

# Digital India: An Overview

JYOTI RANI

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Govt. P.G. College, Gohana

[Jyoti27490@gmail.com](mailto:Jyoti27490@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of a 'Digital India' is moving towards its goal with quick pace, With the ongoing digital drive in India, the number of users opting for online banking is expected to double to reach 150 million mark by 2020, from the current 45 million active urban online banking users in India, according to a report drafted by Facebook and The Boston Consulting Group (BCG). We are living in arena of technologies and digital world. The digital world is a world where the best possible use is made of digital technologies. The 'DigitalIndia' programme, an origination of honorable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi, **targets to make government services available to people digitally and enjoy the benefit of the newest information and technological innovations.** It is a programme to prepare India for a knowledge future. The motive behind the concept is to connect rural areas with high speed internet network and improving digital literacy. Digital technologies which include cloud computing and mobile applications transpire as the catalysts for shaping our world. The Digital India programme faces the serious barriers in implementation. The motto of this research is to find out how the government services can be available to every citizen electronically and improve the quality of life of every citizen. Hence, an attempt has been made in this paper to understand Digital India -as a campaign where technologies and connectivity will come together to make an impact on all aspects of governance and improve the quality of life of citizen.

**KEYWORDS:** Digital India, Online banking, digitally empowered, e-Services, Mobile Applications

## INTRODUCTION

The Digital India programme is a flagship programme of the Government of India with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy-governance initiatives in India took a broader dimension in the mid-1990s for wider sectorial applications with emphasis on citizen-centric services. The major ICT initiatives of the Government included, inter alia, some major projects such as railway computerization, land record computerization, etc. which focused mainly on the development of information systems. Later on, many states started ambitious individual e-governance projects aimed at providing electronic services to citizens.

Though these e-governance projects were citizen-centric, they could make less than the desired impact due to their limited features. The isolated and less interactive systems revealed major gaps that were thwarting the successful adoption of e-governance along the entire spectrum of governance. They clearly pointed towards the need for a more comprehensive planning and implementation for the infrastructure required to be put in place, interoperability issues to be addressed, etc. to establish a more connected government.

Digital Technologies, which include Cloud Computing and Mobile Applications, have emerged as catalysts for quick economic growth and citizen empowerment across the globe. Digital technologies are being increasingly used by us in everyday lives, from retail stores to government offices. They help us connect with each other and also share information on issues and concerns faced by us. Honourable Prime Minister envisions transforming our nation and creating opportunities for all citizens by harnessing digital technologies. His vision is to empower every citizen with access to Digital services, knowledge and information. Digital India is the next big thing that India is witnessing. Today, every nation wants to be fully digitalized that will empower society in a better manner. The 'Digital India' programme, an initiative of honourable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi, will emerge new progressions in every sector and generates innovative endeavours for genet. The motive behind the concept is to build participative, transparent and responsive system. All educational institutions and government services will soon be able to provide I-ways round the clock.

## VISION

The vision is centred on these key areas:

**I. Digital infrastructure as a utility to every citizen:** - This vision provides high speed internet as a core utility public services like the land records, certificates and many more will be made available online or public cloud. Digital India initiative has a vision to provide

high speed internet services to its citizens in all Gram Panchayats Bank accounts will be given priority at individual level. It gives a safe and secure cyber space in the country.

**II. Governance and services on demand:**-Under this vision, every government services or information is available in real time from online & mobile platforms. It makes financial transactions electronics & cashless and provides single window access to every individual.

**III. Digital empowerment of citizens:** -All digital resources will be available universally in Indian languages. All documents and certificates to be available on the cloud.



## OBJECTIVES OF DIGITAL INDIA

The Digital India (DI) initiative aims to bring digital empowerment to India and aid in its transition to becoming a knowledge economy. The programme aims to do so through a combination of building digital infrastructure, providing digital services, implementing e-governance in an accessible manner and using technology as a driver of change and growth. Thus, the objectives are:

- Transform so far agrarian Indian economy to a knowledge-centric economy
- Plug the widening digital divide in Indian society
- Give India equal footing with the developed world in terms of development with the aid of latest technology.

