

F.No.8-4/2017-TEL(Pt)
Government of India
Ministry of Education
Department of Higher Education
(TEL Division)

Shastri Bhawan,
New Delhi, Dated: 15.12.2022

Subject: Immediate measures to enhance Cyber Security and Action Points to be followed in the Ministry - reg.

The undersigned is directed to refer to D.O. letter dated: 30.11.2022 from Secretary (MeitY) on the above mentioned subject.


2. In this regard, it is stated that the survey regarding age & configuration of the computers being used in your Organization/ Institution/ Department under Ministry of Education (MoE) may be conducted at earliest and the following actions are required to be taken urgently, to reduce the vulnerability of cyber attack in respect of Organization /Institution/ Department:

- i. Computers older than 7 years should be discarded by 15 January 2023 (not to be re-deployed);
- ii. Computers less than 7 years old should be checked for the Operating System and, if compatible, should be updated to at least Windows 10;
- iii. All the computers running on unlicensed OS/ Softwares should be updated to licensed Software and OS;
- iv. In all future procurements of desktop/laptop, it must be ensured that only original licensed softwares and Operating System are installed

3. A copy of the cyber security guidelines is enclosed herewith, for compliance and necessary action.

4. This issues with the approval of Competent Authority.

Encl.: As stated.


(Gaurav Singh)
Director (EduTech)
Tele: 011- 23382604

To:

1. Chairman, University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi
2. Chairman All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi
3. Director/ Vice Chancellor, All Higher Education Institution, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education

Copy to:

1. PPS to Secretary (HE), D/o Higher Education, MoE
2. PPS to Additional Secretary (Edu), D/o Higher Education, MoE
3. PPS to Director (EduTech), MoE

SECRET

अलकेश कुमार शर्मा, आई.ए.एस.
सचिव

Alkesh Kumar Sharma, I.A.S.
Secretary

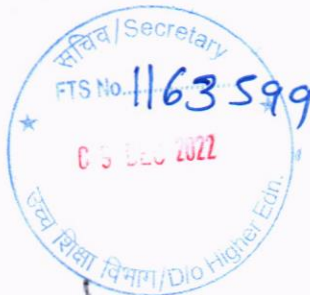


सत्यमेव जयते



आज़ादी का
अमृत महोत्सव

इलेक्ट्रॉनिकी और सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
Ministry of Electronics &
Information Technology (MeitY)
Government of India



DO F. no. M-13/1573/2022-NICCERT
Dated 30th November 2022

Dear Secretary,

This is in continuation of my earlier DOs no. M-11/39/2022-NIC, dated 31.8.2022 and M-13/1053/2022-NICCERT, dated 8.9.2022, regarding immediate measures to enhance cyber security and preparation of security plan for your Ministry/Department/Secretariat.

2. The current cyber security posture for the Government as a whole has since been reviewed at a high level and the following action points have been identified for follow-up in respect of your Ministry/Department/Secretariat:

(a) A copy of the cyber security guidelines is enclosed herewith, for compliance.

(b) Machines that do not comply with the security guidelines need to be disconnected from the network **by 15.12.2022**. These will include personal computers and other devices that are more than five to seven years old and can no longer be updated with the latest operating system and patches. Further, machines that may have been intimated from time to time by NIC-CERT or CERT-In as compromised also need to be disconnected and sanitised before reconnection. For this purpose, CISO may be instructed to immediately commence identification of such machines, with the help of NIC, and to complete the exercise within the timeframe indicated.

3. To enable carrying out of the above, NIC personnel will require physical access to machines to deploy centralised cyber security end-point management software. Further, since NIC has limited resources and carrying out the above within the desired timeframes would entail deployment of additional resources, the Ministry/Department/Secretariat is also requested to make available requisite additional resources, which may be sourced through GeM/NICSI. CISO may also be instructed to ensure compliance with the above, with the help of NIC, on priority.

