

e-procurement system in West Central Railway

The Materials Management Department of West Central Railway, Jabalpur has started e-procurement from September-2008 and from 1st April 2009 onwards it is completely switched over from manual system to e-procurement System. E-procurement application shall provide a common platform using secured Web site where the buyer and the sellers can participate in the procurement process in fair and transparent manner. Now the purchase of various type of materials will be through electronic tenders only. The official website for e-procurement system is www.ireps.gov.in. Indian Railways have formulated well established procurement policies encompassing transparency, fair play, quality procurement and competition and equal opportunity to all eligible vendors and e-procurement system is a step towards it.

The site is developed using the latest technology and security features. Salient security features deployed include asymmetric cryptography, PKI enablement, digital signature, 128 bit 'Verisign' SSL etc. apart from other security features like user name, password, digital authentication, role based action/access privileges, audit trail etc.

The data centre has been designed to be fully secure using various hardware and software utilities like firewall, IPS, Antivirus etc. The site is compliant to IT Act 2000 and follows the instructions/ guidelines issued by Ministry of Railways from time to time for procurement of materials. The site provides a secure platform to users for online-transactions for procurement. Railway users can upload their tender documents and can open tenders online. Vendors can access the tender documents through this site and submit their bids online duly encrypted at their end.

This site is very useful to vendors who will participate in the tenders of Materials Management Department of WCR. By using this site vendors can view/access tenders published by all Zonal Railway and production Units, submit their offer online and there is no need to attend the tender opening in advertisement tenders by vendors as the commercial and financial tabulation statement will be available to them just after opening of tenders. This will reduce their expenditures on postage, traveling etc. also avoid submission of late offers.

The benefits of E-Procurement in nutshell are as under: -

- Improved transparency in tendering and contract finalization.
- Online access to tender information.
- Online participation and sharing of information by Other Zonal Railway as well as among the vendors.
- Online evolution of price bid.
- Remote access to tender opening by vendors.
- Savings due to reduced procurement cycle time.
- Improved Material availability, Inventory Management.
- Faster payment through payment gateway.