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Special Feature

NIC Co-operates with the Climate Change Secretariat on COP-8 E-Governance Awards for Websites/Papers

NIC Co-operates with the Climate Change Secretariat on COP-8

From Kevin Grose, Climate Change Secretariat & Sanjay Gahlout, NIC HQ

From 23 October to 1 November 2002, India played host to the the 8th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Climate Change Convention provides the framework for

governments around the world to take action to combat the threat of global warming caused by increasing economic and industrial activity, particularly in the North. The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) was responsible for the hosting the conference at the Vigyan Bhawan. The MoEF selected the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide all needed information and communications technology to support conference activities as well as a full webcast of the proceedings over the Internet.

Preparations for the conference began in December 2001 with the first visit of the Climate Change Secretariat to Delhi. However, it was from February 2002 when detailed analysis of requirements and implementation plans were drawn up. Heading these missions from the UNFCCC secretariat in Bonn was Kevin Grose, Manager, Information Services together with John Kiarie, the secretariat's Network Administrator. Dr.N. Vijayaditya, Director General of NIC lined up the iCOP 8i team headed by Mr. Sanjay Gahlout.



Ms.J. Waller-Hunter, UNFCCC Exec. Secretary, Sh.Atal Behari Vajpayee, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Sh.T.R. Baalu, Hon'ble Union Minister (E&F) and Mr. R. Kinley, COP Secretary

Climate Change Conferences attract 5000 or more governmental delegates, observers from nongovernmental organizations, business and the media. These participants came to Delhi to negotiate on behalf of their governments or to influence government positions.

As such, information and communication technology was at the very heart of the meeting. All 168 delegations to the conference used email to communicate with their capitals throughout the meetings. The secretariat's website - <http://unfccc.int> - was the primary source for conference information and documents while a full on-demand COP8 webcast service provided thousands of people around the world with access to what was going on.

• Internet connectivity and the MAN

The conference requirements provide for fast Internet access for 500 concurrent users and a stable VPN connection allowing for the synchronization of the secretariat's Lotus Notes R5 servers in Bonn with those on site in Delhi. As well, the VPN makes it possible to transform parts of the secretariat's LAN into a WAN.



R.S. Mani, NIC internet / network team leader and John Kiarie, UNFCCC

NIC undertook an analysis of the requirements based on the specifications provided by the Climate Change Secretariat. NIC proposed redundancy at all critical points. NICNET installed 11mbps (full duplex) RF along side 4 E1 lines (8 mbps full duplex) to connect NIC HQ to the Vigyan Bhawan.



Participants at the computer centre in Vigyan Bhawan

This enabled load sharing and by using dynamic routing it proved possible to achieve auto-failover. Finally, the gateway router was configured in fully-redundant mode. A third level backup was also prepared - a VSAT link of 256/512Kbps. NIC put in place a pure link to the Internet with redundant gateways and capacity of 10x10mbps, and all running the BGP4 routing protocol.



Kevin Grose, Information Manager for the UN checks the arrival of first PCs on the site

◆ **Vigyan Bhawan gets its first LAN**

320 PCs, 42 printers, and 10 servers, all provided by NIC were combined with 5 servers, 50 laptops, a 10 station photo-ID badge production system and various scanners and CD writers provided by the UN. All were connected to over 580 network nodes installed in both the main Vigyan Bhawan building, its Annexe as well as temporary structures that served as the Registration Hall. Given the scale of the requirements, the MoEF agreed early on to permanently network the entire Vigyan Bhawan, including the installation of a fibre optic backbone. This upgrade puts the Vigyan Bhawan on par with other international conference centres around the world.



Cécile Camenen, UN production coordinator, A. Rathore, NIC HQ

The MAN between the NIC and the Vigyan Bhawan was connected through a gateway router in the Vigyan Bhawan. All nodes were connected to the core switches (working back to back) using 37 distribution switches. Redundancy was provided to the core switches as well as UPS services. All nodes were connected using 100mbps to the distribution switches. VLANS were configured to provide necessary security and a reduced collision domain. Installations were

organized by the NIC.

Two hundred United Nations staff and a complement of 180 local staff were on site to support the conference proceedings, prepare documents and assist participants. During the meeting 2 million pages were printed or copied! Staff were accommodated in existing and temporary offices in the Vigyan Bhawan and its Annex. While the UN staff were on duty, so too were the thousands of participants. All 100 PCs in the computer center were in use from 0800hrs to 2200hrs every day. While the media centre was equally busy with 30 PCs connected to the Internet and even a special 'plug in play' centre (using phone cards from MTNL) provided laptop users with dial-up. The National Informatics Centre had responsibility for supporting the WAN/MAN/LAN connectivity, conference servers and participants network and computer centres. UN staff from the Climate Change Secretariat had responsibility for accessing and synchronization of data between Bonn and Delhi, management of the UN network and provision of support to UN staff.

