

Informatics

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Cover Story

Telecommuting Services of NIC

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Are you the one who sits late in the office frequently to finish off important jobs ?..or the one who usually has to rush to the workplace even on weekends to access a document on the office PC ? If yes, the Telecommuting Services of NIC are just for you !!

It has always been a dream for the high profile Executives and Officers in today's competitive world to have a ready access to the work lying in their office computer from anywhere in the world, including the comfort of their homes. It is no longer a dream - it is now a reality with the concept of Telecommuting.

What is Telecommuting ?

Telecommuting is the name given to the revolutionary concept of work culture in which employees work at any time and at any place that allows them to accomplish their work in an efficient manner. Telecommuting is being heralded as a new solution of the Information Age in the new millennium as it promises to completely re-engineer conventional jobs, by effectively eliminating the physical distance between you and your workplace. It offers you something more than just Internet Access or Email, it allows you to have secure access of all the information lying in your Office computer from practically anywhere in the world. An Effective utilization of this technology could mean that you can work on your office files, attend important meetings and

discussions, access public and government databases and web sites ..all from a remote location.

Telecommuting in IT- Led Governance

As we move further from the 'Industrial Age' to the 'Information Age', the Information Technology Task Force set up by the Prime Minister of India has made several recommendations to ensure the implementation of IT-led Governance in the Country. A significant recommendation among these, is Recommendation 91 (part I) which deals with 'Telecommuting' and makes it essential for the Government to provide "Office to Residence" computer communication linkage to the Officers at the decision making level. The task to carry out the recommendation has been assigned by the Government to The National Informatics Centre .

NIC's Telecommuting Programme aims to provide a panorama of services through NICNET, the nationwide computer-communication network, to the category of **'serving and retired Officers of the rank of Joint Secretary or equivalent and above in Central Government as well as equivalent ranks in State Governments'**. A high level committee under the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary had earlier approved that the respective Ministries/Departments would provide Internet ready computers at the residence of the Officers of the rank of Joint Secretary and above in line with the recommendations of the IT Task Force.

NICNET - the ideal vehicle for Telecommuting

Through its nearly 2000 nodes, NICNET, the satellite communication network of NIC, connects the National Capital, the State Capitals and the District Headquarters to one another.

NIC has also set up Sectoral Intranets through Local Area Networks in various Central and State Secretariat Buildings, in collaboration with the respective Ministries, Departments and State Governments. All these networks are interconnected and in turn connected to INTERNET through NICNET.

This vast infrastructure and the wide array of services already in place, makes NICNET the ideal vehicle for Telecommuting. With NICNET, you can not only surf the Internet for web sites but also have a round the clock uninterrupted access to the secure databases of your Department if your office building's LAN is connected to NICNET.

Telecommuting Services over NICNET

If you are an enlisted User of the Telecommuting Services of NIC (TSN), the following services can be availed of :

- E-Mail : Your personalised E-Mail ID through NICNET which shall also act as your Telecommuting Name
- Surfing on the World Wide Web : (unlimited for NICNET Servers but limited upto 500 hours in a year for Internet)
- Hosting Your own web site : You may design your own web site and host your profile on the TSN web server, for free !!
- Access to Ministry/Department's Intranet Servers : If your Ministry already has a LAN connected to the NICNET, TSN provides you an exclusive facility to access your Intranet servers and be in constant touch with your Office from wherever in the world you are. Even if you are on a visit to a remote District of India, NICNET allows you to access your office computer at the cost of a local phone call !!!
- Access to India Image Programme : India Image is a unique project of NIC which is a consolidated portal of over 120 web sites of various Ministries/Departments/Organizations and State Governments. TSN allows you an unlimited access to the India Image site and the web services offered by its constituents.
- Access to Government and Public Databases : TSN promises a fast and uninterrupted access to numerous useful databases which are available in the Govt or Public Domain.

All this is available to the members in the first stage itself. Further, the R&D teams are already working for the second stage to serve you with Voice Recognition Systems in Roaming Terminals (no keyboard !!), Telecommuting access to huge encyclopaedias, millions of pages of text, Bibliography of thousands of Journals, to mention a few.

