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## **H.D. Kote taluk to be on e-governance map soon**

Shankar Bennur

*Initiative taken up under 'Gram Swaraj' in all 32 GPs of taluk*

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*Software called 'Panchatantra' will soon be introduced in all GPs System will ensure transparency in administration and access to records*

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MYSORE: Heggada Devana Kote taluk of Mysore district, one of the most backward taluks in the State, will soon be on the e-governance map with the computerisation of 32 gram panchayats (GPs) of the taluk almost complete. The initiative has been taken up under the World Bank-funded project "Gram Swaraj". Of the 32 GPs, 29 have Internet connectivity and the rest are expected to get it soon.

"Panchatantra", a new software developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to enable "e-friendly" panchayats, will soon be introduced in all 32 GPs.

H.D. Kote Taluk Panchayat executive secretary Prabhuswamy said that H.D. Kote taluk is one

of the few taluks in the State where software was being introduced to realise the concept of e-governance.

The software, which has double entry facility, was introduced on a pilot basis in Hampapura and Chikdonahalli GPs. "Since some changes were required, the software is being modified. Once the changes are effected the software will be introduced in the two GPs and subsequently in the other GPs," Mr. Prabhuswamy said. He said that computer operators had been appointed in all 32 GPs and training was being imparted to them in a phased manner. "Once the nitty-gritty of the operations is understood, the e-governance concept will come into force," he said.

Once the system is in place, it will ensure transparency in administration, enhancement of civic services and access to records such as birth certificates and tax collection. Mysore Zilla Panchayat Chief Planning Officer Vasundhara Devi told *The Hindu* that the computers had been purchased. "Already, 29 GPs are Internet-enabled. The rest will soon get connectivity," she said.

In the past two years, a lot of development has been noticed in panchayats where the "Gram Swaraj" project has been launched.

The five-year project was launched to develop and strengthen the three-tier Panchayati Raj system in the State. It was launched in the GPs of most backward taluks as recommended by the D.M. Nanjundappa Committee report.

The project promises to provide potable water, good roads, and other civic amenities in backward villages. Besides, training panchayat members in general administration, financial management, implementation of rural water schemes, educational programmes, revenue mobilisation, environment maintenance, enforcing better service-orientation schemes and evolving measures for ensuring effective public participation are covered under the project.

According to the project, each GP will get a grant of Rs. 38 lakh in five years with 85 per cent of it being a free grant and the remaining a conditional grant.