



## While you were away

### HANDS THAT ROCK THE CRADLE

One week into March, we celebrate International Women’s Day. To those reactionary minds, designating one particular day in a year for women may appear “patronizing and condescending” by the opposite sex. There could be further restlessness as a reciprocal day – International Men’s Day – started only in 1999 that too in Trinidad and Tobago, for God’s sake!

Like it or not, the space of measurable and visible success is being increasingly shared by those who routinely sport coiffed hair, wear ornaments as well as cook for all members in the family. And the truth is that sharing of success is, in most cases, over and above the daily chores that have been thrust upon them. Illustrious success stories of Indri Nub, Naina Lall Kidwai or Chanda Kochar are not forgotten here. However, here we are celebrating the arrival of the small, less-educated micro-managing rural entrepreneur. Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome the woman entrepreneur who struggles to take the CSCs to new heights.

Among the robust models of woman entrepreneurship, Akshaya managers top the list. No surprises here as Kerala is a place where state transport corporation buses have she drivers and conductors. But Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam, Tamil Nadu and even Odisha are sending dispatches about success stories of women VLEs. While this edition will graphically detail some of the outstanding efforts of such VLEs, I am tempted to philosophize the whole feat with a mix of psycho-social imagination.

Needless to say, the example of Lakshmi, the Tamil literature student who worked as a small time office person in Nagapattinam is my favorite role model. She, in the last six months, has demonstrated that businesses can be redefined without actually changing the contours. Lakshmi is one of the top earners in this field, today. Inexplicably, we all have a tendency to trust



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a she person over a he person. I think that my mother will never lie. I feel bold enough to plead for credit at the grocery store if it is a she person at the cash counter. I feel it obligatory to tender exact change at the pay phone booth if it is run by a differently-abled she person.

CSCs need nurturing before it blossoms into a full grown business unit. It needs care and support from all ends – service providers, subsidy providers, technology providers, clients, and managers. Men, as a general rule, tend to get carried away by the glitter of several business prospects – mutual funds, e-Learning, Visa consultancy, Astrology, agri-marketing, film and other software piracy and what not! While all of them are rewarding in their own ways, what they often overlook is the nurturing part. One has to be sufficiently patient to let the CSCs spread the roots in the community. At this point, what it needs a gardener who can tend it – gently. So, SHE.

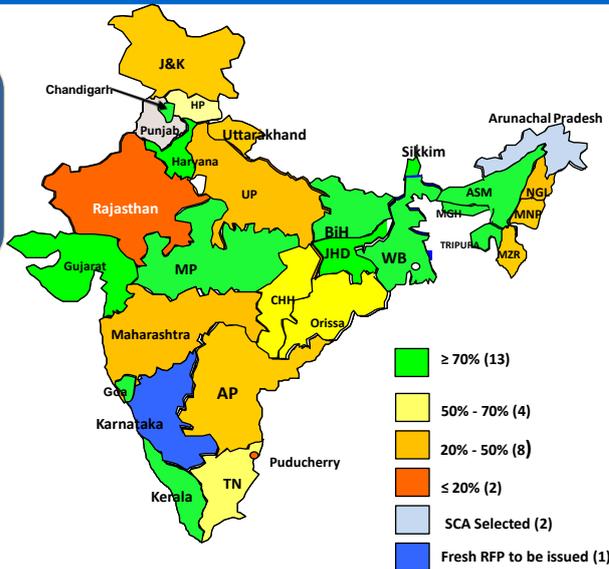


Arun Varma

**CSC Implementation Status** Total CSC Rollout (As on 28th Feb 2010) - 71078

**Progress So Far (As on 28th February 2010)**

- CSC rolled out - 71,078 (28 States)
- Online Monitoring Tool Installed - 27,376 (24 States)
- Implementation underway - 51,903 CSCs (28 States)



**Uttarakhand, Haryana reported 100% CSC rollout, however due to termination of SCA in Haryana, 561 out of 1159 CSCs are non operational. Similarly, in Tripura due to cancellation of contract 133 CSCs are non operational.**

