



DIGITAL INDIA: A VISION TO TRANSFORM INDIA INTO A DIGITALLY EMPOWERED SOCIETY AND KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

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Abstract

The digital world that we live in today is the outcome of several innovations and technology advances. Today, every nation wants to be fully digitalized that will empower society in a better manner. The 'Digital India' programme, an initiative of honorable Prime Minister Mr.Narendra Modi, will emerge new progressions in every sector and generates innovative endeavors for geNext. The motive behind the concept is to build participative, transparent and responsive system. This will provide all services electronically and promote digital literacy. Digital Technologies which includes the concept of cloud computing and mobile applications have emerged as the catalysts for express economic growth and citizen empowerment. Companies all over the world desire to invest in Digital India- the 21st century India, as a growth opportunity. The objective of this paper is to have a vision on the Digital India campaign where technologies and connectivity will come together to make an impact on all aspects of governance and improve the quality of life of citizens.

Keywords: Digital India Programme, Methodology, Scope, Vision and Pillars of Digital India Programme.

Introduction

In the twenty-first century, one of the most significant technologies is the power of the digitization. Another part of digitization is the advancement of smart phones that gives the freedom of single touch to access the online services all over the globe. The journey of e-Governance initiatives in India took a broader dimension in mid 90s for wider sectoral applications with emphasis on citizen-centric services. This facility will aim to lessen the usage of physical documents and enable distribution of e-documents across organizations. The e-power platform will facilitate more creative and service-oriented business models that create employment opportunities. High speed network will aid adequate infrastructure for online education platforms through smart and virtual classrooms. The geNext services like



cloud helps in lowering the carbon footprint by reducing fuel consumption, waste management, greener workplaces and thus leading to a green computing.

Digital India programme

Digital India is an umbrella programme that covers multiple Government Ministries and Departments. It weaves together a large number of ideas and thoughts into a single, comprehensive vision so that each of them can be implemented as part of a larger goal. Each individual element stands on its own, but is also part of the larger picture. Digital India is to be implemented by the entire Government with overall coordination being done by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY). Digital India aims to provide the much needed thrust to the nine pillars of growth areas, namely Broadband Highways, Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity, Public Internet Access Programme, e-Governance: Reforming Government through Technology, e-Kranti - Electronic Delivery of Services, Information for All, Electronics Manufacturing, IT for Jobs and Early Harvest Programmes. Each of these areas is a complex programme in itself and cuts across multiple Ministries and Departments.

Approach and Methodology for Digital India Programme are:

- i. Ministries would fully leverage the Common and Support ICT Infrastructure established by GoI. DeitY would also evolve/ lay down standards and policy guidelines, provide technical and handholding support, undertake capacity building, R&D, etc.
- ii. The existing/ ongoing e-Governance initiatives would be suitably revamped to align them with the principles of Digital India. Scope enhancement, Process Reengineering, use of integrated & interoperable systems and deployment of emerging technologies like cloud & mobile would be undertaken to enhance the delivery of Government services to citizens.
- iii. States would be given flexibility to identify for inclusion additional state-specific projects, which are relevant for their socio-economic needs.
- iv. e-Governance would be promoted through a centralised initiative to the extent necessary, to ensure citizen centric service orientation, interoperability of various e-Governance applications and optimal utilisation of ICT infrastructure/ resources, while adopting a decentralised implementation model.



- v. Successes would be identified and their replication promoted proactively with the required productization and customisation wherever needed.
- vi. Public Private Partnerships would be preferred wherever feasible to implement e-Governance projects with adequate management and strategic control.
- vii. Adoption of Unique ID would be promoted to facilitate identification, authentication and delivery of benefits.
- viii. Restructuring of NIC would be undertaken to strengthen the IT support to all government departments at Centre and State levels.
- ix. The positions of Chief Information Officers (CIO) would be created in at least 10 key Ministries so that various e-Governance projects could be designed, developed and implemented faster. CIO positions will be at Additional Secretary/Joint Secretary level with over-riding powers on IT in the respective Ministry.

Vision areas of Digital India

Infrastructure as Utility to Every Citizen

- High speed internet as a core utility shall be made available in all Gram Panchayats.
- Cradle to grave digital identity - unique, lifelong, online and authenticable.
- Mobile phone and Bank account would enable participation in digital and financial space at individual level.
- Easy access to a Common Service Centre within their locality.
- Shareable private space on a public Cloud.
- Safe and secure Cyber-space in the country.

Governance and Services on Demand

- Seamlessly integrated across departments or jurisdictions to provide easy and a single window access to all persons and Government services available in real time from online and mobile platforms.
- All citizen entitlements to be available on the Cloud to ensure easy access.
- Government services digitally transformed for improving Ease of Doing Business.
- Making financial transactions above a threshold, electronic and cashless.
- Leveraging GIS for decision support systems and development.