Best Regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Alkesh Kumar Sharma)

AS (E)
JSAH
12/12

Dir (Edutech)

Secretary

Department of Higher Education

Room no. 127, C Wing, Shastri Bhawan, Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi - 110 001

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Secret

Government of India
Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

Endorsement F. no. M-13/1573/2022-NICCERT

Dated 30th November 2022

Copy, with enclosure, to:

1. Director General, National Informatics Centre [Attention: Ms Seema Khanna, DDG and Group Head (NIC-CERT)]
2. Additional Secretary and Chief Information Security Officer [Shri Rakesh Ranjan], Department of Higher Education
3. Deputy Chief Information Security Officer [Shri Mohd. Anwar Khan], NIC Unit, Department of Higher Education

Savita Utreja
30.11.2022

(Savita Utreja)
Scientist G and Group Coordinator
Cyber Security Division
Tel.: 011-24368146

Government of India
Cyber Security Do's & Don'ts

Cyber Security Guidelines for Government Employees



MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Version 1.4
September 2022



A-Block, CGO Complex
New Delhi – 110003
Website: <https://www.nic.in/>

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Cyber Security Do's & Don'ts

VERSION HISTORY:

Issue Date	Effective Date	Description
1.1	7-Jun-2022	Draft- Added Section-5, Cyber Security Resources
1.2	8-Jun-2022	Draft – Added inputs from CERT-In and included DNS Server IPv4 and IPv6 IP addresses.
1.3	10-Jun-2022	Final Release
1.4	12-Sep-2022	Added clauses related to network security, access control, hosting of websites, logging and segregated the clauses into various sub-categories. Guidelines divided into 2 parts, for compliance by the respective stakeholders.

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

The following persons hold copies of the documents; all amendments and updates to the document must be distributed to the distribution list.

S. No.	Name	Location	Document type
1	Government Employees	Across India	Soft copy

DISCLAIMER:

This document is solely for the information of the government employees and outsourced/contractual resources.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has become ubiquitous amongst government ministries and departments across the country. The adoption and use of ICT has increased the attack surface and threat perception to government, due to lack of proper cyber security practices followed on the ground.

This guideline has been compiled with the objective to ensure a sanitized and secure framework in the Ministries. CISO is required to sensitize the government employees, contractual/outsourced manpower and build awareness from a cyber security perspective as per the Cyber security guidelines for Government Employees.

The ownership of Compliance of this guideline rests with the CISO of each Ministry/Department.

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Ministry of Information and Public Relations

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Cyber Security Do's & Don'ts

I. INTRODUCTION

Information Communication Technology (ICT) has become an integral part of our lives. It has revolutionized the way we work, learn, and communicate. However, the rapid growth of ICT has also led to an increase in cyber threats and attacks. The Government of India is committed to ensuring the security of its information systems and the privacy of its citizens. This document provides guidelines for government employees to help them understand their responsibilities and protect the Government's information systems.

Cyber Security Guidelines For Government Employees

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide government employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to protect the Government's information systems and data. These guidelines are based on the best practices and standards of the industry and are intended to be used as a reference for all government employees.



1. SCOPE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

The following guidelines are to be adhered to by all government employees, including outsourced/contractual/temporary employees, who work for government Ministry/Department.

2. DESKTOP/LAPTOP AND PRINTER SECURITY AT OFFICE

- 2.1 Use only Standard User (non-administrator) account for accessing the computer/laptops for regular work. Admin access to be given to users with approval of CISO only.
- 2.2 Set BIOS Password for booting.
- 2.3 Ensure that the Operating System and BIOS firmware are updated with the latest updates/patches.
- 2.4 Set Operating System updates to auto-updated from a trusted source.
- 2.5 Ensure that the Antivirus client installed on your systems are updated with the latest virus definitions, signatures and patches.
- 2.6 Only Applications/software's, which are part of the allowed list authorized by CISO, shall be used; any application/software which is not part of the authorized list approved by CISO, shall not be used.
- 2.7 Always lock/log off from the desktop when not in use.
- 2.8 Shutdown the desktop before leaving the office.
- 2.9 Keep printer's software updated with the latest updates/patches.
- 2.10 Setup unique pass codes for shared printers.
- 2.11 Internet access to the printer should not be allowed.
- 2.12 Printer to be configured to disallow storing of print history.
- 2.13 Enable Desktop Firewall for controlling information access.
- 2.14 Keep the GPS, Bluetooth, NFC and other sensors disabled on the desktops /laptops and mobile phones. They may be enabled only when required.
- 2.15 Use a Hardware VPN Token for connecting to any IT Assets located in Data Centre.