■ **NIC webcasts to the world**

The Climate Change Secretariat (unfccc.int) has been webcasting the proceedings of conferences and other meetings since the famous Kyoto meeting in 1997 which attracted 14,000 participants. With up to 6 concurrent live language streams - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, the demands for climate summits are high indeed.

The NIC webcast team worked with the UNFCCC Information Services team on a full webcast programme for COP 8. The programme included live concurrent webcast from two halls and in two languages over the conference Intranet. From the public website, all streams were archived and were available on-demand. In addition, special events were recorded by Doodarshan on Betacam tapes and were then published over the conference Intranet and Internet. Doordarshan provided the facility to convert Betacam/SP tapes to digital files for encoding.

The UN provided technical specifications for the webcast production and database design. These were implemented by NIC that was responsible for technical implementation of the project and hosting the live and on-demand services. UN staff coordinated the programme production and post-production data transfer to Bonn.

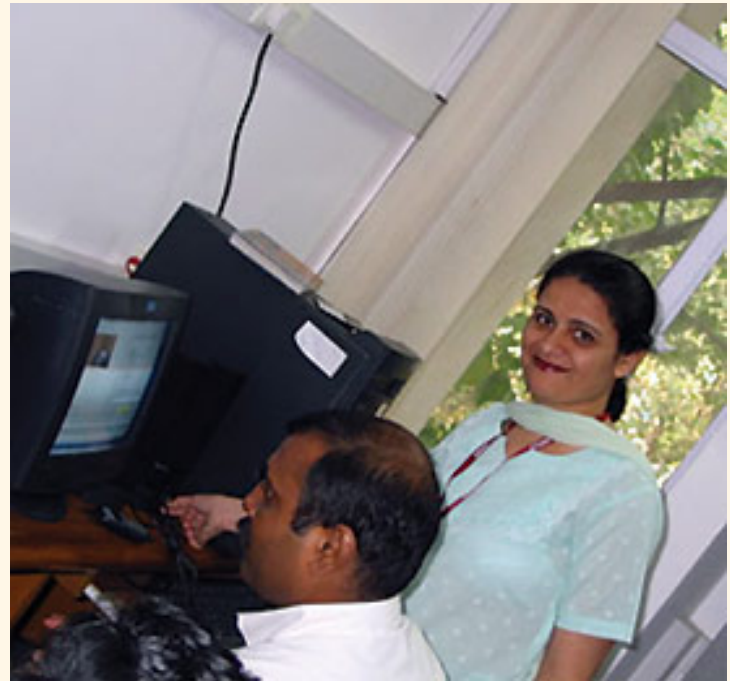
Audio and video signals were provided by Doordarshan. Doordarshan organized for 3 fixed camera positions in the plenary hall as well as the Press Conference Room in hall 6. 3 ENG crews were on site too for ad hoc filming in any other room.

The COP 8 information and communications technology project drew on expertise and services across the broadest spectrum of technology in the market today. Satellite communications services, leased line and radio connections, firewalls and network servers, client hardware and software applications as well as a global webcast were all required to make the COP 8 a success. These resources were then combined through an extensive planning and coordination process.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests, the UN Climate Change Secretariat and NIC worked closely together for nearly an year on the project. Work moved forward during three UN technical missions to Delhi, follow-up video conferences and planning meetings between NIC and MoEF. In addition, there were consultations with the Central Public Works Department. The CPWD is responsible for the buildings of the Vigyan Bhawan.



The COP 8 IT team -UNFCC Secretariat IT Staff together with NIC staff



Neeta Verma, NIC webcast project leader



V. Pasricha, B.K. Das, John Kiarie, A. Goel, P. Vinod.



L to R: V. Pasricha, A. Kumar, N.Ahmed, R.K. Pathak, S. Gahlout, L. Kanotra, R. Gaikwad, P. Chand



Anil Kumar, Dr. N. Vijayaditya, Sanjay Gahlout, R. K. Pathak



UN information services staff at work in their temporary conference offices

E-Governance Awards for Websites/Papers

From Sonal Kalra, Editor (with Inputs from Sunil Kumar, NIC-Haryana, Ajay Chahal, NIC Himachal, Alka Aggarwal, NIC Yojana Bhawan Unit, Gautam Gupta, NIC A&N and Ravish Azad, NIC HQ)

The Government of India is committed to building up an organisational environment that inspires and facilitates developing and deploying processes and web enabled applications which provide better citizen services and encourages participation of users/stakeholders. With an aim to encourage the drive for modernization and e-governance, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances recently instituted awards, at various levels for the websites of those government/semi-govt departments, organizations and offices that operationalize and institutionalize in an exemplary way, the framework of the underlying principles encompassing 'good governance'. Awards were also instituted for exemplary Papers written on themes related to e-governance.

The Awards were in the form of an icon status and stars (Gold Icon : 5 stars ; Silver Icon : 4 stars ; Bronze Icon : 3 stars and Merit Icon : 3 stars) and were presented as mementoes and certificates to the Head of the Organization/Team owning and managing the websites and to the author(s) of the selected Papers.

