

Office on wheels – Govt bids to reach tribal areas

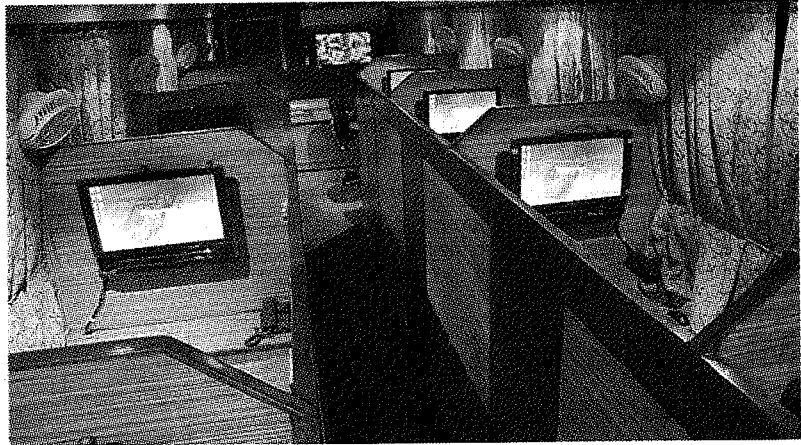
Our Bureau

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With governments facing a big challenge in taking welfare schemes to rural areas, the Rajasthan government seems to have found the way with a little help from the corporate sector.

In a first of its kind approach, the Rajasthan government will take officials from the Revenue department, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Education, Agriculture, Veterinary, Women & Integrated Child Development Services, Social Welfare department, District Supply Office, Public Health Engineering department and Ajmer Vidyoot Vitaran Nigam, Health department besides sub-divisional magistrate, block development officer and tehsildar in a bus fitted with complete facilities available in an office to address the issues faced by rural people. The bus will also distribute free medicines under the Chief Minister's Free Medicine Distribution Programme.

Hindustan Zinc, the largest company in Rajasthan, has developed an exclusive custom designed air-conditioned bus with nine cubicles and latest computer systems and servers. The bus is also fitted with over-wings, which will provide shelter to visiting



Plush interior: An inside view of the bus donated to the Rajasthan government by Hindustan Zinc.

villagers. Mr Hemant Gera, District Collector, Udaipur, said the officials will reach out to the rural masses especially the tribal population of Kotda Block at Udaipur and resolve their problems in their villages itself. Initially, the bus will reach out to 262 remote tribal villages. It will make a trip once every week in one of the 31 gram panchayats. A survey on the villagers' problems will be conducted by various village committees and

block development officers before the bus reaches a gram panchayat for speedy redress.

The entire exercise in villages will be recorded through CCTV camera for review by higher officials to ascertain the success of the initiative, said Mr Gera.

Mr Akhilesh Joshi, Chief Operating Officer, Hindustan Zinc, said it had spent about Rs 50 lakh to redesign the bus to meet the requirements.