*The Latest in CSC..*

Item	Status
Total Tool Installation Completed	25072
CSC ID Created	39104
Integration with e-gram, Gujarat	13,695
Integration with Nemadi centres, Karnataka	800
13 <sup>th</sup> National e-Governance Conference	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2010

*IT Education for Rural India*



Madhya Pradesh Governor Rameshwar Thakur (centre) Launching AISECT-IGNOU partnership. Archana Chitnis, Madhya Pradesh's MoS for School Education is seen second from right, while former Union Minister Suresh Pachouri is at left

In an effort to bring IT Education and vocational training to the doorsteps of millions of students in rural India, IGNOU and the All India Society for Electronics and Computer Technology (AISECT) – a leading information and communication technology (ICT) training network have signed a MoU to roll out 100 IT-enabled courses through 400 learning centres. Launching the AISECT-IGNOU partnership programme during the 2 day AISECT national conference in Bhopal, Governor Rameshwar Thakur said “it was time that higher education was taken to rural India and affirmed that the new partnership will play a crucial role in this direction”. The objective of this partnership is to tag the huge potential of students in rural India, at the block and panchayat level. The partnership will give new employment options to the students in the ICT field. This initiative will provide vocational training to the talented students to harness their skills.

### Tamil Nadu VLE Story



Indumathi S is a VLE based out of Venkatapuram of Krishnagiri District. She is a Graduate in Business Administration and has previously worked with a Self Help Group. Sahaj VLE Indumathi believes in serving poor children and women through her CSC. The local panchayat has appreciated her efforts and has built a building free for her to continue her service for the poor in her village. Through her centre she provides all informations which are required for women. She also provides jobs in her centres for all deserving women. She runs various e-learning courses to educate the mass so that more women can lead a much better life.

### West Bengal VLE Story



Somdutta Chatterjee  
09836596458



Somdutta was a housewife earlier who got to know about the Tathya Mitra CSC from the road show Champaign which SREI made at the time of VLE selection. She had been selected by SREI Sahaj e-Village and had been fully trained by them to deliver services through her CSC centre. The centre was opened in October 2008. Today her centre provides many services to citizens such as: IRCTC Ticket booking, e-learning course, electricity bill payment, mobile top-up, insurance service, digital photography and offline service. She earns about Rs6500 a month from these services.

### Orissa VLE Story



Born in Bhubaneshwar, Reeta Bahidar, now 27, lives in Malkangiri. Malkangiri is synonymous to insurgency and difficult terrain, and is perhaps one of the most challenging areas in Orissa. But surprisingly, things began to unfold with Reeta. After her marriage, she moved to Maithili, a tribal village in Malkangiri. She had a desire to open a computer institute to facilitate computer education. With the assistance of her husband she carefully shaped up her dream. She enrolled herself with Sahaj as VLE.

She has helped many to be independent. Lipsa Nayak, a class 8 student can use the concept of Flexi time to pursue her computer education. Now she is the only girl in her class to know computers and this made her parents proud. Bidya Pujari, a tribal student, have started their own DTP shop after educating themselves through her e-learning course. With the services like LIC premium, people now need not to travel hundreds of kms to reserve the train berth.

### Rajasthan VLE Story



Afroj Banu from the Bundi district of Rajasthan was a housewife earlier. She belongs to a very poor family. She had a large family of her own and her monthly income then was only Rs 2000. As a VLE she delivered various services to the villagers like mobile recharge, DTH recharge, Railway reservation, Web surfing, Utility Bill Payments – electricity bill, telephone bill, water bill etc. Now she is earning more than Rs5000 monthly by delivering services through her CSC outlets. Also she is awarded by the District Collector Smt. Poonam Sharma and State Minister (Disaster Management) Mr.Ola Ji on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2010.

This CSC has now enabled her children to get a better education and lead a good life.

