalore.nic.in>

From Sonal Kalra, NIC HQ

Cyber Crime may be defined in a general way as an unlawful act wherein the computer is either a tool or a target or both. While Internet has proved to be a boon for many, there are others who become unfortunate targets of cyber crime. This site, hosted on NIC's webserver helps the visitors deal with instances of cyber crimes in the IT city of Bangalore. The website defines various kinds of possible cyber crimes and how the cyber crime cell of the Bangalore Police takes the offenders to task. The site also has useful information about the IT Act and tips and guidelines for E-security.

Deptt of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances

<http://darpn.nic.in>

From Sonal Kalra, NIC HQ

The mission of Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances is to act as a facilitator, in consultation with Central Ministries/ Departments, States/ UT Administrations, Organisations and individuals, to improve Government functioning through administrative reforms in the spheres of restructuring the Government, process improvement, Organisation and Methods and Grievance handling, and by promoting modernization, Citizen's Charters, award schemes, e-governance, and best practices. The Department has revamped its earlier website to launch this updated version containing in-depth information on the Department's activities, its important documents, rules and procedures, directory services, central govt schemes etc.

Apart from the above website, the department has also launched, on NIC's web server, an 'online public grievance lodging and monitoring system' at the URL :

<http://darp-grievance.nic.in/>

The system has been developed with an objective of speedy redress and effective monitoring of grievances by the department besides providing faster access to the public. This website allows the citizens to lodge their grievances, send reminders, view the 'action taken status' and even set a password to maintain the confidentiality of their grievance.

Informatics - in Official Language !!

In tune with the implementation and propagation of the Government's official language policy at NIC, some portions of Informatics Newsletter are now being brought out in Hindi by the Hindi Unit at NIC Headquarters. The hindi version, captioned "Rashtriya Sookhna Vigyan Kendra ki Chaturdik Ghatanayan" has been annexed with the last three issues of the English Newsletter.

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Happenings

Infrastructure set-up at Kabul

HS Hora, Anand Srivastava & Ashok Kumar NIC HQ

- NIC played an active role in India's support towards the new regime at Afghanistan when its team installed VSATs and other IT infrastructure at the Foreign Affairs Office at Kabul.



Along with the installation of two VSATs (2.4 Mt and 1.8 Mt), an entire server room was set-up with server and client machines and complete communication network.



The NIC team which stayed at Kabul for two weeks comprised Mr HS Hora, Mr Anand Swaroop Srivastava and Mr Ashok Kumar. In his letter of appreciation sent after a Videoconferencing session of the Indian External Affairs Minister Sh Jaswant Singh, the Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Dr Abdullah Abdullah remarked " ***This achievement was made possible by your Country's prompt response to our request and implemented by a competent team of four young Indian engineers and computer professionals who spent several days in Kabul helping in the implementation and training of our staff in the new technology..***"

AGMARKNET Workshop

From YD Sharma, NIC HQ



- A one day National Workshop on "Strategies for use of IT in the Agricultural Marketing during 10th Plan period" was recently organised jointly by Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI), Ministry of Agriculture and NIC. NIC is executing the prestigious project 'NICNET based Agricultural Marketing.

Information Network - AGMARKNET" which is a 'farmer-centric' project playing a catalytic role in the upliftment of the farming community. The workshop was attended by Officials of the State Agricultural Marketing Boards/ Directorates, Regional Offices of DMI and project co-ordinators of NIC. The workshop was addressed, among others, by Agricultural Marketing Advisor & Joint Secretary (Marketing), Director General (NIC) and Deputy Director General (NIC) Sh. M Moni.

Artefacts Digitisation Plan by NIC

From M Moni, NIC HQ

- A proposal for digitisation and documentation of art objects and artefacts preserved in various central and state museums, submitted by NIC has been approved by the Department of Culture, Govt of India. The Department of Culture is striving to change museums all across the Country into multi-cultural complexes engaged in promoting art, education, research and appreciation. A software titled "Natraj" developed by NIC has already been deployed in 20 museums in various states. Preparatory project work, to bring out an integrated CD-ROM entitled National Register of Art Objects comprising documented and digitised rare art objects has been undertaken.
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Budget Computerization at West Bengal

From Motiur Rahaman, our West Bengal correspondent

- West Bengal has earned the distinction of becoming the lead state in the Country to prepare a fully computerised State Budget. A software developed by NIC West Bengal State Unit for the Finance Department has proved to be an indispensable tool for formulating the figures of the revised budget of the previous year, annual budget for the ensuing financial year and monitoring the day-to-day activities of the Budget section in an efficient way. The software enables

the State Government to make forecasts of the state budget even for the next ten years.