How to join TSN ?

If you are of the rank of a Joint Secretary or above (or equivalent in Central/State Government) and have a PC already installed at home, all you have to do is contact the address given at the end of the story and fill up the requisite form. NIC shall get back to you with your TSN id and password within three days.

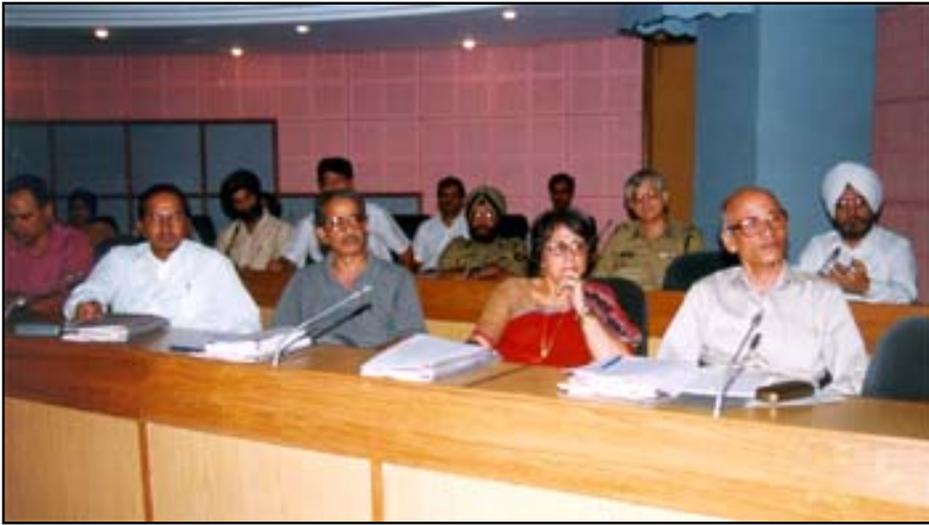
Training

The realisation that the members would like to know more about how they can optimally utilize TSN has prompted NIC to initiate a series of specialized training programmes exclusively for TSN members. These training programmes are being conducted after office hours for the convenience of the participants.

The main objective of these training programmes is to apprise the Senior level Officers of the potentials of IT Tools so as to enable them to use their existing computer infrastructure more effectively. The participants are shown how they can effectively extend their offices to their homes or to a remote location through telecommuting via dial-up and subsequently have the same services available in the office like Internet, E-mail, Access to public databases etc from their home or anywhere in the world. Useful technologies like Via Voice Dictation software (where the computer recognizes the human voice as the means of inputting data), Video Conferencing, Office Automation Package for monitoring pending files etc. are demonstrated during the course of the training. The concept of Intranets within the Ministry/Department is also dealt upon.



This training has been specially designed and meticulously structured keeping in view the different levels of computer awareness and working knowledge of the participants. Hence, the number of lecture sessions have been kept at the required minimum so that more emphasis could be laid on practice sessions. The participants are given a choice of working with work books, assignments etc. depending upon the individual level of computer knowledge. Also in order to provide better assistance, special feedback email accounts have been created where the participants can send their suggestions for improvement in future training programmes.



During the inauguration of a training programme for senior officers on "Computers and Internet" held recently, Dr.N.Seshagiri, Special Secretary and Director General, NIC, stressed on the importance and need for concepts like Telecommuting in order to achieve India's aim of becoming a global super power in the field of IT during the next millennium. Dr.Seshagiri also emphasized on the need for effective usage of Internet technologies for accessing Govt Databases which exist in large numbers and also on selective dissemination of information. He further said that although the Telecommuting Services of NIC are currently limited to Joint Secretaries (or equivalent) and above, there are plans to extend these services to other ranks of Govt Officers in the near future.

