Good governance is one of the key ingredients of growth and development. Over the years, e-Governance in India has steadily evolved into a potent tool to foster transparency, accountability, efficiency and public participation in government systems, strengthening the premise of democracy.

In a run up to Government of India's effort to promote and uphold the use of World Wide Web for enhancing the efficiency and transparency of government mechanism and encouraging its speedy transition towards Digital India, National Informatics Centre (NIC), under the ambit of India Portal (http://india.gov.in) organized the third edition of Web Ratna Awards. Instituted in the year 2009, Web Ratna Awards is one of its kind in India which honors the works of different government bodies on the web based platform.

Since its inception, Web Ratna Awards has played a major role in recognizing the noteworthy and sustainable initiatives in the realm of e-Governance for better delivery of information and services. Web Ratna Awards have re-established itself as an important platform to disseminate information about such path breaking initiatives. At the same time, Web Ratna Awards has also encouraged numerous departments to take up and replicate the successful innovations which have been recognized on this platform.

All in all, the Web Ratna Awards in itself has created a benchmark for various Government Agencies in India enabling and encouraging them to strive for better utilization to promote innovation in the web

Fully packed audience at Stein Auditorium

Release of Web Ratna Awards-2014 Compendium

Senior Offficials present during the event

space to add on to public delivery and efficient governance. In addition to it has also created a healthy culture of competition pushing them to do better and add to the larger goal of promoting Web based e-Governance application. The idea of Web Ratna is one of the key components in the Digital India initiative, doing its bit to promote exchange of information and values which run key governance aspects on the World Wide Web platform ultimately leading to digitally empowered society and a knowledge based economy.

THE EVENT AT A GLANCE
The third season of Web Ratna Awards was marked by unprecedented fervor. The award ceremony was held on 25th March 2015 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. Hon'ble Minister for Communications and Information Technology, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad inaugurated the occasion and presented the awards to distinguished winners.

Shri RS Sharma, Secretary, Department of Electronics & Information Technology (DeitY), Shri Tapan Ray, Additional Secretary, DeitY and Dr. Ajay Kumar, Director General, NIC also graced the event. Senior officials from Department of Electronics & Information Technology (DeitY) and NIC were also present at the ceremony.

Web Ratna Awards 2014 Compendium and Index of Government Websites were also released during the event.

THE PROCESS
E-Governance initiatives of Government Ministries and Departments across India were evaluated under various categories. Three awards Platinum, Gold and Silver were presented in each category to the winners shortlisted from the nominations received under each category. The categories included Citizen Centric Service, Open Data Champion, Outstanding Content, Innovative Use of Technology, Comprehensive Web Presence –Ministry and Comprehensive Web Presence-State/UT. Open Data Champion is a new addition to the awards. It honors Ministries/Departments who have contributed datasets to India's Open Government Data (OGD) Platform (data.gov.in).

KEY QUOTES

" Web Ratna Awards by the National Informatics Centre, Department of Electronics & Information Technology would indeed go a long way to promote e-Governance initiatives and to harness the medium of World Wide Web (WWW) for delivery of Government Information and Services. "

Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
Hon'ble Minister of C&IT

" These Awards are being conferred in different categories which touch upon different aspect of e-Governance. I am happy to learn that a new category of Open Data initiative is added in this edition of awards. DeitY and NIC have a greater role to play in leveraging technology for realization of Digital India. "

Shri Ram Sewak Sharma
**Secretary
DeitY**

" I congratulate NIC for keeping up with the tradition of honouring the exemplary e-Governance initiatives using World Wide Web as a medium. I hope these awards will serve as a source of inspiration for others to follow. "

Shri Tapan Ray
**Addl. Secretary
DeitY**

" It's my pleasure to stand here on the occasion of conferment of Web Ratna Awards-2014. It is extremely important to recognize exemplary initiatives to drive healthy competition all across the government. A spectrum of parameters including creative design, ease of use, ready updation, quality of content etc. are taken into account while deciding the awardees. "

Dr. Ajay Kumar,
**Director General
NIC**

" We had received total 315 nominations for Web Ratna Awards 2014, from all over the country. All the nominations were evaluated based on scientifically formulated criterion. All shortlisted nominations were equally deserving. I wish Web Ratna Awards will go a long way in making websites inclusive and accessible. "

Ms. Neeta Verma
**Deputy Director General
NIC**

" On behalf of NIC, I take this oppurtunity to heartily congratulate the winners of the prestigious Web Ratna Awards 2014. Your sustained efforts towards e-governance has enabled your department in delivering quality services. I hope to see many more awardees to join our journey in future. "

Ms. Alka Mishra
**Sr. Technical Director
NIC**

Award Winners

Winners of each of the six categories were decided on the basis of content currency, relevancy, updation, website usability, accessibility, scalability, technology, design, interactivity among the other critical parameters. Here are the glimpses of conferment of awards by Hon'ble Minister of C & IT, Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

OPEN DATA CHAMPION

Platinum Icon: Office of Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India

CITIZEN CENTRIC SERVICE

Platinum Icon: Passport Seva

Gold Icon: Ministry of Statistics & Program Implementation

Gold Icon: National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation

Gold Icon: Planning Commission

Silver Icon: NIOS Online for Providing Learner Centric Services

Silver Icon: Ministry of Water Resources

OUTSTANDING CONTENT

Platinum Icon: Ministry of External Affairs

Gold Icon: Kerala Tourism

Gold Icon: Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Silver Icon: Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region

INNOVATIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Platinum Icon: mKisan-Unleashing the power of Mobile in the hands of farmers

Gold Icon: Computerization Project of Madhya Pradesh, Commercial Tax Department

Gold Icon: e-Services, Department of Commercial Tax, Tamil Nadu

Silver Icon: e-Sahakar, Maharashtra

COMPREHENSIVE WEB PRESENCE - MINISTRY/DEPARTMENT

Platinum Icon : Ministry of Information & Broadcasting

Gold Icon: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Silver Icon: Office of Controller General of Accounts

COMPREHENSIVE WEB PRESENCE – STATE

Platinum Icon: Maharashtra

Gold Icon: Tamil Nadu

Silver Icon: Uttarakhand

Online nominations were called from various Government entities and overwhelming response was received for all the six categories. An extensive process for evaluation of filed nominations was followed which was conducted in two stages. In the initial stage, entries were screened based on a scientifically formulated Evaluation Matrix which was specifically designed for each category of the Web Ratna Awards. The distinguished Jury thereafter reviewed the shortlisted nominations and finalized the awards in each category.

JURY

The esteemed, high-level Jury of Web Ratna Awards-2014 consisted of senior members from Government, Academia, Institutes and Organizations. Hon'ble Minister has felicitated the esteemed Jury members for their role in deciding the winners after evaluating each entries critically on various parameters. The names of Jury members are - Shri RS Sharma, Secretary (DeitY), Dr. Ajay Kumar, DG (NIC), Dr. Rajendra Kumar, JS (DeitY), Ms. V Vidyavathi, JS (ARC, DARPG), Ms. Neeta Verma, DDG, (NIC), Prof. MP Gupta, Dept. of Management Studies (IIT Delhi), Ms. Rama Vedashree, Vice President (NASSCOM), Shri Shyamanuja Das, Director/ Columnist (Juxt Consult Research & Consulting Pvt. Ltd.) and Ms. Anjali Kaushik, Associate Professor (Management Development Institute).

Shri Ram Sewak Sharma

Dr. Rajendra Kumar

Dr. Ajay Kumar

Ms. Neeta Verma

Prof. MP Gupta

Ms. Rama Vedashree

Shri Shyamanuja Das