

Guidelines for Video Conference using Google Meet

It has been brought to the notice of the High Court that some miscreants have intruded into the Google Meet Video Conferencing meetings of hybrid court proceedings and have displayed objectionable videos. It is also to be borne in mind that the Courts have to function in hybrid mode as directed earlier. To strike the balance and to ensure that such untoward instances are not repeated in such VC meetings, some emergent steps are to be taken by the courts in the District Judiciary. Therefore, these guidelines are issued for strict compliance. These guidelines shall apply to all video conferences conducted through the Google Meet platform.

1. Enable Host Management in Google Meet.
2. Disable the Screen Share option for the meeting to be scheduled.
3. The Host shall manually admit the participants to ensure that only authorized individuals are permitted to join the meeting. The advocates shall be permitted only when their names are displayed with the prefix 'Advocate' or abbreviation, 'Adv'. In the case of a party, with full name followed by the case number.
4. The practice of keeping permanent links for video conferencing shall be discontinued forthwith.
5. A new meeting link shall be created and used for each day of court proceedings.
6. The meeting link for the next working day needs to be created only on the previous working day.
7. Avoid publishing meeting links on public websites including the District Courts' website or other public forums.
8. Every Court on creating a meeting link as provided in Guideline no.6 shall share the same with the Bar Association/s and Clerks' Association/s of the respective court center on the previous day of the proceedings.
9. General information shall be published on the website in Malayalam and English that a party to the proceedings/lawyer who are desirous of participating in the proceedings through VC and who are not aware of the link may request for the meeting link sufficiently early before the commencement of such proceedings, through phone/email and on ascertaining the identity, etc, the link will be shared through the email ID or phone of the party/lawyer. Phone number/s and email IDs of the court shall also be shared in the website for such purpose and a staff may be entrusted to deal with such requests. The information regarding the requirement of display of names as per guideline no.3 shall also be published on the website and it shall be communicated to the Bar Association and Clerks' Associations.