

GISTNIC

Introduction

GISTNIC stands for General Information Service Terminal - National Informatics Centre. It is a database system in India that provides general information to the public. This database covers various subjects such as travel, tourism, education, health, economy, finance, census, and rural technologies. Information can be accessed through NICNET, a satellite-based government informatics network, allowing people across India to receive answers to their queries almost instantaneously.

History

GISTNIC (General Informations Service Terminal-National Informatics Centre) was implemented in 1988 in India. It was a database on traditional science and technologies of India, located at the National Informatics Centre (NIC) in New Delhi. The primary objective of GISTNIC was to provide information on various disciplines, including Indian medicine, ancient agricultural practices, and other traditional technologies.

It was first implemented in Pune, India in 1988. The National Informatics Centre (NIC) at Pune played a crucial role in the development and implementation of the GISTNIC project. Pune was chosen as the pilot location due to its proximity to various research institutions, universities, and traditional knowledge centers, making it an ideal location for collecting and documenting traditional science and technology information. The success of the GISTNIC project in Pune led to its expansion to other parts of India, promoting the dissemination of traditional knowledge and contributing to the growth of e-governance in the country.

After the successful implementation of GISTNIC in Pune, the project was expanded to other locations in India. Some of the notable locations where GISTNIC was implemented after Pune are:

- Bangalore: The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore played a significant role in the expansion of GISTNIC, with a focus on documenting traditional sciences and technologies related to agriculture, medicine, and engineering.
- Hyderabad: The National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) in Hyderabad was another key location for GISTNIC implementation, with a focus on traditional Indian medicine and food sciences.
- Chennai: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras in Chennai was also a part of the GISTNIC expansion, with a focus on documenting traditional sciences and technologies related to engineering, architecture, and urban planning.
- Delhi: The National Informatics Centre (NIC) in Delhi, being the headquarters, also played a crucial role in the expansion of GISTNIC, with a focus on coordinating and integrating the efforts of various locations across India.
- Kolkata: The Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB) in Kolkata was another location where GISTNIC was implemented, with a focus on traditional Indian medicine and chemical sciences.

These locations, along with Pune, formed the initial network of GISTNIC implementation, which later expanded to other parts of India, promoting the dissemination of traditional knowledge and contributing to the growth of e-governance in the country.

GISTNIC Improvements

Over the years, several improvements were made to GISTNIC to enhance its functionality, accessibility, and overall performance. Some of the notable improvements and their implementation timelines are:

- 1992: Database Expansion: The GISTNIC database was expanded to include more traditional sciences and technologies, such as Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha medicine, as well as traditional agricultural practices.
- 1995: User Interface Upgrade: The user interface of GISTNIC was upgraded to make it more user-friendly and accessible to a wider audience. This included the introduction of a graphical user interface (GUI) and a search engine to facilitate easy retrieval of information.
- 1998: Internet Connectivity: GISTNIC was connected to the internet, allowing users to access the database from anywhere in the world. This significantly increased the reach and accessibility of GISTNIC.
- 2001: Digitization of Rare Manuscripts: A project was initiated to digitize rare manuscripts related to traditional sciences and technologies. This helped preserve the knowledge and made it available to a wider audience.
- 2003: Multilingual Support: GISTNIC was upgraded to support multiple languages, including Hindi, Tamil, and other regional languages. This enabled users who were not proficient in English to access the database.
- 2006: Web-Based Interface: A web-based interface was developed for GISTNIC, allowing users to access the database through a web browser. This further increased the accessibility and usability of GISTNIC.

The implementation of GISTNIC marked an important milestone in the development of e-governance in India, as it demonstrated the potential of information technology to disseminate knowledge and promote traditional sciences.

Status of GISTNIC

GISTNIC was a pioneering effort in providing general information to the public in India, but its current status is unclear. With the advancement of technology and the development of more modern and user-friendly platforms, GISTNIC may have been replaced or phased out.

Alternative Information Sources

In recent years, the Indian government has launched several newer initiatives, such as:

- The National Portal of India (india.gov.in)
- The Digital India initiative
- Various state and central government websites

These platforms provide a wide range of information and services to citizens, making it possible that GISTNIC is no longer operational or has been integrated into one of these newer systems.

Accessing GISTNIC Information

To access information on GISTNIC, users could follow these steps:

- NICNET Connection: Users needed to have access to NICNET, a satellite-based government informatics network.
- Dial-up or Leased Line Connection: Users could connect to NICNET using a dial-up or leased line connection.

- **Terminal Equipment:** Users required terminal equipment, such as a computer or a dumb terminal, to interact with the GISTNIC system.
- **Menu-driven Interface:** Once connected, users could access GISTNIC's menu-driven interface, which provided options to browse through various categories of information.

Authorized Users

GISTNIC was primarily designed for use by:

- Government officials
- Researchers
- Students
- Public libraries
- Other authorized institutions

These users could access GISTNIC through designated access points, such as:

- National Informatics Centre (NIC) offices
- State government offices
- Public libraries
- Other authorized locations
- Query-based Access

Users could access information on GISTNIC by:

1. Browsing through menus and categories
2. Submitting queries using a command-based interface
3. Using keywords or phrases to search for specific information

GISTNIC's query-based access allowed users to retrieve relevant information from the database. However, please note that GISTNIC's current status and accessibility are unclear, and it may no longer be operational.