Good Governance: Principles & Practices

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"In this decade of Amrit Kaal, we will give priority to Next Generation Reforms. We will ensure that all facilities like service delivery should reach citizens up to the last mile; it should reach the last person seamlessly, without hesitation or any kind of difficulty. For the overall development of the country, unnecessary interference by the government and the government processes in the lives of the people has to be ended" – Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi[1]

I thank the Director LBSNAA and Deputy Director (Senior) LBSNAA for inviting me for an interaction with the Phase II of the IAS Professional Training Course for IAS 2022 batch with 181 IAS Officer Trainees and 3 Officer Trainees from Royal Bhutan Civil Services. The Phase II program largely based on presentations/ feedback of field work/ assignments conducted by IAS Probationers in the District Attachment provides the batch a comprehensive over-view of the diverse governance models of India. The Socio-Economic Survey of a Village, Court work as Assistant Collector & Executive Magistrate with prescribed number of Judgments in revenue/ criminal cases, attachments with District/ Tehsil Level Offices empowers the IAS Probationer for the initial years in Government. The Academy teaches you administrative leadership, ethics of public service, moral integrity, discipline and dedication to serve the Nation, and determination to pursue excellence. Each one of you can be a catalyst to stability and growth as India pursues its stated policy goal of Viksit Bharat@2047.

As an Institution, the Civil Services, particularly the All-India Services, have always commanded considerable respect from the people of India. Such respect emanates from a perception that decision making would be neutral and unbiased and would enable the Nation to achieve the objectives outlined in the Preamble of the Constitution.

In a broader sense, the challenges Civil Servants face in the 21st century are no different from the challenges that they faced in the 20th century. Commitment to the

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[1] English rendering of the text of PM's address from the Red Fort on 75th Independence Day, 15 August 2021

larger public good against all odds. Further the New Age Competency remains anchored in integrity, building credibility and trust in the institution of the civil service. These skills are foundational and non-negotiable. You can hire skills, but leadership and faith and impartiality cannot be outsourced.

Introduction

The subject of my oration today is "**Good Governance: Principles and Practices**". The Prime Minister's 76th Independence Day Address on 15 August 2022 outlines the vision of our Nation's Good Governance Principles and Practices. The "Panch Pran of Amrit Kaal" – goal of developed India, to remove any trace of colonial mindset, take pride in our roots and unity and sense of duty among citizens. Prime Minister asked the Nation to focus attention on "Panch Pran" for the coming 25 years, concentrate on fulfilling the dreams of freedom fighters by embracing the Panch Pran by 2047 when the country celebrates 100 years of independence. The Prime Minister's 75th Independence Day Address on 15 August 2021 gave a clarion call for adoption of Next Generation Reforms, while empowering citizens and reaching the last mile as the priorities for Viksit Bharat@2047.

The foundation of progress in the modern world lies on modern infrastructure. It also fulfills the needs and aspirations of the middle class. The quest for next generation infrastructure, for world class manufacturing, for cutting edge innovation and for New Age Technology represents the foundations of Good Governance.

The Civil Service has responded by injecting a greater sense of discipline and streamlining of procedures. Policy planning benefitted from a more rigorous process of intellectual enquiry. Information technology along with the broadband network enabled a key competitive advantage, transforming work processes in every branch of government and facilitating citizens interactions with the government. The story of India's success in digitalization is an example of how a clear vision articulated by the political leadership was implemented rigorously and effectively by the Civil Servants across many different Ministries/ Departments.

Government strived to liberate people from the web of unnecessary procedures and laws and in the past decade hundreds of old laws and procedures were abolished. Even during the pandemic, Government ended 15,000 compliances. Dozens of Labor laws were subsumed into just 4 codes. Form simplification has led to less paperwork for citizen's dealings with government. For example, the application for pension requires submission of multiple forms under the CCS (Pension) Rules 2021, the merger of e-HRMS with BHAVISHYA platform enabled the multiple forms to be subsumed into one form.

Freeing the country of antiquated laws and unnecessary compliances was an important manifestation of "Maximum Governance – Minimum Government" policy and was important for ease of living and ease of doing business.

Civil Servants are known for rule-bound administration and doing things according to the standard operating procedures. The Government started Mission Karmayogi and Capacity Building Commission to increase people-centric approach in bureaucracy and improve their efficiency. The results of transformation from a rule-based civil service to a role-based civil service has potential to bring significant benefits to India's governance models.

Saturation approach of priority sector schemes has been the defining goal of Government's all-round, all-pervasive and all-inclusive development model. There are important Priority Sector Schemes where the Saturation approach has been adopted, these include the following:

1. Promoting Swachh Jal through Har Ghar Jal Yojana
2. Promoting Rural Housing through Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
3. Promoting Immunization drive through Mission Indradhanush
4. Promoting Clean Cooking Fuel through Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
5. Promoting Healthcare through Pradhan Mantri-Jan Arogya Yojana
6. Promoting Financial Stability through PM SVANidhi
7. Promoting Maternal Health and Nutrition through PM Matru Vandana Yojana
8. Promoting Skill Development through PM Vishvakarma Yojana

9. Promoting Financial Assistance through PM Mudra Yojana
10. Promoting Nutrition for Women and Children through PM Poshan Yojana
11. Promoting Agricultural Credit through Kisan Credit Card Scheme

India's developmental journey witnessed authentic efforts to construct toilets and make electricity available in 100 percent households. In the near future, India through the priority sector schemes seeks to achieve saturation where all villages have roads, all households have bank accounts, all beneficiaries have Ayushman Bharat cards and all eligible families get the benefit of Ujjwala Yojana through gas connections, drinking water supply with water from pipes, overcome malnutrition and provide quality health care in every village with upgradation of health infrastructure through Health and Wellness Centers.