Help Desk

In case of any difficulty in Telecommuting over NICNET or any query with regards to any service, one may contact the special Telecommuting Help Desk, operational 24 hours a day..seven days a week at :

Tel No. : 91-11- 4360088

Fax : 91-11-4363665

Email : tsn@nic.in

Around the NIC world

- [IT Awareness Programme at Sikkim](#)
- [Computer Centre Inaugurated](#)
- [Video Conferencing at IFFCO AGM](#)
- [Facilitation Counter at Tripura](#)
- [Rural Development IT Centre in UP](#)
- [E-mail Facility at Department of Agriculture](#)
- [New Web Sites on 'India Image'](#)
- [New Version of Judis CD-ROM](#)
- [Sikkim Electroral Rolls on CD](#)

Products/Services

- Computer Aided Administration of Municipality
- Courts Information System at Chandigarh
- Rajasthan Board Results through the NET
- Accounting Software for FCI

Computer Aided Administration of Municipality

NIC Andhra Pradesh State Unit has developed an Information System on 'Computer-aided Administration of Municipality (CAM)', which has been put to use at Lal Bahadur Nagar (LB Nagar) Municipality near Hyderabad. The system developed under Windows NT, DB2 and Visual Basic environment has at present the modules on Property Tax and Birth & Death Registration System.

Property Tax System

The Property Tax System maintains assessment details such as Assessee particulars, Arrears, Court Cases, Remissions, Exemptions, Write-offs, Multi-storeyed Building details, etc. The system generates all required registers and reports. Some of the important outputs are:

- Demand Notices on pre-printed forms
- Bill collection reports
- Base Registers
- Hand/Field Books
- Ward-wise reports
- Bill Collector-wise reports

- Periodical reports for the day or month, etc.

Birth & Death Registration System

Birth & Death Registration System takes the inputs from prescribed forms on Live Births or Deaths informed by an individual or hospital. The system in use at LB Nagar Municipality generates the following outputs, as per the standard forms:

- Birth Certificate
- Death Certificate
- Live Birth Register
- Death Register



The Info System being demonstrated to the Municipal Commissioner

Courts Information System at Chandigarh

The NIC Chandigarh UT Unit recently implemented "District Courts Information System (DCIS)" at District Courts, Chandigarh. A centrally located room in the Court complex has been selected for the purpose and suitable infrastructure along with a separate telephone line has been set up for dial-up connectivity. A week long training course was also organized at NIC UT Unit to train the staff of District Courts. During this training, trainees were given hands-on on Uniplex apart from teaching them about the basics of computers. A demonstration for the judges was also organized in the computer centre at District Courts where the usage of DCIS software was demonstrated. The future plans of the Unit include linking not only the City Courts but also the Punjab and Haryana High Courts.

Rajasthan Board Results through the NET

For the first time in the history of Rajasthan Board of Secondary Education, the Results of Class 10th and 12th were successfully announced through the Internet this year, using NICNET. NIC declared the Results at all the District Headquarters in the State and the NIC Centres were flocked by thousands of anxious students, who appeared to have more faith in verifying the Results through Internet than the newspapers.



Students flocking to NIC Centre for Results

For related stories on Exam Results through the Net, please refer Informatics [July, 1999 issue](#).

Accounting Software for FCI

Food Corporation of India has been making use of the services of NIC for many of their computerisation activities. As part of a National level plan, NIC Andhra Pradesh State Unit has developed the software 'District Accounting System (DIAS)' for use in FCI District Units. The pilot project taken up at Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh was accepted for implementation at the National level by the Committee consisting of senior officers of FCI.

The software captures all transactions relating to Receipts, Payments, Purchase, Sales and Movements of food grains. The data captured from the vouchers is recorded as per their procedure for book keeping and used to generate all required original books of entries. Pass orders are generated for purchases of Rice and Paddy by capturing the supplier details, variety,

storage depot and quality analysis details. The system assists the field offices to carry out their works faster and efficiently.

Nineteen training programmes were conducted in all parts of the Country during Feb-Jun 1999 by NIC AP State Unit in coordination with Food and Civil Supplies Division of NIC HQ and concerned NIC State Units. About 500 officials from more than 200 offices of FCI have received training in the use of this software.

