

EVCS over NICNET by Cabinet Secretary - Moving a Step Ahead in e-Governance

The Government is according high priority to various e-Governance initiatives. For improving e-Governance, communication is a key ingredient and forms the basis of instructions. The Cabinet Secretariat invited National Informatics Centre, DIT, GOI, to operationalise the Executive Video Conferencing System (EVCS) in the offices of all Secretaries to the Government of India and Chief Secretaries of all the States/Union Territories. Instructions had also been given to install multi-point Video Conferencing facility in the Committee room of Cabinet Secretariat to facilitate holding Committee of Secretaries meetings in a convenient and expeditious way.



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Videoconferencing services at district level through NICNET were started in the year 2000. These services were started to help Central and State governments to review various programs and schemes from a conference room provided by State governments converted into VC Studio, on satellite network of NIC through DAMA VSATs. Presently, VC services are operational at 530 districts in the country and it is proposed to cover the remaining districts under NICNET domain.

Videoconferencing technology has now moved out of conference rooms, where it used to be confined traditionally. The credit goes to drastic reduction in average price of videoconferencing equipments and overall improvement in network infrastructure and bandwidth capabilities. These factors have helped in migration of videoconferencing from ISDN/VSAT towards IP.



Sh. K M Chandrasekhar, Cabinet Secretary, addressing the Chief Secretaries through EVCS.

NIC has taken the step to shift from group systems to desktop videoconferencing Systems by

introducing EVCS on NICNET. Hence, EVCSNET is the network on NICNET for providing videoconferencing for Secretaries of GOI, Chief Secretaries of States and UT & Planning Commission. The funds have been provided by the Planning Commission to implement this project. In the earlier communication system, officials used mainly the RAX phones. It is believed that desktop videoconferencing on IP can revolutionize the face of meetings for point-to-point as well as multipoint conference in which large number of Secretaries can interact. Initially, desktop videoconferencing was established in a close user group, comprising of Union Minister of State for Communication and Information Technology; Secretary DIT; and Additional Secretary, Special Secretary, Joint Secretary DIT and DG (NIC).

EVCS is an integrated system with 17" LCD display screen and a fixed camera with integrated microphone and speakers and is suitable for conducting small meetings. EVCS is



Sh. Arun Ramanathan, Finance Secretary & Sh. Subash Pani, Secretary Planning Commission also participating in the Chief Secretaries Conference through EVCS.

capable of connecting VC sessions over IP up to 768 Kbps using H.264 video codec. It is interoperable with Group VC systems using H.323 protocols and it has the capability to send and receive computer presentations using H.239 standards.

EVCS is equipped with Advanced Encryption Standards (AES) to ensure communications are confidential and secure. All the EVCS Systems have been registered with a centralized gatekeeper and their contact address book is being managed with Global Directory Management service.

NIC officers in various Ministries, Departments, States, and Union Territories have extended on-site training, documentation and demonstration to Secretaries and their staff.

Inauguration of EVCS over NICNET

Sh. K. M. Chandrasekhar, Cabinet Secretary, inaugurated the Video Conferencing services on EVCSNET on 27th February 2009 by reviewing the performance of various project and schemes of Government of India with the Chief Secretaries of 14 States from the Committee Room of Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi. Sh. Subas Pani, Secretary, Planning Commission and other Central Secretaries of Departments like Rural Development, Urban Development, Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation, Road Transport & Highways, Railways, Power, Water Resources, Financial Services, Industrial Policy & Promotion, and Expenditure were present during this inaugural Video Conferencing Session at Cabinet Secretariat.


On this occasion, 12 other Central Secretaries of Departments of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Cooperation, School Education & Literacy, Higher Education, Health & Family Welfare, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Labour & Employment, Women & Child Development, Drinking Water Supply, Coal, Border Management and Home Affairs were connected through EVCS on EVCSNET from their respective offices.

The first session of the Conference started at 10:00 AM with opening remarks by Cabinet Secretary, who interacted with Chief Secretaries of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Gujarat, Rajasthan



and Himachal Pradesh followed by interactions with Chief Secretaries of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Assam, and West Bengal in the second session. On 13th March 2009, Cabinet Secretary interacted with Chief Secretaries of Punjab, Kerala, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Tripura and Sikkim. On 16th March 2009, interaction with Chief Secretaries of Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Goa was conducted with the Cabinet Secretary.

At the end of the meeting, Cabinet Secretary expressed appreciation for the services rendered by NIC through the EVCS and advised greater and more frequent use of videoconferencing services to speed up consultation and decision-making. Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh, Sh. Rama Kantha Reddy, requested for holding of such Video Conferencing sessions on a regular basis.

Video conferencing has curved a niche in the process of disseminating informations and business interactions via two-way video and audio transmissions simultaneously. With over an decade of experience in Video conferencing technology, NIC's technical expertise is unmatched in the country. In order to carry forward e-governance as a practical, cost effective and efficient tool, the EVCS based on the NICNET will enable inter-departmental consultations through effective and faster mode of communication. 

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