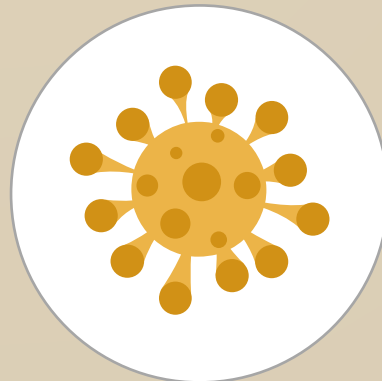




Preventive Action Steps

Major Activities in the Commission during March & April 2020



Steps taken by the Commission to facilitate the Appellants during lockdown:

- Hearings for urgent matters allowed through video conferencing / audio conferencing.
- Need for personal visits was obviated by facilitating the submissions on link <http://dsscic.nic.in/online-link-paper-compliance/add> provided on Commission website.
- For urgent hearing, contact numbers of Deputy Registrars were provided on Commission website.
- Link on Commission website was provided for latest information on Covid-19 pandemic.

March 2020

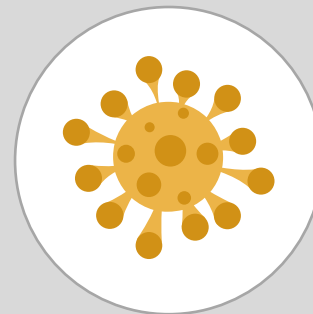
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April 2020

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Activities undertaken

1. **Before** lockdown 04/03/2020 to 25/03/2020.
2. **During** Lockdown from 25/03/2020 .
3. **After** Partial lifting of lockdown from 20/04/2020



March 2020

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April 2020

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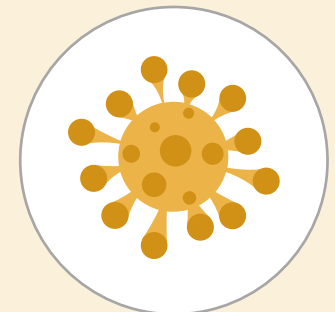
4 March 2020

1. Biometric Attendance System stopped w.e.f 4.3.2020 to prevent spread of infection through finger scan of employees on biometric machine.
2. An advisory on how to deal with COVID-19 pandemic issued by World Health Organization was circulated among all the Officers/Staff of the Commission vide Commission's Office Order dated 4.3.2020.



March 2020

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16 March 2020

Commission meeting held on **16.3.2020** for discussing Precautionary Measures to be taken in the wake of COVID-19 Pandemic and decided:

1. Hearing will be limited to urgent matters through video conferencing / audio conferencing.
2. Parties need not come to Central Information Commission unless it is essential. They may upload their submissions on the respective website URL link: <http://dsscic.nic.in/online-link-paper-compliance/add>
3. All Visitors as well as the staff shall be tested at the existing check point at entry gate of reception.
4. Staff operating at various places should be trained on hand hygiene and sanitation.
5. Informative, educative, communicative material approved by the government shall be made available in soft copies which can be printed and displayed in the Commission premises to create awareness.

March 2020

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17 March 2020

Sanitizers placed at the entrance gate, near lifts and outside toilets for use of people entering the Office building.

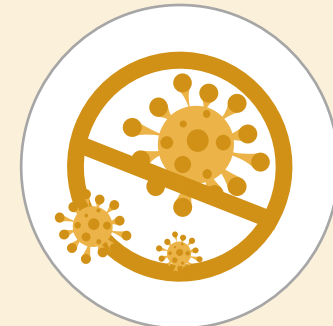
18 March 2020

A workshop held in the Commission to educate the employees on implementation of preventive measures on COVID-19:

- A lecture on the subject was delivered by CIC and Addl. Secretary.
- Short documentaries on preventive measures on spread of COVID-19 pandemic were shown

March 2020

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20 March 2020

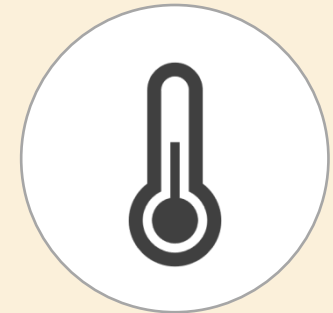
A hand held thermometer was provided to the guard at entrance gate to scan all the people entering the building for temperature check .

21 March 2020

1. Intensive cleaning of office premises on daily basis started.
2. Sanitization of all common places of touch such as lift buttons, door handle knobs, railings etc, started, at least four times in a day.

March 2020

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23 March 2020

Commission meeting held on 23.3.2020 .

