

DIGTAL INDIA, FOCUS AREA AND ITS IMPACT

Dr. Fulwinder Pal Singh, Principal, SBJS Khalsa College,Amritsar, Punjab, India

Abstract

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.Digital India is a campaign launched by the Government of India to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or by making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology.

Key Words- Digital India, E-Kranti, Inclusive Growth

The Digital India initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high-speed internet networks. Digital India consists of three core components,

(a) development of secure and stable digital infrastructure, (b) delivering government services digitally, and (c) universal digital literacy.

Launched on 1 July 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it is both enabler and beneficiary of other key Government of India schemes, such as BharatNet, Make in India, Startup India and Standup India, Industrial corridors, Bharatmala, Sagarmala, Dedicated Freight Corridors and UDAN-RCS.

The vision of Digital India programme is inclusive growth in areas of electronic services, products, manufacturing and job opportunities etc. and it is centred on three key areas – Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen, Governance & Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens.

Digital India initiative

The Government of India entity Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) which executes the <u>BharatNet</u> project will be the custodian of Digital India (DI) project. BharatNet will connect all the 625,000 villages of India by December 2018.

Approach and Methodology for Digital India Programme are:

- i. Ministries / Departments / States 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.

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- 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.

Focus areas

The <u>Government of India</u> specifically targets nine 'Pillars of the Digital India' as follows:

- Broadband Highway
- 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
- Early Harvest Programmes

New digital services

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

1. National e-Governance Plan aimed at bringing all the front-end government services online.

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2. MyGov.in is a platform to share inputs and ideas on matters of policy and governance. It is a platform for citizen engagement in governance, through a "Discuss", "Do" and "Disseminate" approach.

3. UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) is a Government of India all-in-one single unified secure multi-channel multi-platform multi-lingual multi-service freeware mobile app for accessing over 1,200 central and state government services in multiple Indian languages over Android, iOS, Windows and USSD (feature phone) devices, including services such as AADHAR, DigiLocker, Bharat Bill Payment System, PAN, EPFO services, PMKVY services, AICTE, CBSE, tax and fee or utilities bills payments, education, job search, tax, business, health, agriculture, travel, Indian railway tickets bookings, birth certificates, e-District, e-Panchayat, police clearance, passport, other utility services from private companies and much more.

4. eSign framework allows citizens to digitally sign a document online using Aadhaar authentication.

5. Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) Mobile app is being used by people and Government organisations for achieving the goals of Swachh Bharat Mission.

6. eHospital application provides important services such as online registration, payment of fees and appointment, online diagnostic reports, enquiring availability of blood online etc.

7. National Scholarship Portal is a one step solution for end to end scholarship process right from submission of student application, verification, sanction and disbursal to end beneficiary for all thescholarships provided by the Government of India.

8. The "*attendance.gov.in*" is a website, launched by PM Narendra Modi on 1 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.

Blackmoney eradication: The 2016 Union budget of India announced 11 technology initiatives including the use of data analytics to nab tax evaders, creating a substantial opportunity for IT companies to build out the systems that will be required. Digital Literacy mission will cover six crore rural households. It is planned to connect 550 farmer markets in the country through the use of technology.

Facilities to digitally empower citizen

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 the sharing of verified electronic documents across government agencies. Three key stakeholders of DigiLocker are Citizen, Issuer and requester.

BPO and job growth: The government is planning to create 28,000 seats of BPOs in various states and set up at least one Common Service Centre in each of the gram panchayats in the state.

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e-Sampark Vernacular email service: Out of 10% English speaking Indians, only 2% reside in rural areas. Rest everyone depends on their vernacular language for all living their lives. However, as of now, email addresses can only be created in English language. To connect rural India with the Digital India, the Government of India impelled email services provider giants including Gmail, office and Rediff to provide the email address in regional Languages. The email provider companies have shown positive sign and is working in the same process. An Indian based company, Data Xgen Technologies Pvt Ltd, has launched world's first free linguistic email address under the name 'DATAMAIL. which allows creating email ids in 8 Indian languages, English; and 3 foreign languages – Arabic, Russian and Chinese. Over the period of time the email service in 22 languages will be offered by Data XGen Technologies.

Digital India Programme: Importance And Impact

The Digital India programme has been launched with an aim of transforming the country into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. The Digital India would ensure that Government services are available to citizens electronically. It would also bring in public accountability through mandated delivery of government's services electronically; a Unique ID and e-Pramaan based on authentic and standard based interoperable and integrated government applications and data basis.

NINE PILLARS OF DIGITAL INDIA



Key Projects of Digital India programme:

1. 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.

2. 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.