- 2.16 Do not write passwords, IP addresses, network diagrams or other sensitive information on any unsecured material (ex: sticky/post-it notes, plain paper pinned or posted on users table etc.).
- 2.17 Do not use any external mobile App based scanner services (ex: Cam scanner) for scanning internal government documents.
- 2.18 Use of all pirated Operating systems and other software/applications that are not part of the authorized list of software's should be immediately deleted.

3. PASSWORD MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 Use complex passwords with a minimum length of 8 characters, using a combination of capital letters, small letters, numbers and special characters.
- 3.2 Change passwords at least once in 30 days.
- 3.3 Use Multi-Factor Authentication, wherever available.
- 3.4 Don't use the same password in multiple services/websites/apps.
- 3.5 Don't save passwords in the browser or in any unprotected documents.
- 3.6 Don't write down any passwords, IP addresses, network diagrams or other sensitive information on any unsecured material (ex: sticky/post-it notes, plain paper pinned or posted on your table).
- 3.7 Don't share system passwords or printer pass code or Wi-Fi passwords with any unauthorized persons

4. INTERNET BROWSING SECURITY

- 4.1 While accessing Government applications/services, email services or banking/payment related services or any other important application/services, always use Private Browsing/Incognito Mode in your browser.

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- 4.2 While accessing sites where user login is required, always type the site's domain name/URL, manually on the browser's address bar, rather than clicking on any link.
- 4.3 Use the latest version of the internet browser and ensure that the browser is updated with the latest updates/patches.
- 4.4 Don't store any usernames and passwords on the internet browser.
- 4.5 Don't store any payment related information on the internet browser.
- 4.6 Don't use any 3rd party anonymization services (ex: Nord VPN, Express VPN, Tor, Proxies etc).
- 4.7 Don't use any 3rd party toolbars (ex: download manager, weather tool bar, ask me tool bar etc.) in your internet browser.
- 4.8 Don't download any unauthorized or pirated content /software from the internet (ex: pirated - movies, songs, e-books, software's).
- 4.9 Don't use your official systems for installing or playing any Games.
- 4.10 Observe caution while opening any shortened URLs (ex: tinyurl.com/ab534/). Many malwares and phishing sites abuse URL shortener services. Such links may lead to a phishing/malware webpage, which could compromise your device.

5. MOBILE SECURITY

- 5.1 Ensure that the mobile operating system is updated with the latest available updates/patches.
- 5.2 Don't root or jailbreak your mobile device. Rooting or Jail breaking process disables many in-built security protections and could leave your device vulnerable to security threats.
- 5.3 Keep the Wi-Fi, GPS, Bluetooth, NFC and other sensors disabled on the mobile phones. They may be enabled only when required.

- 5.4 Download Apps from official app stores of Google (for android) and apple (for iOS).
- 5.5 Before downloading an App, check the popularity of the app and read the user reviews.
- 5.6 Observe caution before downloading any apps which has a bad reputation or less user base etc.
- 5.7 While participating in any sensitive discussions, switch-off the mobile phone or leave the mobile in a secured area outside the discussion room.
- 5.8 Don't accept any unknown request for Bluetooth pairing or file sharing.
- 5.9 Before installing an App, to carefully read and understand the device permissions required by the App along with the purpose of each permission.
- 5.10 In case of any disparity between the permissions requested and the functionality provided by an app, users to be advised not to install the App (Ex: A calculator app requesting GPS and Bluetooth permission).
- 5.11 Note down the unique 15-digit IMEI number of the mobile device and keep it offline. It can be useful for reporting in case of physical loss of mobile device.
- 5.12 Use auto lock to automatically lock the phone or keypad lock protected by pass code/ security patterns to restrict access to your mobile phone.
- 5.13 Use the feature of Mobile Tracking which automatically sends messages to two preselected phone numbers of your choice which could help if the mobile phone is lost/ stolen.
- 5.14 Take regular offline backup of your phone and external/internal memory card.
- 5.15 Before transferring the data to Mobile from computer, the data should be scanned with Antivirus having the latest updates.

