

Press Release

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Trivandrum

“India must use the ISOC Platform to influence Internet Governance Policy”

India must project the voices of its 400 million present Internet users as well as the future users, to influence Internet Governance Policy for the benefit of its 1.2 billion population, said Dr. Ajay Kumar, Additional Secretary, Department of Information Technology (DeitY), Government of India, New Delhi. The top officer in the Government of India in the Internet Governance Domain, Dr. Kumar was speaking at the formal inaugural ceremony of the Trivandrum Chapter of Internet Society (ISOC-TRV).

ISOC is the international not-for-profit Society set up in 1992 by Internet pioneers that brings together technical and engineering professionals, Internet policy institutions, and individual Internet users. ISOC-TRV is the fifth ISOC Chapter in India after Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Bangalore.

Dr. Ajay Kumar said that while the Internet has become a common infrastructure for many kinds of interactions, much more awareness has to be created in civil society about the different institutions available today such as ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Numbers and Names), ISOC (Internet Society) and IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force). Also, information dissemination has to take place about the Multistakeholder Model, which provides a new and contrasting governance model compared to the multilateral model that was in existence for many years through the UN system.

He said that the Internet Society (ISOC) was an excellent platform that provided room for interactions among the diverse stakeholders of the Internet, ranging from Government, Business, Academia, Technical Community, and Civil Society. He called upon ISOC Trivandrum to use the ISOC platform to bring in more professionals and interested users into the domain of Internet Governance, so that India's contributions could be made stronger. Given the fact that the US was disengaging from the direct governance of the Internet and was in the process of handing over to a multistakeholder body (ICANN) made it even more important that the civil society in India strengthened its presence in these organizations.



Illustration 1: Dr. Ajay Kumar speaking at the Inaugural of ISOC-TRV. Satish Babu, Chair, ISOC-TRV; Dr. Govind, CEO, NIXI; and R. Srinivasan, Vice Chair, ISOC-TRV seated (L to R)

Dr. Govind, CEO, NIXI, who presided over the inaugural function, pointed out the different technical and governance-related aspects of the Internet and the participating organizations in the Internet Ecosystem. He also outlined a set of priorities that India must consider for enhancing participation in Internet Governance.



Illustration 2: A view of the audience

Satish Babu, Chair, ISOC-TRV, welcomed the gathering, and said that it was appropriate that Dr. Ajay Kumar inaugurated the Chapter. He pointed out that there were several initiatives in imparting information about Internet Governance world-wide, but given the size of India, it was imperative to organize a School of Internet Governance in India. He also suggested a meeting amongst ISOC Chapters in India to discuss and formulate a common India-level policy.

R. Srinivasan, Vice Chair, ISOC-TRV proposed a Vote of Thanks. About 45 members and guests took part in the inaugural ceremony.