### Assam VLE Story



Ms Chaya Rani Das of Kamrup Assam is a successful entrepreneur today. After completing her Post Graduation and B.Ed in 2004 she was looking for a permanent employment opportunity in various organizations but was not getting anything to her satisfaction. At that time she happened to meet Zoom, the SCA. They allotted a CSC in January 2009 with 2 PCs, printer and a photocopier. Immediately after starting the centre she went to the nearby schools to educate students on computer and internet. This brought success to her. She has educated 40 students out of which 26 have received certification. She prepares exam papers for nearby two schools. Her centre connects about 9000 people in her GP

### Meghalaya VLE Story



Ms. Badapbiang Thabah is well known in her village. She is from the East Khasi Hills district of Sohiong, Meghalaya. She is a Post Graduate and is associated with CSC from 2008. She conducts regular village meetings and visits various institutions like schools and banks to create awareness about her centre. One striking characteristic is her positive attitude and her ability to accept feedback and work on it. Her main services are DTP and Photo printing. She also conducts computer classes. She also gets a lot of business directed her way from the Meghalaya Rural Bank (The MRB send its customers to the CSC for Printing, Photocopying and Photographs). She has recently started Microcredit Services in her CSC and brings in a monthly income of roughly Rs. 10000.

### Madhya Pradesh VLE Story



Ms. Farha Naaz has started her CSC at Ladwari Panchayat of Niwari block in Tikamgarh District, Madhya Pradesh. Her centre has three Computers, Printer along with an Inverter and Digital Camera at her CSC. She provides DTP, Photocopy and Digital Photography services as major services along from her CSC. She has recently started taking interest in Financial Inclusion services due to its demand among villagers. She has been trained to be a Business Facilitator of State bank of India and looks forward to start internet kiosk banking as a Business Correspondent in a month's time. She is also delivering AISECT courses for the interested trainees at her CSC. By rendering all the above services, Farha earns a monthly income ranging from Rs. 7000 to 8000 from her CSC. She is happy for tying up with CSC Project.

### Nagaland VLE Story



CSC Centre (Near War Cemetery, Kohima) is where Ms Mary Sonar, an Arts graduate from Baptist College has started her business activities recently in DTP, computer typing, printing of documents, scanning, photocopying and also in top-up coupons for mobile services. She has also started e-ticketing for air, rail and road. As her CSC is located near the war cemetery, she has an advantage of attracting good number of tourists.

Earlier Mary used to be associated with a German funding agency in their 'Youth Development Programme'. With help from her brothers, Mary could generate a reasonable income from her CSC by introducing additional innovative business ideas. Mary is confident, that with the availability of G2C services she will not only generate additional revenue for her centre but also will play a major role in creating awareness amongst the public about CSC programme.

### SREI Sahaj – IGNOU Skill Development Initiative breaks new barriers

SREI Sahaj e-village Limited, a subsidiary of SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited, in partnership with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) launched a skill development vocational programme at affordable cost for about 100 million youths in the rural India. The courses were inaugurated by the Union Minister for Communication and Information Technology Thiru A. Raja at IGNOU on February 22.

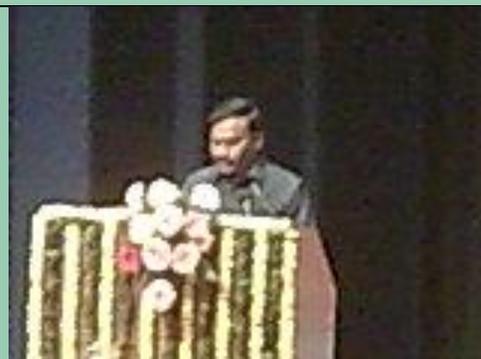
'An estimated 100 million rural youth population across the country stands to benefit through the Sahaj-IGNOU partnership,' IGNOU Vice-Chancellor V.N. Rajasekharan Pillai said. By the end of 2010, the varsity promised to make this on-line skill education available at 27,255 common service centres already existing in states of Assam, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Mr. Pillai said: 'This is the first time in the country that online education through distance mode will reach the remotest corners of the country, empowering the rural poor. The IGNOU-Sahaj partnership will help bridge the educational divide within the rural landscape and make advanced computer education available to the villagers at their doorsteps.'

