**Awareness Raising Workshop
on
Internationalised Domain Names (IDN)
November 28, 2011 at
The Capitol Hotel, No.3, Raj Bhavan Road, Bangalore**

Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), under the aegis of Department of Information Technology (DIT), Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MC&IT), Government of India is organizing an Awareness Raising National Workshop on Internationalised Domain Names (IDN) for Indian languages on November 28, 2011 at The Capitol Hotel, No.3, Raj Bhavan Road, Bangalore from 10:30 am onwards.

The workshop is a result of the joint efforts of the DIT, Govt. of India and C-DAC to enable the availability of domain names in Indian languages. In the past, IDNs were available only in Latin characters and having your domain name in an Indian script was impossible. But today with this new initiative, having your domain name in an Indian language like www. ಸಿಡಾಕ್.ಇಂಡಿಯಾ will soon be a reality.

However, underlying this development are several issues that need to be resolved, arising out of the complexity of Indian scripts. Over the past two-three years C-DAC, in close association with the Department of Information Technology (DIT) has evolved a policy document for Internationalized Domain Names in Indian Languages. A certain number of scripts and languages have also been identified in the initial stage and the requirements for each have been detailed out in the Policy Document: Devanagari (Marathi, Hindi, Konkani, Sanskrit and Nepali), Punjabi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Assamese, Odia, Bangla to name the major languages have been handled. The policy will support all the 22 scheduled languages in due course of time. With the maturity of the policy, it is time to involve the implementers of the project: the Registrars, Sub-Registrars and Industry at large and make them aware of the major issues underlying the allocation of Internationalized Domain Names in Indian Languages.

This workshop is part of the series of events that has been formulated to discuss and raise awareness about the safeguards, challenges and issues among stakeholders, before the policy comes into effect. It is hoped that this workshop shall serve the purpose of providing a platform to all major players in this initiative to be aware of the problems and perspectives of IDN and collate useful feedback for finalizing the policy.

Although there is no doubt that it signals a positive time for the acceptance of Indian languages on the World Wide Web, there will be a number of issues that will require deliberation for its smooth implementation, security and confidentiality being some of the key elements within that framework. Both stakeholders and the industry have to come forward to iron out the underlying issues and set the standards towards raising the confidence level of the user community, and thereby its wide acceptance.

Given the complexity of Indian writing systems, safeguards will be of primary importance to ensure that the common man is secure as far as possible from pharming and spoofing attacks. The syllabic structure of Indian languages, variant tables, restriction rules are some of the major focal areas of IDN, which will be thrown open to the major players for their comments.

The key aspect here is to reach a consensus on the mode of implementation so that the user community can benefit at the earliest.

The series of Awareness raising National Workshops on IDN started with Pune, followed by Hyderabad, Mohali, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram and other major cities of India. Other workshops for raising awareness and developing consensus for all official languages will be organized in the months to come.