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Rs. 190-crore funding for e-governance projects

Special Correspondent

Twelve additional initiatives to be launched this fiscal, says Vidyashankar

Six BPOs to come up in districts this year

They will provide backup to Social Welfare Department

Bangalore: Principal Secretary for e-governance M.N. Vidyashankar said here on Saturday that Karnataka would substantially enhance its e-governance initiatives by the end of this year.

The department would spend close to Rs. 190 crore for the purpose during the remaining part of this fiscal by launching 12 additional projects.

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Speaking to presspersons during a break at the launch of the T.A. Pai Managament Institute Centre for e-governance Research and Education, Mr. Vidyashankar said six BPOs, on the public-private-partnership model would come up in districts this year.

He said one was functional near Bagepalli and another was coming up near Shimoga. The Government was providing part of the infrastructure and each BPO would seat 200 staff. "These BPOs will provide backup for services related to the Social Welfare Department, gram panchayats and so on," he said.

Centres in city

Bangalore would also benefit from government spending with 53 new BangaloreOne centres, taking the total to 100, he said.

Most of the new centres would be located in newly added BBMP areas, and preference would be given to residents without easy access to utility payment centres. Centres similar to BangaloreOne would come up in eight other cities like Mysore and Belgaum before December end, with at least three in each city.

Spreading e-governance infrastructure further, the Government would expand its wide area network connectivity to 176 taluks in 29 districts.

Speaking earlier, Mr. Vidyashankar referred to an earlier short-lived experiment to bring e-governance practices to teaching hospitals. "We tried to bring transparency in all aspects. Though this project did not last, we are reviving it," he said. Subash Bhatnagar of Indian Institute of Managament –Ahmedabad said in his keynote talk that TAPMI's MBA programme in e-governance had proved useful and this had spawned similar programmes in several other universities. "Transformation through e-governance holds out the same promise that the nascent information technology industry did 25 years ago. It may be possible to reach good governance to every citizen in the country and not just those with connections and money," he said.

Benefits

Generating more employment and economic opportunities, increasing information and communication technology penetration to rural areas, enhancing global competitiveness of agriculture, and tackling corruption in governance would be some of the pluses of e-governance, Prof. Bhatnagar said.