Digital Empowerment of Citizens



- Universal digital literacy.
- All digital resources universally accessible.
- All Government documents/ certificates to be available on the Cloud.
- Availability of digital resources / services in Indian languages.
- Collaborative digital platforms for participative governance.
- Portability of all entitlements for individuals through the Cloud.

Nine Pillars of Digital India Programme – A Road to Smart Governance

1. Broadband Highways

The first step is to provide high speed broadband highways through fiber optics that connect all the remote areas, government departments, universities, R&D etc. Web based portals and Mobile apps will be developed to access online information while on the move. 2,50,000 village Panchayats would be covered under the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) by December 2016. Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is the nodal Department for this project. Virtual Network Operators would be leveraged for service delivery and communication infrastructure in new urban developments and buildings would be mandated.

2. Universal access to Mobile Connectivity

In the upcoming years, net-work technologies like 3G, 4G and upcoming 5G will storm the speed. Government is specially preparing to connect unconnected areas and speedy use of these technologies. General public will access the online government services with the help of handheld devices. Nation is ready to be well-connected, efficient, and more productive in every aspect.

3. Public Internet Access Programme

Virtuous technologies that support cost containment, collaboration, security, services-on-the-go, social-connect, and in-built intelligence that deliver remote access to any information or service available across the domain. This change will open new doors of e-services to every citizen.

4. E-Governance Reforming Government through Technology

Government Process Re-engineering using IT to simplify and make the government processes more efficient is critical for transformation to make the delivery of government



services more effective across various government domains and therefore needs to be implemented by all Ministries/ Departments.

The guiding principles for reforming Government through technology are:

- Form simplification and field reduction – Forms should be made simple and user friendly and only minimum and necessary information should be collected.
- Online applications and tracking - Online applications and tracking of their status should be provided.
- Online repositories - Use of online repositories e.g. for certificates, educational degrees, identity documents, etc. should be mandated so that citizens are not required to submit these documents in physical form.
- Integration of services and platforms – Integration of services and platforms e.g. Aadhaar platform of Unique Identity Authority of India (UIDAI), payment gateway, Mobile Seva platform, sharing of data through open Application Programming Interfaces (API) and middleware such as National and State Service Delivery Gateways (NSDG/SSDG) should be mandated to facilitate integrated and interoperable service delivery to citizens and businesses.

5. e-Kranti - Electronic Delivery of Services

This kranti will fully focus on digital knowledge program where education, health, farming, rights, financial and many more services will be delivered on a very high bandwidth. Physical boundaries no longer are a limitation when almost everyone and everything is a digital handshake away.

6. Information for all

Open Data platform facilitates proactive release of datasets in an open format by the ministries/departments for use, reuse and redistribution. Online hosting of information & documents would facilitate open and easy access to information for citizens. Government shall pro-actively engage through social media and web based platforms to inform and interact with citizens. MyGov.in, a platform for citizen engagement in governance, has been launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister on 26th July, 2014, as a medium to exchange ideas with Government. It will facilitate 2-way communication between citizens and Government to bring in good governance.



7. Electronics Manufacturing

This milestone will create a huge base for electronics manufacturing in India with the aid of digital technologies and skills. The empowerment of manufacturing through the Internet of Things will enable intelligent workshops that demonstrate data driven operational excellence and decentralized production control systems within and beyond the physical factory walls.

8. IT for Jobs

The government is preparing to provide training and teaching skills to the youth for employment opportunities in the IT sector. BPO industries will be established for the fastest growing segment of the Information Technology Enabled Services industry. It offers e-services 24/7 in every field and gives more jobs potentials.

9. Early Harvest

This programme will generate short timeline projects where every manual service is altered by e-service. E-services like:

- Implementation of Wi-Fi in all the universities.
- Public Wi-Fi Sports to access online gen.
- Educational books to e-books.
- People will use the e-services for entertainment, weather information, latest updates etc.
- Replacement of manual attendance to Biometric procedure

Conclusion

In this digital age, every civilian has a bright prospect to transform the lives in many ways that were hard to envision just a couple of years ago. With the imminent of “Digital India” campaign, India will have a stout and powerful digital infrastructure. All educational institutions and government services will soon be able to provide I-ways round the clock. More employment prospects will open for the youth that will boost the nation’s economy. Let us all look forward for the successful implementation for this project for the brighter and prosperous India and hope India will again called a Golden Sparrow. Even though India is known as a powerhouse of software, the availability of electronic government services to citizens is still comparatively low. The National e-Governance Plan approved in 2006 has made a steady progress through Mission Mode Projects and Core ICT Infrastructure, but greater thrust is required to ensure effective progress in electronics manufacturing and e-Governance in the country. The Digital India vision provides the intensified impetus for further momentum and progress for this initiative and this would promote inclusive growth



that covers electronic services, products, devices, manufacturing and job opportunities. India in the 21st Century must strive to meet the aspirations of its citizens where government and its services reach the door steps of citizens and contribute towards a long-lasting positive impact. The aims to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy by leveraging IT as a growth engine of new India.

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