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

4. eSign framework would allow citizens to digitally sign a document online using Aadhaar authentication.

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5. The **Online Registration System (ORS)** under the eHospital 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.

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

7. 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.

8. The Government of India has undertaken an initiative namely **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.

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. To deliver citizen services electronically and improve the way citizens and authorities transact with each other, it is imperative to have ubiquitous connectivity. The government also realises this need as reflected by including **'broadband highways'** as one of the pillars of Digital India. While connectivity is one criterion, enabling and providing technologies to facilitate delivery of services to citizens forms the other.

Highlights of the progress in Digital India

- More than 12,000 rural post office branches have been linked digitally and soon payment banking would also become a reality for them.
- The government also plans to make 'digital village' across the country, by linking all schemes with technology. The 'digital village' would be powered by LED lighting, solar energy, skill development centres and e-services like e-education and e-health.
- Electronic transactions related to e-governance projects in the country have almost doubled in 2015, owing to the Digital India Programme. According to government website electronic transaction aggregation and analysis layer (eTaal), 3.53 billion transactions took place in 2014, which almost doubled in 2015 to 6.95 billion.
- The progressive policies and aggressive focus on 'Make in India' have played a significant role in the resurgence of the electronics manufacturing sector.

Proposed Impact of Digital India

A. Economic impact:

According to analysts, the Digital India plan could boost **GDP up to \$1 trillion by 2025**. It can play a key role in macro-economic factors such as GDP growth, employment generation, labor productivity, growth in number of businesses and revenue leakages for the Government. As per the World Bank report, a 10% increase in mobile and broadband



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penetration increases the per capita GDP by 0.81% and 1.38% respectively in the developing countries. India is the 2nd largest telecom market in the world with 915 million wireless subscribers and world's 3rd largest Internet market with almost 259 million broadband users. There is still a huge economic opportunity in India as the tele-density in rural India is only 45% where more than 65% of the population lives. Future growth of telecommunication industry in terms of number of subscribers is expected to come from rural areas as urban areas are saturated with a tele-density of more than 160%.

B. Social impact:

Social sectors such as education, healthcare, and banking are unable to reach out to the citizens due to obstructions and limitations such as middleman, illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, lack of funds, information and investments. These challenges have led to an imbalanced growth in the rural and urban areas with marked differences in the economic and social status of the people in these areas. Modern ICT makes it easier for people to obtain access to services and resources. The penetration of mobile devices may be highly useful as a complementary channel to public service delivery apart from creation of entirely new services which may have an enormous impact on the quality of life of the users and lead to social modernization. The poor literacy rate in India is due to unavailability of physical infrastructure in rural and remote areas. This is where m-Education services can play an important role by reaching remote masses. According to estimates, the digital literacy in India is just 6.5% and the internet penetration is 20.83 out of 100 population. The digital India project will be helpful in providing real-time education and partly address the challenge of lack of teachers in education system through smart and virtual classrooms. Education to farmers, fisher men can be provided through mobile devices. The high speed network can provide the adequate infrastructure for online education platforms like massive open online courses (MOOCs). Mobile and internet banking can improve the financial inclusion in the country and can create win-win situation for all parties in the value-chain by creating an interoperable ecosystem and revenue sharing business models. Telecom operators get additional revenue streams while the banks can reach new customer groups incurring lowest possible costs. Factors such as a burgeoning population, poor doctor patient ratio (1:870), high infant mortality rate, increasing life expectancy, fewer quality physicians and a majority of the population living in remote villages, support and justify the need for tele medicine in the country. M-health can promote innovation and enhance the reach of healthcare services. Digital platforms can help farmers in know-how (crop choice, seed variety), context (weather, plant protection, cultivation best practices) and market information (market prices, market demand, logistics).

C. Environmental impact:

The major changes in the technology space will not only brought changes to the economic system but will also contribute to the environmental changes. The next generation technologies will help in lowering the carbon footprint by reducing fuel consumption, waste management, greener workplaces and thus leading to a greener ecosystem. The ICT sector helps in efficient management and usage of scarce and non-renewable resources. Cloud computing technology minimizes carbon emissions by improving mobility and flexibility. The energy consumption can be decreased from 201.8 terawatt hour (TWh) in 2010 to 139.8 TWh in 2020 by higher adoption of cloud data centers causing a 28% reduction in carbon footprint from 2010 levels.

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Impact

The internet subscribers have increased to 500 million in India till April 2017. On 28 December 2015, Panchkula district of Haryana was awarded for being the best as well as top performing district in the state under the Digital India campaign.

Conclusion

A digitally connected India can help in improving social and economic condition of people 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

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