- To find out how the government services can work effectively with practical solutions and innovative ideas to accomplish the vision of a digital India-a reality.

## SALIENT FEATURES

Umbrella programme which includes the hitherto National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) to connect 2, 50,000 gram Panchayats by providing internet connectivity to all citizens.

- To be completed in phased manner by 2019.
- To be monitored by a Digital India committee comprised of several ministers.
- Contemplates creation of massive infrastructure to provide high-speed internet at the gram level, e-availability of major government services like health, education, security, justice, financial inclusion etc. thereby digitally empowering citizens.
- Will also ensure public answerability via a unique ID, e-Pramaan based on standard government applications and fully online delivery of services.
- Has capacity to create huge number of jobs.
- If implemented well, will be a great boost for the electronics industry in India and expectedly will see a fall in imports of electronics.

## SCOPE AND AREAS OF DIGITAL INDIA

DI aims to encourage the participation of individuals in digital activities through promotion of digital usage through mobile phones etc. and also beefing up of infrastructure. High speed internet will be made available at the Gram Panchayat level. Individuals will maintain a digital identity right from birth. A public cloud will be created with private space that could be shared. Emphasis will also be placed on making cyber space secure for Indians.

All departments and ministries will work together to provide single window access to all individuals. Government services can be availed either through mobile phones or through the internet. All processes will be simplified, making digital access easier. Citizen entitlements will be made available on the cloud. Also, efforts will be undertaken to make financial transactions of a sizeable amount electronic and cashless.

Another major aim of the DI is to educate people and increase awareness about digital processes. To further this aim, the government will promote universal digital literacy and make all digital resources universally accessible to the people. Also, to make digital

resources and services accessible to all people, it will be made available in all Indian languages.

The DI programme covers a wide range of areas:-

- **Broadband Services**:- It provides for incremental coverage of broadband services in gram panchayats over a span of three years at a cost of Rs. 32,000 crore under the guidance of Department of Telecommunications (DoT). It also provides for building up of a national information infrastructure with the guidance of Deity.
- **Mobile connectivity**:- Another important objective is to provide universal access to mobiles, improve mobile connectivity and increase mobile network penetration at a cost of 16,000 crores and under the DoT's purview.
- **Public Internet Access**:- DI also aims to establish service centres in rural areas through a National Rural Internet Mission and in post offices thus ensuring easy public access to internet and other digital services.
- **E-governance**:- The government aims to simplify procedures and reduce bureaucratic hurdles by using IT for a variety of purposes such as maintaining electronic databases, registering grievances against public officials etc.
- **E-kranti**:- This provides for **electronic delivery of services** such as education, healthcare, dispensing justice, educating farmers, forming plans, increasing financial inclusion etc. DI will continue in the footsteps of the National e-governance Plan with respect to implementation of these.
- **Access to information**:- Use technology to proactively engage with citizens through social media, emails, messages etc. Also, build portals that provide people easy access to relevant information
- **Manufacturing of electronics**:- DI aims to bring down India's electronics imports to zero by 2020 through adopting a variety of measures aimed at boosting domestic manufacturing
- **IT Jobs**:- Creation of skilled workforce in the area of IT. Improve capacity-building and provide training so that a suitable workforce is built. The DI programme envisages 1.7 crore direct and 8.5 crore indirect opportunities.
- **Early harvest programmes**:- Envisions converting all government greetings into e-greetings. Development of an IT platform for mass messaging and biometric attendance for all government employees is also being developed.
- **National Knowledge Network (NKN)** :- The scheme has been initiated for establishing the National Knowledge Network with multiple gigabit bandwidth to connect Knowledge Institutions across the country
- Also includes connecting citizens by social network called MyGov, envisages as Net-Zero Electronics Import Target by 2020 and setting up of an **Electronic development fund**.

