

## Digitalizing India for Good Governance

**Minakshi Sehrawat**

Assistant Professor Apiit Sd India

### Abstract

E- Governance is no more a technological innovation available to only the elites, rather it has become a vital necessity for efficient transparent and democratic governance and public service delivery too. The practice of good governance has been widely facilitated with the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). India too has been successfully incorporating e-governance techniques for service delivery and building a citizen- centric administration. But still there is a need to develop a more holistic, easily accessible, participative approach to e-governance; Digital India is an initiative of the government to build up such a model of governance, through digital literacy and empowerment of all people. The aim of launching this campaign is to provide Indian citizens electronic government services by reducing the paper work and saving time and manpower. It is a target few nations would have dreamt of. The issues of equality and development in socio economic fields still remain a farfetched reality but equality and empowerment, participation and transformation seems achievable via the virtual world of internet which has become a powerful tool of shaping public opinion, as well as good governance through use of digital & ICT tools. The present paper aims to study the targets functions and policy initiatives of Digital India through the use of secondary data sources and highlight the benefits of this initiative in building up good governance and participative democracy.

**KEYWORDS:** Digital India, Empowerment, E- Governance, Economy.

#### **Introduction:**

Digital India seems to become a buzz word now a day. It is one of the latest flagship programme of the Government of India to transform India into a complete digitally empowered as well as IT enabled and knowledge economy of the world ([digitalindia.gov.in](http://digitalindia.gov.in)). The Digital India vision provides the intensified impetus for further momentum and **progress for e-Governance** and would promote inclusive growth that covers electronic services, products, devices, manufacturing and job opportunities. Its main aim is to reform governance through technology. The vision of Digital India is centered on three key areas – Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen, Governance & Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens. This project has to be completed by 2019. The brainchild of Hon'ble Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, it lays emphasis on the effective implementation of National **e- governance plan**. It can be a very effective and efficient technique of good governance. **Digital India (DI)** is an initiative of the Government of India started on 1st of July in 2015 to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improving online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity.

#### **Significance of Study:**

In order to receive the highest standards of citizen-centric services, going 'e' is a best alternative. It not only ensures the quick and efficient delivery of services but also provides a corruption free administration. The study aims to understand the various

provisions of this program and to find out what has actually been done at ground level.

**Statement of the Problem:** The problem of inefficient administration and rampant corruption is not acute in India. It is a high time to set the things in order. For that purpose it is important to reach masses with a good alternative and efficient way out. Digitizing our infrastructure is believed to a best among all available options but ensuring its reach too to the grass root level is also a matter of concern. There are various welcome steps of government but let's see how far it further needs to go to sprawl its dimensions.

### **Research Methodology:**

#### **1. Analysis of Secondary data**

#### **Objectives of Digital Infrastructure:**

The main aim is to prepare India for the knowledge based transformation and delivering good governance to citizens by synchronized and co-ordinate engagement with Central Government and State Governments as well as private players.

The main aim is to work for constantly empowering people, especially marginalized and information-backward communities, with the power of information and knowledge using digital tools.

- **Accessible & Cost effective Infrastructure:** Providing people access to the Internet and making them digitally literate through e-resources.
- **Good Governance & People's Participation:** Raising awareness about their rights and entitlements and giving them the voice to demand better governance, better delivery of government services and better protection of their basic human rights using digital literacy and digital tools
- **Education, Skill Development & Empowerment:** Enabling people to access better health, education, skill and livelihood opportunities using digital literacy and digital tools
- **Develop Social Sector, Use Of NGOs & PPP :** Empowering grassroots-level SHGs cooperatives, CSR initiatives ,civil society organizations working in the developmental sector by creating their web portals for online presence and digital literacy and digitally ensuring protection of people's culture, heritage, environment and natural resources
- **e-Markets:** Digitally empowering MSMEs micro-enterprises and communities by training them to use digital tools and enabling them to access new markets through website presence and e-commerce
- **Knowledge Creation & Database:** Creating a knowledge network of digital practitioners and database of effective ICTD innovations and interventions so that these innovations and interventions can be scaled up and partnerships can be forged for using them according to specific socio-economic developmental needs.
- **Activism & Research:** Advocacy and activism to ensure access for all to the Internet as a basic human right and more extensive use of ICT and digital tools for research and development.

The initiative includes plans to link rural areas with high-speed internet networks especially to benefit and connect people of rural areas to access any information needed. To end information poverty by empowering marginalized and "information-

dark communities” with digital literacy, access to digital tools and information-rich knowledge society ushered in by the Internet and the digital revolution.