Apart from the development of the budget software, the speech of the finance minister was webcast live by NIC and a CD-ROM has also been prepared containing all budget publications. Dr N Vijayaditya, Director General (NIC) recently met with Dr Asim Sengupta, Hon'ble Finance Minister, West Bengal and discussed the future plans for NIC's support in the activities of the State finance department.

IT Kiosk Project Inaugurated

From YD Sharma, NIC HQ

■ Dnyanada, an IT Kiosk Project at Rajapur in Maharashtra was initiated in collaboration with NIC to bring the world of knowledge to the doorsteps of Rajapur through Information Communication Technology. The Thrust area of the project was use of IT for rural masses. In the first phase 10 blocks of Rajapur constituency



were covered by support of NIC. MITCON, Pune is taking forward this project in the 2nd phase under the name 'Vicharganga', which was inaugurated by Bharat Ratna Dr. Abdul Kalam at a recent function. Sh. YD Sharma, Senior - Technical Director, NIC addressed the gathering at the occasion.

Inauguration of 'NAI DISHA' Project

From Sunil Kumar, our Haryana Correspondent

■ New Agent of Information - District level Integrated Services of Haryana for All [NAI DISHA] project was inaugurated by Sh Om Prakash Chautala, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Haryana in a function at Panchkula. NAI DISHA is a web based system, developed by NIC-Haryana State Unit, and includes Government-to-Citizen [G2C], Citizen-to-Government [C2G], Government-to-Government [G2G] services. The 22 public services include Public Grievances, Old Age Pension, Widow Pension, Handicapped Pension, Birth Certificate, Death Certificate, Forms & Procedures of Schemes, Yellow Pages, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Antodaya Beneficiaries Details, Sarkar Apke Dwar [CM Announcements] Progress, Revenue Court Cases Cause List, Below Poverty Line [Rural] list etc. A LAN has been established in Mini Secretariat, Panchkula with 15 nodes and the first ever workflow application operational on LAN is Online Grievances Monitoring Information System [OGIS]. NAI DISHA is operational at 5 Locations [2 Tehsils & 3 Sub-Tehsils] using dialup. During the function, the Chief Minister gave certificates of honour to the NIC team working on the project. .

Query Counter at Jaipur High Court

From Deepak Bhargava, our Rajasthan correspondent

■ A computerized query counter at Rajasthan High Court Bench, Jaipur was inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Arun Kumar, the Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court at Jaipur Bench, Jaipur. This query counter, set up by NIC Rajasthan State Unit facilitates litigants and advocates to make queries of their cases through various parameters such as title of the case, next date of listing, present stage of the case etc. On an average, about 700 queries are being processed daily.

Disability Certificate Issuance System

From Mukesh K Ralli, our Himachal Pradesh Correspondent

■ On request from the Social and Women Welfare Department of Himachal Pradesh, NIC Himachal Pradesh State Unit has prepared a software for online issuance of the Disability Certificate known as Disability Certificate Issuance System (DCIS). Earlier, the State Government through the welfare department was issuing certificates manually to the disabled persons so as to enable them to avail travel concessions, reservations and other benefits under various schemes of the government. The computerized system is now helping the District Welfare Offices to issue the Disability Certificates online, in no time, from the machines installed in the District Welfare Offices.

E-Governance in Campaign Monitoring

From Garima Sagani, our Rajasthan correspondent

- Government of Rajasthan had launched the campaign 'PRASHASAN GAON KE SANG-2001 in the last quarter of year 2001 to solve the public grievances related to 40 schemes under 14 departments. Through out the period of this campaign, the progress of various activities taken up in the campaign were effectively monitored through the web site (pgks2001.raj.nic.in) developed by NIC. This Year too, NIC was assigned the responsibility to look after the Project. A software was developed in Hindi for this purpose, which has been implemented at all the NIC district centres and at the state unit.

Transport Department Computerization

From Gaurav Marwaha, NIC HQ

- The District Transport Office, Shillong of the Government of Meghalaya has gone high tech with the inauguration of the computerisation of this office by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Dr. F.A. Khonglam on the 15th April 2002 by accepting the fee for new vehicle registration and then printing a new Registration Certificate. The NIC, Meghalaya State Unit and the Transport Informatics Group, NIC Headquarters have jointly computerized the office.



Web Enabled Software for Assam Govt

From Tasiruddin Ahmed, our Assam Correspondent

- In a step forward towards e-governance, the Assam Government has adopted to monitor their various people-oriented schemes through a web-enabled software developed at the NIC Assam State Unit, Guwahati. The software, which was developed on the request of the Chief Minister's Secretariat, was demonstrated and formally launched at a Deputy Commissioners' conference held on 22nd and 23rd April 2002. The online system, very aptly named as Performance Evaluation and Enhancement Programme (PEEP), is used to monitor the monthly status of the Government Schemes implemented in the districts.