Decisions taken:

1. Being Quasi-judicial body, cases may be disposed by the Commission on the basis of written submissions. If someone insists for personal hearing the concerned Information Commissioner/Deputy Registrar may decide disposal on case to case basis. The names, e-mails and telephone numbers of the Deputy Registrars attached to CIC/ICs be displayed on CIC website for the benefit of both the parties.
2. Intensive use of technology tools will be explored and implemented for disposal of cases. The situation will be reviewed by the Commission after 31.03.2020
3. Staggering of working staff to be decided by the concerned Registry/ unit in-charge to work with skeletal staff in wake of DoP&T O.M in this regard.

March 2020

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31 March 2020

Commission meeting held on 31.3.2020 on Video Conferencing

1. The following decision were taken:-

- All Second Appeal cases scheduled for hearing deferred for this period.
- In case of any matter of urgency, Deputy Registrar of the Registry be contacted telephonically.
- Hearing of such matter would be through audio conference.
- CIC/ICs and officials of the Commission shall however work-from-home only.

2. Arrangement for passes for the staff of the CIC to make movement whenever necessary:

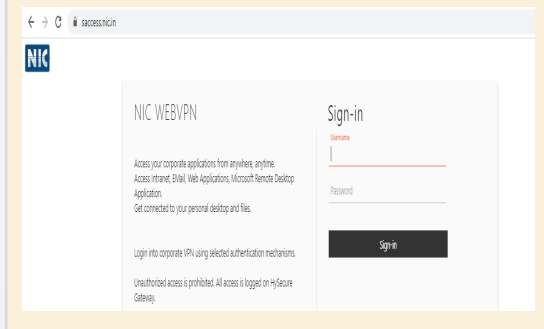
- Request made to the Delhi Police to issue passes to the essential staff of the ICs and others.

3. Operation of e-office:

- E-office platform will be extended by NIC to the home computers of the CIC and officers in the hierarchy of the channel of submission of files.

March 2020

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4 & 5 April 2020

1. Complete sanitization of the CIC building carried out , both inside and outside, on 4.4.2020 and 5.4.2020.
2. Items such as Tables, Chairs, Workstations, Electronic gadgets, Walls, Gates, Doors, Railings, Glass Partitions, etc. completely sanitized with high quality disinfectants.
3. Arrangements for cleaning and sanitation in the CIC building:
 - Periodicity in accordance with the protocols on sanitization to be maintained for sanitization of CIC building.



April 2020

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7 April 2020

Commission held video conference /meeting on 07.04.2020 via Zoom

And decided:

1. To issue notices and list cases for disposal of RTI second appeals:

- Maximum possible efforts will be made using technology for early conduct of hearings under the current circumstances arising due to lockdown.
- Notices may be issued by e-posts, if required.
- The Registrar to continue to train all the DRs periodically to provide support and ensure that the scheduled hearings commence through audio/digital mode by **15th April, 2020**, if not earlier in larger public interest.



April 2020

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7 April 2020

2. Make arrangement for staff for movement, whenever necessary:
 - Request made to the Delhi Police to issue passes to the essential staff of CIC.
 - Till then authorization from competent Officer of CIC to be used for commuting from home to office.
 - Suitable vehicle arrangements also be made for staff necessary to attend office during lockdown period.

3. Interacted with Civil Society Representatives to apprise them of the preparedness of the Commission in resuming hearing after the lockdown period.
 - Some suggestions given by them included the need for proactive disclosures under section 4 of the RTI Act by various Government Departments especially issues related to health, sanitation & water supply ,PDS , etc;
 - the use of new technological tools appropriately for the ease and convenience of all concerned, and extensive publicity may be carried out through various media platforms for the benefit of public at large by the concerned Departments.

April 2020

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7 April 2020

4. Steps be initiated for waiver of lockdown period from the stipulated timelines for CPIO, FAA and second appeal under the RTI Act.
5. Commission may issue advisory to all Ministry/Departments for proactive *suomoto* disclosures under section 4 of the RTI Act during the lockdown period on medical, sanitation, etc. to the citizens.

April 2020

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10 April 2020

1. **Commission meeting with all former Chief Information Commissioners was held on 10.4.2020 on Video Conferencing** to invite their suggestions to create an enabling environment for the people to overcome the hardships in securing information so that the Commission may undertake them, in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.
2. In view of the unprecedented damage caused to the national economy by the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts made by the Government to pool all resources to meet the challenges of this national crisis, Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners at Central Information Commission **voluntarily agreed to take a cut equal to 30 % of the basic pay for a period of one year, starting with April, 2020.**

April 2020

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13 April 2020

1. Publicity of Relief and Rescue Operations

- DoPT was requested by this office to issue advisory to all Ministries for supplementing the Government measures on COVID-19 related relief and rescue operations employing the provisions of section-4 of the RTI Act 2005 for wide dissemination in media as well as on websites of public authorities.

