Chapter 103
Implementation of E–Governance in India

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ABSTRACT

The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) was approved by the Government of India in the year 2006, comprising of 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 components. The vision of this programme is –"to make all government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets, and ensure efficiency, transparency, and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realise the basic needs of the common man." The effort has been made to demystify and simplify the process of delivering government services by taking a holistic view of initiatives across the country and proving an enabling ICT based platform. The ultimate objective is to bring government services to citizens' doorsteps. This article discusses major e-governance initiatives before the launch of NeGP and the status of MMPs under Central and State Government and under integrated service category after the launch of NeGP. It also takes an overview of the number of online services provided to the stakeholders through government portals. A review of recommendations of National Knowledge Commission of India on e-governance is taken along with the actions taken in this direction. Major challenges in implementation of e-governance are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

India, being a developing country, has steadily been implementing an e-Governance strategy across all levels of government. This strategy is based on a careful balance of investing in underlying technology, mission mode projects at the central and state government levels, district and local initiatives, and communications and awareness across all levels of government, all of which are being implemented under an overarching capacity building, policy and governance framework. This is an ambitious strategy that has been tailored to address the unique priorities, needs and challenges of India. Providing government information, services, products and transaction

is electronically has the potential benefit of accessibility for a wider audience, political and administrative transparency, and improved service delivery. By using e-government websites, citizens can conveniently access government information and services and gain greater opportunities to explore the possibilities of participating in democratic processes.

e-Governance helps in bridging the information gap between the Government and the Governed. e-Governance is an essence to the application of information and communications technology to functioning of the government in order to create 'Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent'(SMART) governance. Better service delivery, transparency and accountability, empowering people through information, improved efficiency within governments and improved interface with business and industry are the goals of e-governance.

According to the World Bank, "E-Government refers to the use of information technologies (such as Wide Area Networks, the Internet, and mobile computing) by government agencies and have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government. These technologies can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient government management. The resulting benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and/or cost reductions." (World Bank, 2005)

In India, the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) has been formulated by the Department of Information Technology (DIT) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAR&PG) comprising of 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 components, which was approved on May 18, 2006 with an outlay 25000 crores rupees with an aim to create the right gov-

ernance and institutional mechanisms and to, set up the core infrastructure and policies. Apart from mission mode projects, other three major components of NEGP include creation of State Wide Area Network; State Data Centre (SDC) and 100,000 Community Service Centers (CSC) to serve among a cluster of 6 villages in the country and provide a range of services (more than eighty). Now every state of India has an IT Policy in place and is involved in the development and implementation of new projects across the various departments of the government viz. Land record, agriculture, finance, insurance, banking, education, etc. In September 2007, the Indian Government has approved city-specific programme covering 323 cities in the country to provide e-Governance services. These e-Governance services enable the citizens to get birth and death certificates, pay property tax, water and power-bills, submit building plans online, purchase railway tickets, consult physician on emergency, anytime and anywhere irrespective of geographic boundaries. The cabinet committee on economic affairs (CCEA) has approved the programme for Rs 787 crore in the 11th five-year plan. (2007-2012). (Gupta, Kumar and Bhattacharya, 2004)

There are three phases of use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in India. These are

- Phase I (1947--1984): Informatics-based E-government,
- Phase II (1984--1995): Personal Computer (PC)-based E-government, and
- Phase III (1995--2007): Web-based E-government.

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