CIC Workshop at Shillong

From Candida Shadap & Sabyasachi Choudhury NIC Meghalaya



■ A one day Workshop on "E-Governance and Community Information Centres Projects" was jointly organized by NIC and the Information Technology Department, Meghalaya on the 18th April 2002 at Shillong. The Chief Guest, Shri. Cyprian Sangma, Minister of Information Technology, Meghalaya inaugurated the workshop. Senior state government officials attended the workshop. The resource persons included Senior Officers from NIC New Delhi and SIO Andhra Pradesh.

Touch Screen Kiosks inaugurated

From R Gayatri, our Tamil Nadu Correspondent

■ Tamil NILAM (Tamil Nadu Infosystem on Land Administration and Management) is an important e-Governance initiative of Government of Tamil Nadu. All the 206 taluks in the state have been provided with computers under this programme. The major applications on these systems include Land Records, Old Age Pension Management, Certificates Management, Public Grievances Redressal, Personnel Information, Payroll etc. The talukas have been provided with citizen interface counters and additional equipment in the form of Touch Screen Kiosk and Laser Printer.



Application software for Taluk systems and Kiosks have been developed by NIC Tamil Nadu State Unit. The Touch Screen Kiosks were formally inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Selvi J.Jayalalithaa, on 15th April 2002 at Andipatti Taluk.

Bhu-Lekh' Training at Rajasthan

From Garima Sagani, our Rajasthan correspondent

- Rajasthan has been one of the leading states in the country in computerizing its Land Records despite its limited resources, low computer awareness among its people and low literacy rate. The project was initiated in the year 1993-1994 with two districts on pilot basis. It is with cumulative efforts of NIC Rajasthan State Unit, the State Govt. and MRD GOI that Rajasthan is able to step into the next phase of Land Records Computerization i.e., implementing the software at Block Level.

Shifting from District to Block Level also had additional objectives such as distribution of copy of Records of Rights (ROR) to land owners, Mutations Entry, New ROR creation, Crop details entry and report generation etc. As data at Block level is very crucial, it's very necessary that the person who is in-charge of Block Level Bhu-Lekh Computer Centre is well-versed with computer and its peripherals including UPS, software usage and data backups.

To achieve this, NIC Rajasthan has devised a comprehensive training strategy which enables the users to handle the computer centre with minimal help of NIC officials at district. The participating 'Patwaris' are trained extensively in the use of Bhu-Lekh software and other basic computer concepts. A total of 1074 persons have been trained during this training, which spanned over a year at 11 locations.

NIC's Role at ARTI Training , West Bengal

From Motiur Rahaman, our West Bengal Correspondent

- The penultimate day of the Joint Survey & Settlement training of IAS, IPS, WBCS(Exe), WBCS(Judicial) freshers at Analysis Research Training Institute, Salboni, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal , conducted recently, was dedicated for a lecture on "**E-Governance & Computerisation of Land Records**". A team from NIC, led by Dr. Subir Roy, Senior Technical Director and SIO West Bengal NIC made a presentation at the event. Dr. Subir Roy, spoke on the various aspects of e-governance with particular reference to West Bengal. He also highlighted various citizen centric services which can be provided by the Government with the help of available Information Technology tools. Mr. P.K.Pramanik, Technical Director, NIC, also put forward a detailed presentation covering steps for computerization of Land Records including the security measures of Database. Mr. C.R.Das, Deputy Director, Survey, West Bengal, praised NIC for the proactive role in achieving the computerization of Land Records in 93% of the Mouzas.

INFO GRAM Inaugurated at Goa

From C. Chandran, SIO Goa

- INFO GRAM is a one of its kind computerised service centre, facilitated by NIC Goa State Unit, designed with a view to open up information to the rural masses, empower them and involve them actively in the process of nation

building. The project, at the village panchayat level, envisages providing all government services to citizens at one point and shall be implemented in three phases. In the first phase, the services to be provided shall include Birth/ Death registration, issue of certificates, information and application forms of the various central and state government schemes, email, internet access and access to citizen charters of the various departments. The second phase shall include services such as collection of house tax/rent/lease/octroi, construction licensing, crop information, weather information, prices of essential commodities as well as arrival and prices of agricultural commodities at important markets. In the third phase, INFO GRAM envisages creating and maintaining a comprehensive database of all the house-holds and inventory of resources in the village panchayat.



INFO GRAM was inaugurated by Sh Babal Datta Naik, Zilla Panchayat Member, North Goa, at Shiroda Village Panchayat on 16th April'2002.

NIC Personnel honoured at CSI

From Vinod Taneja, our UP Correspondent

■ The Lucknow Chapter of the Computer Society of India (CSI) recently won the "National Best Chapter Award" for the tenure which had Dr Rakesh Goel and Sh Vinod Taneja of NIC as the Chairman and the Secretary respectively. The officers were honoured at the inauguration function of CSI's Northern Region conference by Sh Vishnukant Shastri, Hon'b'e Governor of Uttar Pradesh.