### **Vision and Mission**

The Digital India vision provides the intensified impetus for further momentum and **progress for e-Governance** and would promote inclusive growth. The vision of Digital India is centered on three key areas – Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen, Governance & Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens. This project has to be completed by 2019. **Digital infrastructure** will focus on providing high speed secure Internet. **Governance and Services** on Demand will stress on integrating services across departments and jurisdictions and making services available in real time for both online and mobile platform. **Digital empowerment** of citizens will pay emphasis on universal digital literacy and availability of digital resources/services in Indian languages.

### **Three key vision areas of DI program are:**

**Digital infrastructure** all through the country is like a utility to the Indian people as it will make available high speed internet delivering all the government services with ease and fast. It will provide lifelong, unique, online and authenticable digital identity to the citizens. It will make easy access to any online services like handling bank account, financial management, and safe and secure cyber-space, education, distance learning, etc.

- Cradle to grave digital identity that is unique, lifelong, online and authenticable to every citizen.
- Availability of high speed internet as a core utility for delivery of services to citizens.
- Mobile phone & bank account enabling citizen participation in digital & financial space.
- Easy access to a Common Service Centre.
- Safe and secure cyber-space.
- Shareable private space on a public cloud.

**Digitally transformed services** High demand of good governance and online services will make available all the services in real time through digitization. Digitally transformed services will also encourage people for doing online business by making financial transactions easy, electronic and cashless.

- Seamlessly integrated services across departments or jurisdictions
- Availability of services in real time from online & mobile platforms
- All citizen entitlements to be portable and available on the cloud
- Digitally transformed services for improving ease of doing business
- Making financial transactions electronic & cashless
- Leveraging Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) for decision support systems & development

**Digital empowerment** of Indian people will really make possible of digital literacy through universally accessible digital resources. It will enable people to submit required documents or certificates online and not physically in the schools, colleges, offices or any organization.

- Universal digital literacy
- Universally accessible digital resources
- Availability of digital resources / services in Indian languages
- Collaborative digital platforms for participative governance

- Citizens not required to physically submitting Govt. documents / certificates.

### **Project Highlights:**

The plan aims to digitize India and E connects citizens through:

- Broadband in 2 lakh villages, Universal Phone Connectivity.
- Net Zero Imports by 2020,
- 400,000 Public Internet Access Points,
- Wi-fi in 2.5 lakh schools and all Universities;
- Public wi-fi hotspots for citizens at major public places including railway Stations,
- Digital Inclusion: 1.7Crore Jobs created for IT, Telecom and Electronics and Indirect job creation for at least 8.5 Crore through this plan.
- E-Governance & E-services across government.
- India to be leader in IT's use in services – health, education, banking
- Digitally empowered citizens – public cloud, internet access.

### **Functions:**

The programme aims to make every household digitally literate with a goal to make India the Global Knowledge hub, with IT being a major driver and engine of growth .The initiative is focused to nurture a Digital India thereby making every household and every individual digitally empowered. It has a strong thrust on e-Governance as IT is a great enabler for empowerment, equity and efficiency. Their focus is on: broad banding villages; participative governance; digital learning; tele-medicine and mobile healthcare; e-learning tools, skill development, job creation ,open source and open standard; E-Bhasha; and others.

### **Nine 'Pillars of Digital India':**

The Government hopes to achieve growth on multiple fronts with the Digital India Programme. Specifically, the government aims to target **nine 'Pillars of Digital India'** that they identify as being:

- 1. Broadband Highways** Laying of national optical fibre network (NOFN) in all 2.5 lakh gram Panchayats in the country will happen in a phased manner.
- 2. Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity** Ensuring mobile access in around 44,000 uncovered villages in the country and government is taking steps to ensure that all villages are covered through mobile connectivity by 2018.
- 3. Public Internet Access Programme:** To expand the coverage of Common Services Center (CSC) from 1.35 lakhs to 1.5 lakhs, i.e. one in every panchayat.
- 4. E-Governance – Reforming Government through Technology:** Business process re-engineering will be undertaken to improve processes and service delivery. Services will be integrated with UIDAI, payment gateway and mobile platform.
- 5. E -Kranti - Electronic delivery of service:** e-Kranti focuses on electronic delivery of services whether it is education, health, agriculture, justice and financial inclusion.

6. **Information for All** The focus will be on easily accessible global information through online hosting of data and proactive engagement through social media and web based platforms like MyGov.
7. **Electronics Manufacturing** Focus is on set top boxes, VSAT, mobile, consumer electronics, medical electronics, smart energy meters, smart cards and micro ATMs.
8. **IT Education and Training for Jobs** The government is planning to train one crore students from small towns and villages for IT sector.
9. **Early Harvest Programmes:** The government is planning to deploy Aadhaar Enabled Biometric Attendance System in all central government offices located at Delhi. A web based application software system will enable online recording of attendance and its viewing by the concerned stakeholders

### **Policy Initiatives and Services to Be Provided:**

Some of the facilities which will be provided through this initiative are Digital Locker, e-education, e-health, e-sign and national scholarship portal. As the part of Digital India, Indian government plans to launch Bot net cleaning centers.

