

FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM CONTROLLER GENERAL OF ACCOUNTS



Dear Colleagues,

My retirement after 38 years of active public service brings back a kaleidoscope of pleasant memories. It is for me a solemn, yet proud occasion and I would like to share the feeling of immense pride and satisfaction at all we've been able to achieve together in the last two years.

We have managed to launch and effectively steer a number of innovative INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY initiatives during this period. The platform of COMPACT/ eLEKHA has been strengthened and stabilized. The e-RECEIPTS and stabilizing of OLTAS and EASIEST has resulted in momentous efficiencies in the collection system. Already 90% of Excise, 70% of Income Tax and 70 % of Service Tax are coming in through the eRoute. The Core Accounting Solution(CAS) is taking strides and ePayments through it have stabilized in the Ministry of Agriculture. It is expected that the linkage of CAS with the Core Banking Solutions of all the banks will be completed in 2009 and ePayments by all the PAOs for all payments will become the norm.

The Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System and the Sanction ID system, which seemed like an unachievable dream has taken off the design stage. The two pilots in Punjab and Karnataka are being implemented and a report detailing Statewise/ schemewise releases with drill down details of sanctions is available

in e-Lekha and all State Governments have been given access to it. The e-Lekha hardware is being augmented and full blown efforts have been launched to ensure connectivity between various PAOs by June 2009. The Expenditure Information Network, which is the final goal of this Project, is also getting crystallized and once put in place will set new standards for accountability and transparency in governance.

As a recognition of our work and performance, the National E-Governance Award has been given to e-Lekha for exemplary horizontal transfer of ICT technologies. I also take great pride in informing you about the Microsoft award won by us. The award is known as the Services Developer Award given to honor excellence in development and conceptual projects that involve inventiveness and creativity and use advanced technology to meet business needs. It is further expected that eLEKHA will be bagging many more awards in the future.

In addition to several initiatives, a matter of core concern has been the area of internal audit and path breaking capacity building initiatives in this field have been taken for our officers and staff.

A Centre of Excellence to ensure the highest standards in internal audit and internal controls has been set up in the office of the Controller General of Accounts and a four months certification program in "Risk Based Internal Audit" and internal controls has been started by INGAF. The latter is already training a second batch of trainees. A one year Course for Accounts Officers on "Accounting and Internal Audit" started at NIFM has also seen successful results. We have extended the outreach programs to address issues like the IFMIS in the North East. We are test running COMPACT in Mizoram and work is afoot for establishing a Regional presence of INGAF there. The office of the CGA is also working in partnership with the Asian Development Bank on the Mizoram Treasuries' Computerization Project.

We have enhanced our profile in the international arena. CGA is now on the Board of the International Consortium on Governmental Financial Management. The "International Conference on Public Financial Management for Improving

Program Delivery” organized by the officers of Civil Accounts, was an overwhelming success. In the realm of capacity building, INGAF has been brought to the centre stage of the Association of Government Accounting Organizations of Asia (AGAOA) platform and accepted as a Regional Training Centre. The secretariat at INGAF is being empowered with an IDF grant to build resources and enhance capacity development initiatives in the entire region.

A video conferencing facility has also been set up at the office of the Controller General of Accounts. Accelerated preparation of Appropriation Accounts and Finance Accounts (within 7-8 months of the close of the financial year), Pilots in accrual accounting, implementation of the New Pension Scheme, Sixth Central Pay Commission pay/pension revision, Monitoring of ATNs, improvements in the administration of various cadres, due recognition for excellent performance etc. have been some of the other achievements.

The list is long and what I have been able to recapitulate is only partly indicative of all that we have been able to attain. On this day I say goodbye to all of you and express my gratitude for the love and affection and unstinted support in all the ventures. At a personal level I must confess that I will miss the teamwork and the comradeship that helped us to synergize our efforts and steer the various Projects. I will miss also the esprit de corps of the organization exemplified in your work and through joint platforms such as the CAO day.

There will be many challenges in the coming years and within these challenges would lie unique opportunities – I have full confidence that you will seize them and, move from strength to strength and bring out further improvements in the functioning of the Department. My wife joins me in conveying our best wishes to all of you and your families.

God bless you all.

V. N. Kaila
New Delhi
31-3-2009.