The present version of the system is for use under Unix environment available at FCI District Units. New version for use under Windows environment is under development, which will also be useful for State Civil Supplies Corporations.



Training programme for FCI Personnel at Guwahati

Projects

- Delhi Government, on the path of 'Cyber Governance'
 - Treasury Computerization in Bihar
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Delhi Government, on the path of 'Cyber Governance'

With Internet promising to be the revolutionary technology of the millennium, Governments all over the world are conceptualizing and implementing "cyber-governance", a concept sure to make life easy for the common man. One of the features of a Cyber Governance regime is the easy availability of all govt information, application forms etc. required by the public for various purposes right on the User's desktop, thus saving a lot of time otherwise wasted in running from one desk to another.

Delhi, being the Country's capital, already has a large base of Internet users and thus presented a suitable case for adopting the concept of cyber governance. As a first step in this direction, the Delhi Chief Minister's Office decided to launch a full fledged Official web site of the Delhi Government, and the task to Design, Develop and Host the Web Site was assigned to NIC.

What followed was a series of discussions held between the Senior Officers of the Delhi Govt and the NIC Personnel. Also, a Nodal Officer from each Govt Department was identified to coordinate the task of compiling the material from his/her respective department and handing over the same to the CM Office which further handed it over to NIC's Design Team after due vetting. Subsequently, the Web Site was designed and demonstrated to the Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt Shiela Dixit before a formal launch which took place on 15th August this year.

<http://delhigovt.nic.in>

The Web Site enriched with graphics, text and audio, provides a one point source for all one needs to

know about the Delhi Govt. The highlighting features of the Site include a section on **Licences and Certificates** from where one can get complete information, whether one wants a driving licence or a marriage registration certificate. All relevant application forms can also be downloaded from the site. Another key feature is a module on **Discussion Forums** where the citizens of Delhi can voice their views on topics of common interest initiated by the CM. Also, the Site contains a facility for people to **write directly to the Chief Minister** and submit their suggestions or complaints. Besides, the Web Site contains general information on Delhi, Press releases/ Tenders issued by the Govt and a profile of the Lt Governor, CM, Cabinet Ministers etc.

Treasury Computerization in Bihar

Bihar is one of the medium sized States of India having the second largest population in the Country. Presently the State has 13 Divisions and 55 Districts spanning around 75,566 villages. Since Treasury falls under the purview of State Plan, every District of the State has a Treasury associated with it.

Treasury is the place where all public accounts of the Province are kept. In other words, all the monetary transactions of the Province are conducted through Treasury. District Treasury is not only a principal organ but custodian of Govt money. Needless to say, the proper functioning of Treasury System is a must for every State.

Treasury-Bihar is an organization having an employee strength of 1,00,000 working in different Districts or sub-treasuries. Over the years, the workload at these treasuries had increased manifold and status tracking was becoming difficult. Two years back, State authorities thought of computerization as a possible solution and sought the help of NIC-Bihar State Unit.



Inauguration of Computer centre at District Treasury Office

With the help of the State Finance Deptt, NIC Studied the entire system and proposed a Statewide computerization plan with an investment worth of Rs.6.22 crores. After the approval, NIC expeditiously designed, developed and implemented the software package. The entire implementation action plan was

carried out in two phases. First phase targetted the computerisation of four secretariat treasuries and in the second phase, District treasuries were taken into the action purview. At present , 20 District Treasuries are fully operational with on-line computerised treasury systems and another 20 Districts are on the way.

The salient features of the on-line treasury information system developed by NIC include the ability to handle all validation checks, latest data security features, restriction on any fraudulent withdrawals, generation of regular reports and exception reports etc.

NIC Bihar Unit has been regularly involved in carrying out major computerization projects for the State Finance Deptt. The entire State budget was computerized and released on a CD-ROM by the NIC Unit. A Fully equipped Finance Data Centre has also been set up by NIC and it hopes that very soon, every District Treasury will have a hook-up to the Finance Data Centre through the VSAT.