- 5.16 Observe caution while opening any links shared through SMS or social media etc., where the links are preceded by exciting offers/discounts etc., or may claim to provide details about any latest news. Such links may lead to a phishing/malware webpage, which could compromise your device.
- 5.17 Report lost or stolen devices immediately to the nearest Police Station and concerned service provider.
- 5.18 Disable automatic downloads in your phone.
- 5.19 Always keep an updated antivirus security solution installed.

6. EMAIL SECURITY

- 6.1 Ensure that Kavach Multi-Factor Authentication is configured on the NIC Email Account.
- 6.2 Download kavach app from valid mobile app stores only. Do not download from any website.
- 6.3 Do not share the email password or Kavach OTP with any unauthorized persons.
- 6.4 Don't use any unauthorized/external email services for official communication.
- 6.5 Don't click/open any link or attachment contained in mails sent by unknown sender.
- 6.6 Regularly review the past login activities on NIC's Email service by clicking on the "login history" tab. If any discrepancy is observed in the login history, then the same should be immediately reported to NIC-CERT.
- 6.7 Use PGP or digital certificate to encrypt e-mails that contains important information.
- 6.8 Observe caution with documents containing macros while downloading attachments, always select the "disable macros"

option and ensure that protected mode is enabled on your office productivity applications like MS Office.

7. REMOVABLE MEDIA SECURITY

- 7.1 Perform a low format of the removable media before the first-time usage.
- 7.2 Perform a secure wipe to delete the contents of the removable media.
- 7.3 Scan the removable media with Antivirus software before accessing it.
- 7.4 Encrypt the files /folders on the removable media.
- 7.5 Always protect your documents with strong password.
- 7.6 Don't plug-in the removable media on any unauthorized devices.

8. SOCIAL MEDIA SECURITY

- 8.1 Limit and control the use/exposure of personal information while accessing social media and networking sites.
- 8.2 Always check the authenticity of the person before accepting a request as friend/contact.
- 8.3 Use Multi-Factor authentication to secure the social media accounts.
- 8.4 Do not click on the links or files sent by any unknown contact/user.
- 8.5 Do not publish or post or share any internal government documents or information on social media.
- 8.6 Do not publish or post or share any unverified information through social media.

- 8.7 Do not give share the @gov.in/@nic.in email address on any social media platform.
- 8.8 It is recommended to use NIC's Sandes App instead of any 3rd party messaging app, for official communication.

9. SECURITY ADVISORY AND INCIDENT REPORTING

- 9.1 Adhere to the Security Advisories published by NIC-CERT (<https://niccert.nic.in>) and CERT-In (<https://www.cert-in.org.in>).
- 9.2 Report any cyber security incident, including suspicious mails and phishing mails to NIC-CERT (incident@nic-cert.nic.in) and CERT-In (incident@cert.org.in).

10. CYBER SECURITY RESOURCES

The following resources may be referred for more details regarding the cyber security related notifications/information published by Government of India:

S. No	Resource URL	Description
1	https://www.meity.gov.in/cybersecurity-division	Laws, Policies & Guidelines
2	https://www.cert-in.org.in	Security Advisories, Guidelines & Alerts
3	https://nic-cert.nic.in	Security Advisories, Guidelines & Alerts
4	https://www.csk.gov.in	Security Tools & Best Practices

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5	https://infosecawareness.in/	Security Awareness materials
6	http://cybercrime.gov.in	Report Cyber Crime, Cyber Safety Tips

11. COMPLIANCE

All government employees, including temporary, contractual/outsourced resources are required to strictly adhere to the guidelines mentioned in this document. Any non-compliance may be acted upon by the respective CISOs/Ministry/Department heads.