2. Relaxation for Limitation Periods

- DoPT was to takes suitable steps to exclude the period of lock down from the limitation periods stipulated under the RTI Act 2005 for providing information by CPIOs, filing of First and Second Appeals, and disposal of First Appeal.

April 2020

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20 April 2020

Commission meeting held on 20.4.2020 maintaining social distancing.



1. Discussed Pendency and disposal of cases: and decided that each Information Commissioner will ensure all possible hearings in the present scenario to reduce the pendency. It was also decided that E-mail may be sent to Nodal CPIOs, requesting them to update database pertaining to them and their subordinate offices so that possible hearings may be conducted

April 2020

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20 April 2020

2. Discussed Re-engineering of processes in the Commission during and after the lockdown: New processes adopted in the Commission for disposal of hearings and work from home.

3. Implementation of RTI Act, 2005 in wake of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019 was decided that letter to the Chief Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir /Ladakh, with copy to the Secretary, MHA and Secretary, DoPT, for seeking list of CPIOs be issued so that hearings of second appeals may be resumed by the Commission. All the cases received in the Commission be registered and transferred to the IC (DP) for further action in this regard.

April 2020

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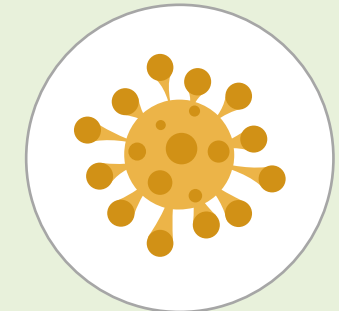
20 April 2020

1. Sanitization of all vehicles entering the Office Building was started .
2. Rooms used by the Officers/Staff being sanitized on weekly basis.



April 2020

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24 April 2020

1. Letters requesting for appointing Central Public Information Officers and First Appellate Authority under RTI Act 2005 issued to The Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh.
2. Letters requesting for transfer of the pending complaints/ second appeal cases under RTI Act before the State Information Commission , J&K to the CIC, issued to The Chief Secretary of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh.

April 2020

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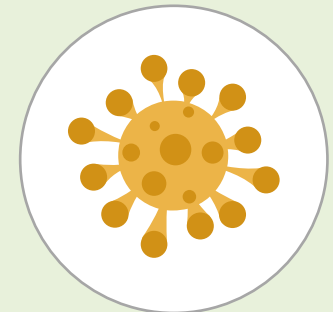
29 April 2020

National Federation of Information Commissioners of India (NFICI) meeting was held on 29.4.2020 on NIC Vidyo app.

- 18 State Chief Information Commissioners (SCIC) were connected on the Vidyo App for the video conference.
- Shri Vinson M Paul, (Vice President) SCIC, Kerala could not be connected due to software problems and hence requested West Bengal, SCIC to commence the proceedings
- Shri Basudeb Banerjee, SCIC, WB introduced Sh. Bimal Julka Chief Information Commissioner, CIC to assume the charge as the new President, NFICI. The Board of Governors and all the members present unanimously endorsed the decision
- President NFICI threw light on the major activities undertaken by the CIC New Delhi in March & April during lockdown period in view of COVID19 and explained the chronology of events and proactive action taken by the CIC in this regard.

April 2020

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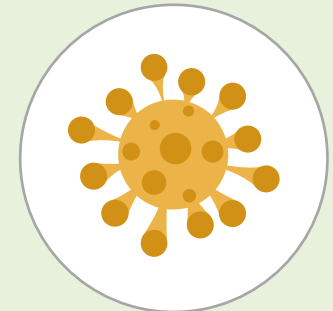


29 April 2020

- All present actively participated in the deliberations & highlighted their constraints /difficulties being faced by them due to lack of infrastructure at the State level, handicaps regarding poor internet connectivity in the Rural Areas and issues regarding lack of bandwidth etc.
- President stated CSICs are the best judge to deal with the cases in conformity with the prevailing situation in their jurisdiction.
- The participants were sensitized about the extraordinary situation requiring extraordinary actions in these challenging times as the RTI Act is a common mans Act, all efforts need to be made to protect the Right to Information by the information seekers.
- Additional two months' time may be given to all the State Information Commissions to submit their important decisions & initiatives in a summarized manner on the prescribed proforma.
- NFICI website is now fully operational on NIC's Server. The new address of NFICI is www.nfici.nic.in

April 2020

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Second Appeals Disposed Off

March 2020	April 2020
868	548

March 2020

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