The State authorities have widely acknowledged the support and co-operation extended by NIC Bihar in taking the State ahead in terms of technology.



Utilization of Computers at Treasury Bihar

NIC Karur District Centre

- NIC's Emergence
 - During Elections
 - Examination Results
 - Key Activities
-

Karur is one of the six newly formed Districts of Tamil Nadu which came into being after a trifurcation of Tiruchy District. Karur has an area of 2958 sq km and Districts Namakkal, Tiruchy, Dindidul and Erode form the boundaries in North, East, South and West respectively. Karur is fairly well developed in terms of industrialization with textile industry being the largest. Some of the famous tourist attractions in the District include two temples in Karur town and Thanthoni Block.

NIC's Emergence

NIC Karur Unit was established in July, 1997 with a modest infrastructure. Things got better with time and the Unit adopted Multipoint System connecting the Data Terminal Equipment system during January 1999. Recently, as a major leap ahead, Karur became the first of the newly formed Districts to have the NICNET connectivity which was inaugurated in February this year by Sh S Ayyar, IAS, District Collector, Karur.



Inauguration of NICNET connectivity at Karur by
Sh. S. Ayyar, Distt collector

During Elections

During the Lok Sabha Elections , NIC Karur played a major role in deploying Poll duty staff at various polling stations throughout six assembly segments. In total, more than 6000 persons were deployed for polling duty. The details of all the polling duty staff members such as sex, cadre, nativity, place of posting etc. were duly entered in the computer. Evaluating these details through NIC's software using "Random number generation technique" (simple random sampling without replacement), they were posted under probability criteria for unbiased posting. The source program modules developed by NIC were inspected and appreciated by the Election Observers and the District Collector. NIC Karur was also associated with the conducting of Doordarshan DRS Exit Poll for "26 Karur Parliamentary Constituency" which was selected among 120 constituencies. The results were then successfully transmitted through MES, NIC Tiruchy Unit.

Examination Results

NIC Karur Unit played an active role in the exercise of disseminating the marks and the final result of the SSLC and HSC Examinations in the State of Tamil Nadu for the Academic year 1997-98. The information was collected from NIC Chennai and disseminated to the students through specially set-up information booths. The process took around 4-5 days and around 6000 students of HSC and 10,000 students of SSLC were benefitted.

Key Activities

During the time span of past one and a half year, NIC Karur has been extending its computer support to various sectors of the District Administration and the following major activities have been carried out:

Health Reports : Databases have been created by the NIC Karur Unit for storing information about the schemes undertaken by the Health Department for CSSM (Child survival and safe motherhood) as well as Malaria Eradication Programmes. Reports are being generated every month and the same are regularly sent to Secretariat, Chennai.

Land Records : Six villages of the District namely Inam Karur, Balambalpuram, L.N. Samudram, Sanapiratti, Thantoni, Thirumanilayur have been covered under the Urban Land Tax. The details of the tax along with the addresses of the land owners, demand for each year, collection for each year and the outstanding amount have been computerised and stored on NIC's computer.

Economic and Statistical Data : A software to process economic and statistical data has been implemented by NIC Karur which calculates and processes daily and weekly farm prices of various agricultural commodities. Reports are generated on a weekly basis and sent to Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Chennai.

Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare : Under the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare Schemes, the State Govt provides scholarship to students. The details of around 2000 such students have been computerized by NIC Karur. Sensitivity parameters (student's reg.no., date, year of entry etc.) have been checked thorough validation programs and reports have been generated for four categories viz. scholarship under a) SC List (central) b) ST List (central) c) State special and d) Under free education.

Besides, NIC Karur has conducted half a dozen specialized training programmes on "computer awareness" for the staff members of various departments of the State Government.

This is just a beginning. NIC Karur District Unit is spreading its wings further in different directions to achieve its objective of inculcating the 'informatics' culture in the way District Administration operates. The Unit, with its multifarious achievements, has set an example before all the new District Centres of NIC to follow suit and grow further.