Total five courses are currently available as part of the partnership. They are diploma in advanced computers, certificate programme in HTML, certificate programme in JAVA SCRIPT, certificate programme in SQL and certificate programme in FLASH. The eligibility criteria for these programmes is matriculation. All programmes will be accredited to IGNOU for its use. Sahaj will administer the programmes, including enrollments, registration, fee collection, evaluation and do the certification by IGNOU.

The initiative is aimed at making up for the lack of rated educational institutes in the rural India and help students in the villages get quality skill up gradation without the hassles of relocation. The programs are also supported by Chaakri.in, Srei Sahaj's job portal dedicated solely to the rural population. All the learners who register on the portal will be guaranteed at least one job offer. It is projected that in the next 12 months, about 80,000 youth will be trained on these courses and over a period of time, more certificate courses, diploma and degree courses will be launched.

Thiru A. Raja greatly appreciated this initiative and said that this would greatly benefit and augment the growth and development of the socio economic landscape of rural India. Dr.Sabahat Azim, CEO and President, Sahaj e-Village said that the biggest bottleneck of India's growth story is lack of skilled manpower. So this partnership will set go beyond all commercial considerations and achieve the avowed objective of empowering rural India through the innovative courses on offer.



### New Initiative – Government of Maharashtra

Government of Maharashtra has taken a new initiative of sharing the information on all citizens centric IT programmes of the Government with the various stakeholders through the Government portal [www.mahanews.gov.in](http://www.mahanews.gov.in)

One can directly visit the relevant section of the portal by clicking on the link provided below:

<http://mahanews.gov.in/content/articleshow.aspx?id=Ckdv/0S9TMk8iskdEcRN3EjDJvYpbP3TU6HMBRshgNz8z8GVzhembA==>

**Inauguration of CSC Khidmat Centre in J&K**



“J&K Bank deserves our appreciation for all the initiatives it has undertaken in the state to empower entrepreneurs and individuals from the very grass-root level” says Chief Minister Omar Abdullah after inaugurating the J&K Bank’s KHIDMAT CENTRE at Beehama, Ganderbal on 16<sup>th</sup> February.

Mr. Abdullah said: “Efforts like these which are focused on the effective delivery system of services across the state really enhance the functional capacity of good governance. This is real service (Khidmat) of the people of Jammu and Kashmir”. Earlier, Chairman and CEO of J&K Bank, Dr Haseeb A Drabu gave a complete demonstration of Khidmat initiative. He apprised the CM about its aims and objectives.

Dr Drabu said, “J&K Bank will set up 1109 such centres across the state in a phased manner. With this launch today, 300 such Khidmat centres spread across various districts of the state have gone online.

“The initiative serves two important purposes that people of J&K are in need of. First, it generates employment besides encouraging entrepreneurship. Second, it helps to bring the state on the IT map which is the objective of national e-governance project” he said.

Chief Minister was accompanied by Member of Parliament Shareef-ud-din Shariq, Minister of State for Tourism and Development Nassir Aslam Wani, Political Advisors Mubarak Gul and Devinder Singh Rana.

These Common Services Centres (CSC), Khidmat Centres in J&K will provide multitude of services ranging in the areas of education, health, agriculture, commercial, retail etc. Online services like air/railway ticketing, internet surfing, financial services, Result/Exam notifications, e-learning etc would be provided at these centres at affordable charges. Besides, many off-line services will also be offered like Desktop Publishing (DTP), Digital Photography, Scanning and CD writing, JK Bank loan documentation, Mobile Bills/ recharging.

**RBI Adopted villages for Financial Inclusion**

To mark the platinum jubilee celebration of the Reserve Bank of India, J&K Bank has established CSCs at eight RBI adopted villages for financial inclusion at the behest of the Central Bank. These villages include Chakra, Puneja, Tharara, Shanghaie, Ladden in Jammu region, Karhama in Kashmir and Basgo in Leh.