#### **- DigiLocker**

Digital Locker facility will help citizens to digitally store their important documents like PAN card, passport, mark sheets and degree certificates. Digital Locker will provide secure access to Government issued documents. It uses authenticity services provided by Aadhaar. It is aimed at eliminating the use of physical documents and enables sharing of verified electronic documents across government agencies. Digital Locker System aims to minimize the usage of physical documents and enable sharing of e-documents across agencies. The sharing of the e-documents will be done through registered repositories thereby ensuring the authenticity of the documents online.

#### **- Attendance.gov.in**

Attendance.gov.in is a website, launched by the PM on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 to keep a record of the attendance of Government employees on a real-time basis. This initiative started with implementation of a common Biometric Attendance System (BAS) in the central government offices located in Delhi.

#### **- MyGov.in**

MyGov.in is a platform to share inputs and ideas on matters of policy and governance between policy makers and citizens freely, fairly and transparently. MyGov.in has been implemented as a platform for citizen engagement in governance, through a “Discuss”, “Do” and “Disseminate” approach. The mobile App for MyGov would bring these features to users on a mobile phone.

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** Mobile app would be used by people and Government organizations for achieving the goals of Swachh Bharat Mission.

- **E-Sign framework** would allow citizens to digitally sign a document online using Aadhaar authentication.

- **Digitize India Platform (DIP)** Deity has undertaken an initiative namely Digitize India Platform (DIP) for large scale digitization of records in the country that would facilitate efficient delivery of services to the citizens.

- **Bharat Net**, a high speed digital highway to connect all 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats of country. This would be the world’s largest rural broadband connectivity project using optical fibre.

- **The Online Registration System (ORS)** under the **e-Hospital** application has been introduced. This application provides important services such as online registration,

payment of fees and appointment, online diagnostic reports, enquiring availability of blood online etc.

- **National Scholarships Portal** is a one stop solution for end to end scholarship process right from submission of student application, verification, sanction and disbursement to end beneficiary for all the scholarships provided by the Government of India.

- **Next Generation Network (NGN)** BSNL has introduced Next Generation Network (NGN), to replace 30 year old exchanges, which is an IP based technology to manage all types of services like voice, data, multimedia/ video and other types of packet switched communication services. BSNL has undertaken large-scale deployment of Wi-Fi hotspots throughout the country. The user can latch on the BSNL Wi-Fi network through their mobile devices.

- **e-Governance Policy** Initiatives have also been undertaken by DeitY in the e-Governance domain like e-Kranti Framework, Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software for Government of India, Framework for Adoption of Open Source Software in e-Governance Systems, Policy on Open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) for Government of India, E-mail Policy of Government of India, Policy on Use of IT Resources of Government of India, Policy on Collaborative Application Development by Opening the Source Code of Government Applications, Application Development & Re-Engineering Guidelines for Cloud Ready Applications.

- **BPO Policy** has been approved to create BPO centers in different North Eastern states and also in smaller towns of other states.

- **Electronics Development Fund (EDF) Policy** aims to promote Innovation, R&D, and Product Development and to create a resource pool of IP within the country to create a self-sustaining eco-system of Venture Funds.

- **National Centre for Flexible Electronics (NCFlexE)** is an initiative of Government of India to promote research and innovation in the emerging area of Flexible Electronics.

- **Centre of Excellence on Internet on Things (IoT)** is a joint initiative of Department of Electronics & Information Technology (DeitY), ERNET and NASSCOM.

- **Agriculture** It is planned to connect 550 farmer markets in the country through the use of technology giving them access to crop harvest, sales, purchase, besides information on weather data, farming advice, loans and insurance options online.

- **Industry** With the demand for electronic hardware expected to rise rapidly to US\$400 billion by 2020; India has the potential to become an electronic manufacturing hub.

- **E-NGOs** aim to validate and empower grass root organizations through digitized global online presence.

#### **Implementation in various States:**

The programme will be implemented in phases from 2014 till 2018 by Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) with the support of other Public and Private stakeholders.

#### **ASSAM**

- Citizens in two districts can apply online for documents like permanent residence certificate, certified copy of electoral roll,

- Land mutation document, Birth/Death certificates, driving license, and vehicle registration.
- Digitization of ration card data has started.
- Electoral rolls and National Register of Citizens are digitized.