Thrust Areas in Digital India	
→	Broadband highways
→	Total mobile connectivity
→	Public Internet Access Programme
→	E-Governance,
→	E-Kranti
→	Boost to electronics firms,
→	Employment
→	Early harvest programmes
→	MyGov
→	Net-Zero Electronics Import Target by 2020
→	Electronic development fund

## CHALLENGES FOR THE DREAM OF DIGITAL INDIA

Almost everyone on Facebook changing their profile pictures to support digital India but to make it reality here are list of challenges in the implementation of digital India. Challenges are in every sector right from policy making, changing the work flow up to changing the mentality of the government officers. It is technological change within the most diversified nation. Few of them have been listed below:

**1. High level of digital illiteracy:** Digital illiteracy is prevalent in most of the towns and villages in India. Cities have adopted digitalization but limited to certain extent. Full-fledged digitalization is cashless transaction on daily basis, use of internet services to get government certificates. This requires administration changes, Taxation changes and change in public mentality. So it's a team work which includes citizen's responsibility and support to the new system.

**2. Connectivity to remote areas:** It is a mammoth task to have connectivity with each and every village, town and city. The problem of connectivity is a complex issue because every state has different laws pertaining to its execution. Also it is challenging for the central authorities to make a database where such a huge information can be stored.

**3. Compatibility with centre state databases:** Every state has different internet protocols because every state is diversified. Diversified not only in the sense of religion but also in language. Hence software compatibility with the centre is a crucial issue. Information shall be saved carefully.

**4. Cyber Crime:** There is cyber threat all over the globe and digital India will not be any exception. Hence we need a strong anti-cybercrime team which maintains the database and protects it round the clock.

**5. Inter Departmental Coordination:** Within the government there are various departments which should be integrated. Integration has technical as well as corporate issue. Corporate in the sense self-ego of the officers and staff of our government services are hurdle in the change. Also the middle man policy will be eliminated completely because of digital India, hence there will be imminent resistance from the working staff.

**6. Finance:** Though there are resources with India but there is a huge capital cost which is to be invested and the fruits of the investment will be received after few years.

**7. Net neutrality:** The issue is still on the table and we are blindly following the digital India. Net neutrality is must and we should make sure that digital India without net neutrality would be a great blow to entrepreneurs and citizens of India.

**8. Changing the mind-set:** This point will come into picture when you have allocated the required resources and material but when it comes to implementing them, most of them will be hesitant to change. People are accustomed with years of same of practice that they are not ready to change.

**9. Exchange of information:** The information stored should also be used by other government offices. For example police, surveillance and other security issues can be easily resolved with digital India but its coordination is a mammoth task. It is not only a technological question but we all support Digital India but we should be aware of the dangers and setbacks, so that we can prepare ourselves for the upcoming challenge. We should be mentally prepared for the changes and challenges in implementing the policy, only then it would be possible to change it to reality. Also deals with the question of privacy and security.

## CONCLUSION

India would become a very powerful digitally connected world. This would lead to a good architecture for electronic delivery of service. The Digital India project provides a huge opportunity to use the latest technology to redefine the paradigms of service delivery. A digitally connected India can help in improving social and economic condition of people living in rural areas through development of non-agricultural economic activities apart from providing access to education, health and financial services. However, it is important to note that ICT alone cannot directly lead to overall development of the nation. The overall growth and development can be realized through supporting and enhancing elements such as literacy, basic infrastructure, overall business environment, regulatory environment, etc. Further, Security should be the most important area at all level of operation for the digitally empowered knowledge economy of the country. Although, digital India programme is facing some barriers, yet it has a great impact on India to make the best future of every citizen. We Indians and others should work together to shape the knowledge economy. More employment prospects will open for the youth that will boost the nation's economy. Digital India campaign is a welcome

step in shaping India of the 21st century powered by connectivity and the technological opportunity.

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