

E-Governance: Concept and Initiatives in India

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ABSTRACT

The concept of E-Governance is important for the prosperity and growth of a country. E-Governance means to make all government services available to the citizens of a country via electronic media. The Indian government approved the National e-governance plan, consisting of 27 “Mission Mode Projects” (MMPs) and ten components, on 18 May 2006. It is the establishment of policies, and continuous monitoring of their proper implementation, by the members of the governing body of an organization. It includes the mechanisms required to balance the powers of the members (with the associated accountability), and their primary duty of enhancing the prosperity and viability of an organization.

INTRODUCTION

E-governance, expands to electronic governance, is the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in all the processes, with the aim of enhancing government ability to address the needs of the general public. The basic purpose of e-governance is to simplify processes for all, i.e. government, citizens, businesses, etc. at National, State and local levels.

The Indian government has taken various steps to spread e-governance for full accessibility to all the general public and the poor and weak sections also.

Key Words: E-Governance, Transparency, Processes, Citizens, Information Technology, Integration, Communication

In short, it is the use of electronic means, to promote good governance. It connotes the implementation of information technology in the government processes and functions so as to cause simple, moral, accountable and transparent governance. It entails the access and delivery of government services, dissemination of information, communication in a quick and efficient manner.

While Governance relates to safeguarding the legal rights of all citizens, an equally important aspect is concerned with ensuring equitable access to public services and the benefits of economic growth to all. It also ensures government to be transparent in its dealings, accountable for its activities and faster in its responses as part of good governance.

However, this would require the government to change itself – its processes, its outlook, laws, rules and regulations and also its way of interacting with the citizens. It would also require capacity building within the government and creation of general awareness about e-Governance among the citizens.

Information Technology helps government to access faster to the public both geographically and demographically. In India, the main thrust for e-Governance was provided by the launching of NICNET in 1987 – the national satellite-based computer network. This was followed by the launch of the District Information System of the National Informatics Centre (DISNIC) programme to computerize all district offices in the country for which free hardware and software was offered to the State Governments. NICNET was extended via the State capitals to all district headquarters by 1990. In the ensuing

years, with ongoing computerization, tele-connectivity and internet connectivity established a large number of e-Governance initiatives, both at the Union and State levels.

Types of Interactions in E-Governance

- G2G (Government to Government)
- G2C (Government to Citizen)
- G2B (Government to Business)
- G2E (Government to Employees)

E-governance can only be possible if the government is ready for it. It is not a one day task, and so the government has to make plans and implement them before switching to it. Some of the measures include Investment in telecommunication infrastructure, budget resources, ensure security, monitor assessment, internet connectivity speed, promote awareness among public regarding the importance, support from all government departments and so forth

- E-governance has a great role to play, that improves and supports all tasks performed by the government department and agencies, because it simplifies the task on the one hand and increases the quality of work on the other.

Initiatives

Computerization of Land Records: In collaboration with NIC. Ensuring that landowners get computerized copies of ownership, crop and tenancy and updated copies of Records of Rights (RoRs) on demand.

Bhoomi Project: Online delivery of Land Records. Self-sustainable e-Governance project for the computerized delivery of 20 million rural land records to 6.7 million farmers through 177 Government-owned kiosks in the State of Karnataka

Gyandoot: It is an Intranet-based Government to Citizen (G2C) service delivery initiative. It was initiated in the Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh in January 2000 with the twin objective of providing relevant information to the rural population and acting as an interface between the district administration and the people.

A State e-Governance Management Team (SeMT) in Haryana: a team has been constituted in Haryana to extend technical and professional support to various government departments in conception and implementation of various e-governance initiatives.

Lokvani Project in Uttar Pradesh: Lokvani is a public-private partnership project at Sitapur District in Uttar Pradesh which was initiated in November, 2004. Its objective is to provide a single window, self-sustainable e-Governance solution with regard to handling of grievances, land record maintenance and providing a mixture of essential services.

Project FRIENDS in Kerala: FRIENDS (Fast, Reliable, Instant, and Efficient Network for the Disbursement of Services) is a Single Window Facility providing citizens the means to pay taxes and other financial dues to the State Government. The services are provided through FRIENDS *Jana sevana Kendrams* located in the district headquarters.

E-Mitra Project in Rajasthan: e-Mitra is an integrated project to facilitate the urban and the rural masses with maximum possible services related to different state government departments through Lokmitra-Janmitra Centers/Kiosks.

E-Seva (Andhra Pradesh): This project is designed to provide 'Government to Citizen' and 'e-Business to Citizen' services. The highlight of the eSeva project is that all the services are delivered online to consumers /citizens by connecting them to the respective government departments and providing online information at the point of service delivery.

CONCLUSION

E-Governance is considered a very essential tool for the success of a country and the key stone for a democratic country. Only and only whole-heartedly efforts of a government and accompanying hands of general public makes the successful implementation of e-governance in India.

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