#### ANDHRA PRADESH & TELANGANA

- Government bills can be paid online.
- E-services available in all 'mandals' but work in progress.
- Andhra State is digitizing land records, ownership and title deeds
- Government employees' salaries
- Women and child welfare
- sand mining

#### CHANDIGARH:

- VAT for businesses through e-registration,
- Local excise and taxation department forms online soon.
- E-stamps in place, physical stamp papers to go soon.
- Administration plans phased rollout of 60 public services under e- District Mission Mode Project, 16 gone online

#### CHHATTISGARH

- Began massive IT drive in 2005, among the first in India.
- E-delivery of citizen services assured under Lok Seva (Citizen Service) Guarantee Act.
- First state to notify e-governance rules.
- Urban Bodies, Urban Development Authorities, Panchayats; Rural Development, Social Welfare, Public Welfare, Education, Health, Police, etc. Ministries digitized.

#### GUJARAT

- Under e-Gram project all 33 Collector offices and 13,000 gram panchayats are connected
- Gujarat leads chart of e-transactions.
- Under e-Transactions aggregations and Analysis Layer (e-Taal),
- A central tool that reflects IT usage by states.
- State Wide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology (SWAGAT) allows citizens to connect directly with CM.
- Land records are digitized. All 1.17 crore ration cards are bar- coded.

#### HARYANA

- Seven e-services were launched, including e-stamping in property registration,
- Aadhaar enrolment of children along with registration of birth, and digital life certificates.

#### HIMACHAL PRADESH

- Paperless e-vidhan initiative since August 2014, all papers in House are laid digitally.
- All MLAs and media persons follow proceedings electronically. All officials communicate with Vidhan Sabha Secretariat online.
- Nearly all citizen services are online under e-Suvidha project. The High Court has digitized working; causes lists are online and on digital displays.

#### KARNATAKA

- Mobile One project launched in December 2014 to bundle over 600 government services
  - Application and issuance of birth/death certificates, property registration, tax and bill payments for power, water etc.
  - One seamless web location accessible over mobile phones.
- JAMMU & KASHMIR
- Government set up an exclusive e-governance agency.
  - Public services, including getting a date of birth certificate.
  - Registration as a new voter.
- E-Tendering for development projects and execution of employment related schemes, are online, but land records are not digitized.

#### MAHARASHTRA

- Signed an agreement with Microsoft in January to create a digital identity for citizens.
- Merging identities such as driving licenses and passports.
- Aaple Sarkar portal to register grievances against government departments.
- August 1 deadline to start Government Receipt Accounting System (GRAS) for government receipts.

#### ODISHA

- Land e-registration
- College e-admissions
- Monitoring of mineral transportation from pit-head.
- Online applications for 7 basic certificates.
- Waybill generation in commercial tax department.
- Driving licenses, vehicle registration certificates, and creation and processing of intra-department files at the state secretariat have been digitized.

#### PUNJAB

- Department of Governance Reforms created in 2012 to work on e-governance.
- Power bills can be paid online at the PSPCL website.
- Corporations in bigger cities have started some online gateways.

#### UTTAR PRADESH

- Land records are online.
- E-registration for commercial and other taxes.
- Various welfare schemes are available.
- E-tendering is mandatory in the Public Works Department, Mining and Irrigation.
- Sugarcane department has been recognized for its e-governance initiative.
- All scholarships are online.
- 26 key services are online.

#### WEST BENGAL

- PDS examine through end-to-end computerization.
- Ration cards' digitization has now touched 7.8 cr.
- Online issue of caste certificates in 55 subdivisions.
- 2.74 lakh ST certificates issued.
- Mamata Banerjee's Kanya shree Prakalpa has working with huge success.

## Findings:

About 170 events were organized at the state headquarters during the DI week July 1-6 2015. More than 250 services were launched in areas of

- Health Information
- Utility Services
- Smart Public Distribution system (PDS) card
- Land Record Services
- Mobile App For Civic Amenities
- Services For Farmers
- Social Welfare And Pension Services
- Electoral Services
- Online Court Services
- Police Services
- Employment Exchange Services

Reports have been received from 438 districts wherein in 1,238 events, more than 136,000 lakh government officials and citizens have been informed on Digital India Programme and its services. Events were organized in more than 57,000 common service centers (CSC), wherein more than 3.42 lakh people (rural citizens, youth, e-Service users) participated. More than 1,500 post offices across the country and more than 175,000 lakh citizens have been informed about Digital India and e-services. PM Modi's Digital Dialogue initiative on Twitter received 391 million impressions. (Source: digitalindia.gov.in)

## Conclusion:

The journey of e-Governance initiatives in India took a broader dimension in mid 90s for wider sector applications with emphasis on citizen-centric services. **Digital India programme** with the vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. Three important **elements** of digital India are: Creation of Digital Infrastructure, Digital Literacy and Delivering Services digitally all over the country which seem very real and possible through the use of highly effective and efficient collaborative processes. Besides technical resources, behavioral and organizational dimensions have to be changed and revamped to start building an effective e-governance tool that can deliver the best to the citizens and help in achieving all targets of good governance and national transformation

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