Sitapur, UP state's DM unique partnership with Cyber Cafes for spreading E-governance

Shri Amod Kumar, DM of Sitapur, UP has initiated a smart public private partnership with the launch of "Lokvani" A E-governance software. Its been issued to Cyber Cafes in the area . Lets look forward we hear more such initiatives. Sitapur's Lokvani to make an echo - The Times of India

LUCKNOW: Lokvani - the e-governance system indigenously developed and launched in Sitapur by a team of officers last year, blazes a trail in information technology sector as UP government decides to officially adopt the software and implement it across the state by August 15, 2005. A circular issued by the industrial development commissioner Atul Kumar Gupta to all district magistrates and commissioners along with all principal secretaries and secretaries makes the use of software mandatory in order to ensure an effective transparent and accountable online public redressal system specially for the rural sector in UP. The software, the GO passed on June 16 says, shall be used for online registration, follow up and disposal of public grievances apart from providing latest update on the progress of applications for firearm licences or general law and order complaints. The common man can also, at a minimal cost, have access to the list of all development projects under way in a district, details of land and revenue records and even procure online income/ caste/ domicile/ birth or death certificates and driving licence. Priced at Rs 75,000, the software can be bought from Sitapur and all district magistrates are expected to raise their resources at the district level. A brainchild of Amod Kumar, DM, Sitapur, Lokvani has been inspired by similar attempts made by MP and Rajasthan governments in Dhar and Jhalwara. Kumar, who is an IIT alumni, and his team studied, analysed and assessed the projects and developed a package which suited the local needs and aspiration. The best part of the software, says Kumar is that unlike the other two models it does not depend on government's freebies. *The modus operandi, he explained, entails "training and giving licences to operate, to select local cyber cafe owners who would charge for putting complaints on the Lokvani website.* The website is linked with the central computer at the collectorate's National Informatics Centre (NIC) that will be monitored personally by the DM and updated by his staff. The complainant thus can monitor the progress of his complaint. Kumar had demonstrated the software at the senior administrative officers' conference held on March 4 in presence of chief minister Mulayam Singh Yadav. Following a keen interest shown by the CM, the project was immediately referred to the IT department for a feasibility check.

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Monday, June 13, 2005

First case against cyber cafe booked under the Bagalore draconian rule

Its the worst day for the small cyber cafe operators, Bangalore . Unfortunately we are widely dispersed and too small to gather & stage a protest and create awareness. In days to come Bangalore cyber cell has a tough job to handle, but the 3000 cyber cafes

cannot be unpaid accomplice in policing the city . At ApiAp we shall try our best to voice our protest to this unjust regulation.

First case against cyber cafe booked BANGALORE, Staff Reporter , The Hindu The State Government has made it mandatory for cyber cafes to maintain a record of Internet users The Cyber Crime police have booked the first case against a cyber cafe here for not following the notification making maintenance of the record of Internet users mandatory. The case was booked against Paradise Cyber Cafe in Basaveshwara Nagar on June 7. The Cyber Crime police have submitted a report to the Information Technology Secretary, K.N. Shankarlinge Gowda, for taking further action against the cyber cafe owner. The State Government, with an intention to prevent misuse of Internet by criminals, issued a notification in August 2004 making it mandatory for cyber cafes to maintain a record of Internet users. Failure to maintain the record, the notification said, would result in impounding their licences. The notification, the first of the kind to be issued in the country, prescribed the need for a surfer to display his identity card at the cyber parlour or be photographed by a web camera by the attendant, before he logs on to the Internet. According to the Cyber Crime police not many Internet parlours in the city are following the directions, despite copies of the notification being served to them. This led them to start the process of booking cases against Internet parlours, a senior Cyber Crime police official said. Â© Copyright 2000 - 2005 The Hindu