Nominations were received for forty seven websites of various State Governments, Departments, Undertakings etc. as well as forty-five papers on themes related to e-governance.

True to the spirit of carrying out work of the highest order, websites designed by NIC were nominated in large numbers and three out of the four websites which finally bagged the coveted awards turned out to be developed by NIC. Also, a paper by NIC Haryana team won the Silver icon for its effective content. The winners were awarded at a special ceremony during the 6th National Conference on E-Governance held at Chandigarh on 24th and 25th October 2002 by Capt. Amarinder Singh, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab. Here is a brief glimpse of the winners ..

• Winner Websites

Gold Icon Status : Andhra Pradesh State Portal

(<http://www.aponline.gov.in>)

The website is a true example of how Internet can be effectively used to reach out to the common citizens and make their lives easy. The features of the site include a one-stop link to online citizen services, application forms for various services, query facility for request status by citizens, secured e-payments, integration with wireless devices etc. Designed by Tata Consultancy Services, the website has won other awards too, in the past.

Silver Icon Status : Himachal Pradesh Government Portal

(<http://himachal.nic.in>)

The official web portal of the Himachal Pradesh Government has a plethora of useful information and links for the visitors. A special feature is the link to Lokmitra Citizen Government Interface which provides services like downloadable forms, government telephone directory, online electoral rolls, causelist of the State High Court, daily market rates of food items and commodities, admission notices, civil list, exam results, blood donors database, weather, events etc. Since Himachal Pradesh is a tourism intensive state, the website also provides link to the hotel directory and the online hotel reservation system. The website, designed and developed by NIC Himachal Pradesh State Unit is simple but smart and a major step towards E-Governance in the State.



Sh. Ajay Chahal, NIC HPSU receiving the award from Capt Amarinder Singh, Hon'ble CM of Punjab.

Bronze Icon Status : Planning Commission Website

(<http://planningcommission.nic.in>)

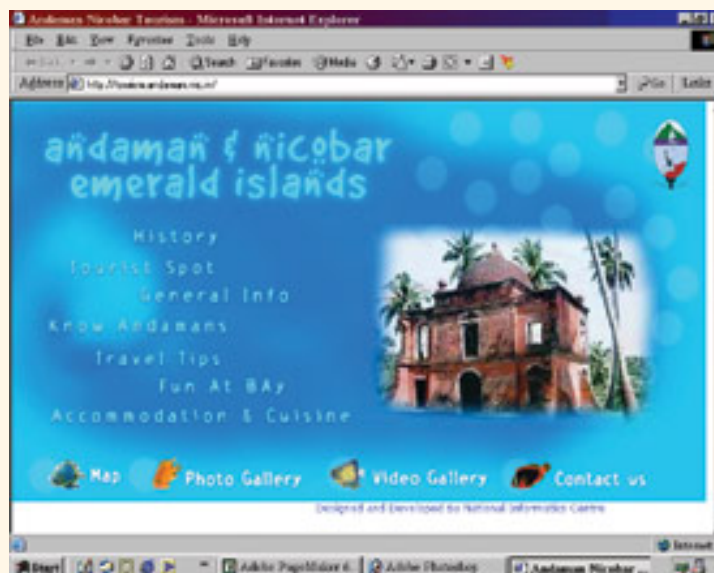
The website of the Planning Commission provides in-depth details about the various five year plans, related reports, data and statistics on various economic and social indicators and a large number of useful links to the Government of India websites. Several useful reference papers and reports about the five year plans have been provided in an easy-to-download manner for the visitors. The site has been designed and developed by the Yojana Bhawan Unit of NIC.

Special Award : Andaman & Nicobar Islands Tourism Website

(<http://tourism.andaman.nic.in>)

This website, exclusively on the tourism aspect of the picturesque islands of Andaman and Nicobar islands acts as a one-

stop guide to all one needs to know about visiting the islands. The site, designed and developed jointly by NIC ñA&N Unit and the Web Services Division at NIC HQ , provides information on the History of the Islands, the favourite tourist spots, general info, travel tips and accommodation etc.,. A highlighting feature is the photo gallery depicting beautiful images of the emerald islands.



Best Paper Silver Award

Apart from the websites, a paper submitted by NIC Haryana State Unit also won the Best Paper 'Silver' Award at the event. The Paper on 'Enhancing Transparency in Welfare Pension Schemes through IT' has been co-authored by Sh. Dharam Vir, IAS, Principal Secretary IT Haryana, Sh. Ghan Shyam Bansal, SIO, NIC-Haryana State Unit and Sh.Susheel Kumar, PSA, NIC-HSU. The paper deals with various categories of welfare pension schemes and salient features of the HaPPIS (Haryana Pension Processing and Information System) software developed by NIC Haryana State Unit.

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