"Son, Alphabet 'E' is patented to us!
It's high time we file a suit!!"



From the Desk of Director General, NIC



**Director General
National Informatics Centre
Department of IT
M/o Communications and Information Technology
Government of India**

E-Governance has come out to mean much more than just launching a Government web site. Today the countries of the world are recognising the importance of clearly defining the concept of 'governance for all' to include a simplified and meaningful interaction between the government and citizens at all levels. And with it has come to the fore, the role of Information and Communication technology in 'catalyzing economic activity and improving governance as also the quality of life of the citizens'.

Much before the term 'e-governance' came into limelight, National Informatics Centre has been working dedicatedly in promoting effective Govt-citizen interaction through the application of ICT at the Central, State and District levels in the Country. The organisation is working full gear towards its mission of providing unstinted IT support, in all possible forms, to the Central and State Governments towards fruitful implementation of their projects, services and schemes for the benefit of the citizens ; and thus helping the Country realise its potential of becoming a global IT superpower in the new millenium.

I am pleased to note that "Informatics", the quarterly newsletter of NIC is reaching new heights and expanding its scope every year. The aim of the newsletter is to bring forth a true reflection of the way ICT activities are having a profound impact on the processes of governance at every nook and corner of the Country. **I congratulate the editorial team of Informatics and wish them all the best in bringing out an informative and meaningful publication highlighting the true spirit of e-governance.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Vijayaditya', written in a cursive style.

(Dr. N. Vijayaditya)

Director General
National Informatics Centre

From the Editor's Desk

Change, they say, forms the spice of life. And change, with a clear purpose and in a positive direction is an essential ingredient for success. What you hold in your hands right now is the result of our efforts towards a positive change....it is an enhanced version of 'Informatics' with enriched content and a whole new 'look'. After the newsletter was revised last year to focus on the concept of e-governance, we were flooded with congratulatory letters from the readers who have been regularly suggesting an increase in the number of pages to include more news and comprehensive information. With the new volume, those suggestions have been implemented. The same could not have been made possible without the active co-operation of our correspondents sitting in every part of the Country. We hope you would appreciate the efforts put in by the Informatics team in bringing out this new version with more content and a fresh layout.

Do write to us and let us know your feedback on the 'change'...

Sonal Kalra

From You to Us

Readers are invited to send their comments/suggestions to the Editor through this column. Your letters may be sent through

email at

inform@hub.nic.in

or by post at the following address :

Room No. 379, 3rd Floor, NIC Headquarters, A-Block, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, N.Delhi 110003

■ **Dear Editor,**

First of all please accept my good wishes for the new and better "Informatics". I hope it will be an even greater success than it is now. The team involved in the publication of Informatics is doing a commendable job and I am sure that you will be able to excel in future.

I have a few suggestions to make for the forthcoming issues of "Informatics".

1. All the news/articles should be presented with good and relevant photographs and graphics. Wherever possible, the size of pictures could also be increased.
2. It would be very nice if a regular or occasional feature is introduced incorporating the feedback/comments etc. from officers of user departments like Collectors/Secretaries/ HODs/Judicial Officers etc. about the services rendered by NIC in their areas.
3. Efforts should be made to increase the circulation and distribution of "Informatics". It should reach a wider audience especially those on the user side.
4. The layout of the news section could be improved with well defined areas/sections for each sector.
5. Let the "Informatics" be used not just as a tool for disseminating information but also as a means for aggressive publicity for NIC's activities and programmes.

Jit Raj,

NIC Jammu & Kashmir

■ **Dear Editor,**

It is really great to see the new look of 'INFORMATICS' since the issue of July,2001. As NIC is the premier organization for the promotion and implementation of E-Governance activities and also rises to the occasion to provide support for the disaster management in case of natural calamities in the country, 'INFORMATICS' should cover as many of these activities as possible. Hence, the size of the newsletter may kindly be increased in order to publish more contents especially in the 'Happening from the World of NIC' and 'E-Governance Success Story' sections. A new section containing the article on the latest Technologies on IT/ Communication may please be considered to be added for the NICians to be professionally updated.

Motiur Rahman
NIC-Midnapore (West Bengal)

🔴 **Dear Editor,**

I am a regular reader of Informatics Newsletter since its inception. I have also been circulating its copies every quarter to important officials of my district who are interested in knowing about NIC's activities. The recent changes made in the presentation of Informatics have given it a good professional look covering variety of subjects & happenings in and around NIC. It is a good communication tool among IT professionals.

Dilip Shitoley,
NIC Gwalior