Posted by ApiAp at Monday, June 13, 2005 1 comments Links to this post

Saturday, June 11, 2005

Cybercafe goes cold in the West

VIKRAM DOCTOR TIMES NEWS NETWORK[SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 05, 2004 01:29:59 AM] In now The 10th anniversary of a globally transforming technological innovation should have been widely noted and celebrated. Yet 10 years on from when Eva Pascoe, a Polish PhD student studying in London opened Cafe Cyberia, the world's first cybercafe , there's been little to mark the occasion. Yahoo! which understandably has benefited from the phenomenon launched its first Yahoo! Mail Internet Cafe Awards, choosing from the over 20,000 cybercafes it estimates are now operational in over 171 countries, to give out awards for the Most Remote Cybercafe (Cafe Polyvalent in Timbuktu, Mali) or Most Stylish (Phlegmatic Dog in Moscow). But that was about as far as formal recognition of the anniversary and where it did attract media comment, it was mostly to note how passé the cybercafe concept now seemed. In a rather patronising leader entitled 'Ye Olde Internet Cafe', the Daily Telegraph noted that when they were first started they were frequented by the coolest trendsetters but today were mainly for "gap-year students, far from home, or the urban poor." It concluded: "the internet cafe is already on its way into the footnotes of history. Many will find it remarkable that the first one opened only 10 years ago. But few will be surprised when the last one shuts." Well, maybe the writer of that leader should come to India. "There are over 50,000 cybercafes in India," says David Appasamy, chief communications manager at Satyam Infoway which in just three years has set up a chain of over 2,000 cybercafes across 67 cities. "We're opening at the rate of three cybercafes a day." The company estimates

it gets over half a million users a month and that's growing at a 25% rate. Now are these all English speaking elite. "Its aspirational. Everyone wants to move ahead and computers are seen as the means," says Appasamy. And since most people can't afford their own computers, they go to the cybercafe. Nor will falling computer prices change this, as it did in the West. No matter how low prices fall, they will always be too costly for most Indian families. Amitabh Singhal, president of the Internet Service Providers Association of India points out that compared to the West, Internet access is relatively expensive in India, so going to a cybercafe where the cost is spread among many users makes economic sense. Home usage is also inconvenient. "Using the Internet over the dial-up connections that most people have at home is very slow and annoying," he says. "Especially with the sort of data-rich content that most websites have these days it can take forever to download." Surfing the Net today really does need broadband, and for most people the only way to get it is through their friendly neighbourhood cybercafe. In a larger sense too, cybercafes fit into a very Indian approach to technology. This is the country, after all, where cable operators receive satellite TV to dish out to their subscribers and most people access long distance telephony from STD/ISD booth. Many of which, in fact, simply added on a couple of computers to become the first cybercafes. Most technology in India ends up getting distributed through intermediaries, and cybercafes are just the latest form. And what truly Indian ways we're finding to use all this! "Families arranging marriages use video conferencing at Infoways to interview prospective candidates in other cities!" says Appasamy. Other common usages include salesmen in remote locations filing their reports with HO, senior citizens calling their children abroad using Net telephony, students sending college applications and even sitting for their entrance tests, HR professionals getting CVs of potential employees and stock traders accessing the markets, people maintaining their personal websites - in addition, of course, to the email, chat and computer gaming. It's not just Indians who have come to depend on cybercafes. For tourists, particularly the backpacking gap-year students noted by The Telegraph, they have become vital technology. Tom Hall, senior web producer at Lonely Planet, the backpacker's bible, says that they use them for much more than just email. "There are also online trip journals, such as the MyTripJournal feature on LonelyPlanet.com which help travellers relate their experiences to everyone at home by posting writing and photos online," he tells us. "Travellers are also using the internet to get information on destinations, such as our WorldGuide section, and the ThornTree travel forum, which is often used by travellers on the road to get advice and find travel partners. Also, travellers use the internet to book a hostel at the next destination." Most of this is true across the developing world, which suggests that there's a long future to the cybercafe's role as a gateway to technology. When countries open up, a cybercafe is often among the first businesses to be established. Iran got its first cybercafe as early as 1998, with separate sections for women and men. In 2000 Bhutan got its first cybercafe, just a year after it got TV. In 2002, just a year after the Taliban fell, Kabul got its first cybercafe, and today there are many. Even the world's most repressed country, North Korea, got its first cybercafe in 2002, reportedly because its leader, Kim Jong-Il, is an avid surfer (unfortunately the initial rates were $100 per hour, which kept

most North Koreans away). This openness has often sparked alarm with governments and cybercafes commonly find themselves caught in the backlash, with threats of closure or heavy penalties for allowing access to porn or different political views. In India states have followed different policies, with some like Maharashtra occasionally threatening to crack down on cybercafes. Lonely Planet's Hall says that, in common with most tech specialists, he believes that cybercafe usage will eventually fall, because of home and work connections and, even more, due to wireless and cellphone technologies. "That being said, I think this will take quite a while to occur," he says. "We're different from the West. I think we will be using the cybercafe for quite some time to come," says Singhal. As proof perhaps of how firm the future of the cybercafe outside the West is, consider what's happened to the first one of them all. After expanding into a chain, Eva Pascoe sold the business to South Korean investors, who renamed it 'Be The Reds' after the cheer used by supporters of the South Korean national football team. That first outlet is still running and is mainly used by the Korean student community in London.