Central Vigilance Commission  
(Coordination - I Section)  

No. 016/VGL/023  
Dated 21.7.2016  

Sub: Use of Social Media for the Central Vigilance Commission  

The Commission has desired that it should have outreach on the social media platforms which are being used by various central and state government agencies as well as autonomous and statutory authorities. The current status of the initiative is the following:

1. The twitter account of the Commission has been opened with the association of the NIC cell attached to the Commission and the twitter handle has been kept on active status for testing and verification purposes.
2. This has been notified to the Press Information Bureau social media unit and also to the country representatives of Twitter. A request for authentication of this account has been made with the authorized representative of Twitter; on their authentication this account will become a verified account of twitter and the domain rights of the twitter handle will be registered in the Commission’s name. This process is presently underway.
3. Tweeting will then be permitted by the authorized person for the same, under advise to the Press Information Bureau, as is the practice in other central government departments.
4. The twitter shortcut will be linked to the Central Vigilance Commission’s website and intimation will be given to all CVOs. Formal intimation of this account will then be sent to all important government social media accounts.
5. A brief background note is attached as Annexure to this letter.

[Signature]  
(Aditya Joshi)  
Director

All Directors/DS/OSDs

Copy to:

1. Sr.PPS to CVC
2. PS to VC(R)
3. PPS to VC(B)
4. PS to Secretary
5. PS to AS(SH)/AS(SPNS)/AS(PS)/AS(SS)
6. PS to CTE(RC)/CTE(HK)
BACKGROUNDP NOTE

Sub: Use of Social Media for the Central Vigilance Commission

1. The Commission has expressed the need to expand its footprint in the social media, and in this regard this note intends to briefly outline the main features of this engagement, discuss various relevant social media engagement policy issues which need consideration/decision and to propose a tentative roadmap for implementation of the same.

2. This note is based upon consultations with the I&B Ministry, with NIC and the Press Information Bureau representative attached to the Ministry of Personnel, with users such as the Ministry of Personnel, Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Pensions as well as extant guidelines drawn up by the Department of Information Technology. Several social media sites such as those maintained by the Delhi Traffic Police, The Ministry of External Affairs (Public Diplomacy Division), the Prime Ministers Office, the Ministry of Personnel, the Maharashtra Police Department, Mumbai Police etc have been studied in this regard. Organisations with varied relevance to the public have been examined and their social media engagement strategies understood for our proposed engagement strategy.

3. Definition: Social media has been defined as any web or mobile based platform that enables an individual or agency to communicate interactively and enables exchange of user generated content. This is characterized by 24x7 connectedness, active collaboration between users, and the creation of a virtual community of like minded persons or agencies. This has generally become synonymous with social networking sites such as Facebook, or micro blogging sites such as Twitter.

4. Types of Social media include Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Blogs (descriptive content pages created and maintained by individual users, used interactively by other users), Micro blogs (blogs with a typical restriction of 140 characters, such as Twitter), Video blogs or Vlogs (such as Youtube, Picasa, Flickr) and Wiki platforms (What I Know Is) about a subject.

5. Objectives: Why does an Agency need to use social media? This issue needs no elaboration as far as Government organizations are concerned since the intention is to seek wider social engagement and citizen awareness and participation in the work of organizations which are funded with public money. In the case of the Commission, the objective may be tentatively defined as seeking public awareness and participation in
activities of preventive vigilance as well as informing the public about the work being done by the Commission. In this respect, the objective will be similar to the maintaining of the Commission’s website.

6. **Choice of Platform:** Which platform to use for interaction will depend upon the objectives of the organization as well as the availability of the existing platforms. This will also depend upon the duration of the engagement, the type of consultation sought i.e. whether consultation is open to the public or confined to a specific group, the duration and periodicity of engagement and adherence to existing laws. It is therefore tentatively proposed that we may open a Facebook account and subsequently, a Twitter handle, postings to be done for the public on activities and events pertaining to preventive vigilance. The periodicity of the engagement may be on a weekly basis.

7. **Governance issues:** Various aspects of the rules and regulations of Social Media engagement are discussed below:-

a. **Account governance:** The Social Media accounts may be opened in the name of the organization, operated by a single authorized representative. The responsiveness of the accounts may be weekly and we may create a policy for responses and a policy for dealing with queries/comments separately.

b. **Resource governance:** The resources made available on social media may be co-terminus with those that are made available under the RTI Act. Officials authorized to respond to RTI queries may be authorized to approve availability of resources for social media as well.

c. **Content governance:** At this early stage, it is proposed to restrict use of social media to providing information and for activities of preventive vigilance. Therefore we may not allow users to act/amend content and at this stage, unmoderated two way interactions may not be permitted. The sites may be periodically reviewed in this regard.

d. **Data and information security governance:** the Commission may follow the same data and information security protocol as in the case of the official website of the Commission, since data portability may be possible from one social media platform to another. Personal information and confidential data/files may be kept out of the purview of the social media.

8. **Communication Strategy:** The strategy proposed is that we may use social media to communicate existing information and propagate official policy to the public. We may not allow everyone to become a creator of content and the social media platform may be monitored regularly in this regard. It is proposed that we may use this tentative position to
begin social engagement and review this policy periodically in the light of experience gained subsequently.

9. Pilot: It has been suggested by experts that an organization using social media platforms for the first time may begin by activating one or two small platforms in a limited way and then review its usage subsequently based upon the extant of public following and the time and resources that the organization may want to devote to this activity. Accordingly it is proposed to initially open a Facebook page for the activities specified above and review this subsequently.

10. Institutionalisation: This is the process of embedding social media in the structure and working of the organization. This consists of two parts namely engagement analysis and institutionalization. In engagement analysis, organizations have to constantly monitor social media for feedback and communicate the organizations social media policy as well as responsiveness policy. Great care must be taken to manage perceptions; the public must have realistic perceptions of the organisation’s social engagement. For example, it may be clearly communicated that the Commission will not divulge individual information of investigations, cases etc. nor will social media accounts be used as a corruption compliant mechanism. Separate organizational arrangements exist for these activities. It must be clearly emphasized that the social media engagement is for the purpose of furthering activities of preventive vigilance and informing the public about information that is available in a systematic form in the Commission’s website. Regarding institutionalization, it is proposed that the social media engagement may follow the existing protocols laid down by the Commission, viz. that authorities who are authorized to impart information under RTI Act may be authorized to approve material for social media sites. Two way interactions / unmoderated discussions with users may not be permitted at this stage, since we have neither the time nor the resources for this aspect at the present.

11. The roadmap for social media engagement is proposed below:-

a. The social media account (Facebook account) may be opened by NIC as an organizational account, as has been done by other Ministries. NIC has already been apprised of this.

b. The Facebook account details will be shared with the Ministry representative of the Press Information Bureau (Shri KS Dhatwalia, ADG, PIB) for the purpose of authentication of the account with Facebook. On authentication, the account will become verified account of an Indian Government organization.
c. An authorized officer of the organization may operate the account. Posts may be done on a weekly basis, according to a schedule laid down for the same. We may review the account every fortnight.

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