So far J&K bank has identified Village level Entrepreneurs at these villages and CSCs at few of these have already been established. These CSC shall provide all bank related services at the door step of people of these villages and shall bring the population of these areas under financial inclusion.

J&K bank has tied up with a leading Smart Card Company Financial Information Network Operations Ltd. (FINO) to use biometric technology for small transactions for customers in these villages. The FINO is also providing training to these VLEs about Smart cards and point of transaction (PoT) machines

Snap Shots of 13<sup>th</sup> National e-Governance Conference held at Jaipur, Rajasthan  
18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010



Government Orders Issued

**Andhra Pradesh** – Government Orders have been issued for the Agriculture Department for delivery of improved services to farmers through Citizen Service Centres by running a pilot programme in 3 mandals from 3 regions i.e. West Godavari, Kurnool, and Karim Nagar District.

**Assam** – Government of Assam had issued an order to provide transport, time bound and affordable Government to Citizen (G2C) Services to the citizens through the CSCs set up in Assam under the National e-Governance plan.

**Jharkhand** – Government Order has been issued for the Godda District of Jharkhand for NREGA data entry work through Pragma Kendras.

**Rajasthan** – Circular issued on the guidelines for utilization of 3% plan budget by Government Departments for e-Governance initiatives. Citizen centric services of Government Departments are to be e-delivered on end-to-end basis through e-mitra kiosks in urban areas and through the Common Service Centres (CSC) in the rural areas.

**West Bengal** – A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Department of Post, Government of India and West Bengal State Rural Development Agency (WBSRDA) for supporting the department of information Technology in implementing the Common Services Centre (CSC) under the National e-Governance plan.

### DIT Officials visit to Madhya Pradesh



Mr. Abhishek Singh, Director DIT Gol was in Bhopal on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2010 to take stock of Financial Inclusion efforts being carried out in the state utilizing CSC network. On the occasion, GoMP invited representatives of all the SCAs, SDA, NREG Council, State bank of India, State bank of Indore, Bank of India, Union Bank of India, MP Online, technology providers such as Zero mass, i25 rural etc. Director mentioned that Gol is looking efforts in MP as a 'Proof of Concept' and asked all the stake holders to contribute towards achieving financial inclusion, as the same would be beneficial to the sustainability of CSCs. The following key decisions were taken:

- NICT and AISECT have already become BCs and Other SCAs were asked to become BCs, at the earliest.
- BC Operations should happen along with BF services.
- SBI agreed to provide necessary orientation to VLEs, to take up banking work
- SBI has agreed to make available bio-metric device, on instalment basis and is working towards reducing the cost of device
- SCAs requested the GoMP to route all social welfare payments including NREGA payments thru CSCs.
- SCAs to achieve FI in 2000 CSCs in next 3-4 months from the present 50 centres

After the meeting Director DIT visited the office of MP Online and understood the functioning of its services. He suggested adding 'School fee payment' as a possible service. He also visited AISECT office and had deliberations regarding their rollout status and educational services.

Director also had gone for a field visit of the CSCs around Bhopal where he visited the CSC at 'Panda Kalan', Panda Block.

### DIT Officials visit to Assam



Delivering a PRC to a citizen at Rampur CSC



Interacting with a VLE of Kamrup (rural)

Shri. Abhishek Singh, Director DIT had visited Assam for inspection of e-Districts and the CSC centres on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2010. A meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Shri. Abhishek Singh, Director DIT, New Delhi on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 2010 in the office of Assam Electronics Development Corporation Ltd where C&S IT, Government of Assam, MD AMTRON, SDA team and representatives both from the SCAs i.e. M/S Zoom and M/S SREI were present to review the progress of the broadband connectivity status of the CSC centres by BSNL. It was said to BSNL that they have to provide broadband connectivity to all the 605 exchanges and where broadband is not available connectivity has to be provided through WIMAX. The first phase of work of planning 28 towers has to be done by March 2010.

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