

**Public Comments on Electronic Service Delivery Bill invited by Department of
Information Technology-Link to RTI and Accountability
April 12, 2011**

Dear all,

The Department of Information Technology, Government of India has uploaded the text of the *Draft Electronic Service Delivery Bill, 2011* (Draft ESD Bill) on its website seeking public comments on its contents. The Draft Bill is attached and accessible at: http://mit.gov.in/sites/upload_files/dit/files/DraftEDSBill_11042011.pdf

What is the Draft ESD Bill?

As part of the National e-Governance Plan several missions and projects are in place that aim to modernize government business and service delivery processes by using computers and other electronic devices. More than a lakh Common Service Centers have been established across the country to provide service delivery to people through electronic means. These could be receipt of forms and applications, issue or grant of any license, permit, certificate, sanction or approval and the receipt or payment of money by whatever name called in a particular manner. Signature certifying authorities, Unique Identification (UID) number delivering authorities are doing their work. Yet several departments and authorities continue to deliver services manually. Any citizen who has tried to access any public service delivered manually knows how cumbersome it is. There is not enough transparency in the system and this leads to corruption.

The Government of India plans to bring in a law that will compel its public authorities and the State Governments to deliver all public services electronically by a deadline in the near future. If the Draft ESD Bill becomes law they will be compelled to do so. Electronic Service Delivery Commissions will be established at the Central and State level for aiding and monitoring the implementation of this law. The Draft Bill requires proactive disclosure of all norms of services that will be provided electronically. The Commissions are competent to receive complaints from citizens about non-compliance with the provisions of this proposed law. The Commissions can impose fines on Head of the Department or his/her subordinate for non-compliance with the provisions of the proposed law.

What can you do?

It is laudable that the Government is seeking people's views on the Draft Bill's contents. This Draft Bill is aimed at improving transparency and accountability in electronic delivery of public services. As it has a bearing on corruption and accountability it is important that people send their views to the Department of Information Technology on its provisions.

Please send your views to: abhishek@gov.in with Draft ESD Bill mentioned in the subject line of your email. No deadline has been stipulated in the public notice accessible at: <http://mit.gov.in/content/draft-electronic-service-delivery-bill-1>

In order to access the our previous email alerts on RTI and related issues please click on:

http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=84

You will find the links at the top of this web page. If you do not wish to receive these email alerts please send an email to this address indicating your refusal.

[I have not posted this message on humjanenge@googlegroups.com. However this message may be automatically relayed through that group to unintended recipients. My apologies in advance for the inconvenience caused to such recipients.]

Venkatesh Nayak
Programme Coordinator
Access to Information Programme
Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative
B-117, 1st Floor, Sarvodaya Enclave
New Delhi- 110 017
Tel: +91-11-43180215/ 43180200
Fax: +91-11-26864688
Skype: venkatesh.nayak
Website: www.humanrightsinitiative.org