At the heart of effective policy is the deep commitment to principles of social equity, justice, transparency and accountability. Social justice was at the heart of policy making and the Government worked to provide equitable opportunities to everyone.

I quote the words of Hon'ble Prime Minister from his address to the US Congress in June 2023:

> "When I first visited the US as Prime Minister, India was the tenth largest economy in the world. Today, India is the fifth largest economy. And, India will be the third largest economy very soon. We are not only growing bigger but we are also growing faster. When India grows, the whole world grows. After all, we are one sixth of the world's population. In the last century, when India won its freedom, it inspired many other countries to free themselves from colonial rule. In this century when India sets benchmarks in growth, it will inspire many other countries to do the same. Our vision is Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas."

The Agenda for Good Governance 2024

"I believe that now it is my responsibility to think more than what I have thought in the last 10 years and to do more than that. Now whatever has to be done, has to be done

in the direction of surpassing the global benchmark. What you were yesterday, how well you did today, that time is gone. Now the world is here on this subject, there is nothing ahead of it, so we will be ahead of it. We have to take our country where no one has ever reached." – Prime Minister Narendra Modi

The Prime Minister in his historic 3rd term in Government has laid down an ambitious and result oriented agenda for Good Governance which envisages each Ministry and Department to formulate initiatives and ideas for implementation as part of 'Panch Pran' (five resolutions) announced in the independence-day address of Prime Minister on 15 August 2022.

Each Ministry and Department shall seek to effect qualitative improvements in their grievance redressal systems to make them more sensitive, accessible and meaningful.

Whole of Government approach to be adopted in formulating and implementing policies and schemes and concerted steps to be taken for India to become the 3rd largest economy in the shortest possible time.

Ease of Living for citizens is a high priority for Government and sustained efforts to be made for reducing the compliance burden and decriminalizing minor offences.

A comprehensive exercise to be undertaken to simplify rules and regulations and processes to ensure these are consistent with the spirit of laws and policies.

Suitable incentives for encouraging officers to take full advantage of the capacity building courses and modules available on iGOT Karmayogi portal.

Metrics to be developed to foster a competitive spirit amongst States and Districts in order to encourage them to adopt reforms in different areas of governance, particularly in respect of statutory clearances and approvals.

Development of comprehensive action plans for implementing the concept of women-led development.

The Department of Administrative Reforms – Historical Perspective

The Second Administrative Reforms Commission said

"*Governance in order to be citizen centric should be participative and transparent. It should be effective, efficient and responsive to the citizens. Furthermore, the ethos of serving citizens should permeate all government organizations. Last but not the least, Government organizations should be accountable to the people. As one of the primary functions of the State is to promote the welfare of its citizens, an evaluation of the functioning of institutions of governance will ultimately have to be based on the satisfaction they provide to the common man. In this regard prominence would need to be attached to the voice of the citizens themselves.*"

Some of the initiatives of Government in Citizen Centric Governance included setting up institutional mechanisms to redress citizens' grievances, enacting laws to give rights to citizens like the right to information, simplifying procedures to reduce bureaucratic delays, using technology to improve internal efficiency, rewarding government employees who perform well, improving discipline within the organization and holding public contact programs.

In the period 2019-2024, a New Paradigm of Governance emerged. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the Governance landscape of India radically changed in scale, scope and learning paradigms. India succeeded in transforming technologically obsolete institutions into modern day digital institutions which benefitted millions of Indians. Today India's rural country side has changed - banking Correspondents, e-Mitras and common service centers have bridged the gap between internet poor and internet rich. I recall my visits to 32 Districts of Rajasthan as part of "Prashasan Gaon ki Ore" in 2018 and witnessed the empowerment of rural population with digital technology. Common Service Centres bridged the gap between the internet rich and internet poor and enabled access to improved service delivery.

As India celebrated its Amrit Kaal period, Prime Minister Modi has given a clarion call for adoption of Next Generation Reforms by bridging the gap between government and citizens. In his address at the Special Session of Parliament, Prime Minister Modi said,

"The first rays of the Amrit Kaal (golden era) are illuminating the nation with a new belief, fresh self-confidence, new enthusiasm, new dreams, new resolutions and a renewed strength of the Nation. Achievements of Indians are being discussed everywhere and with a sense of pride. This is the result of a collective effort in our 75-year Parliamentary history. As a result, today, the echo of our accomplishments is being heard world-wide."

This vision of Next Generation administrative reforms of the Prime Minister has been diligently translated into reality by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. Secretariat Reforms, Special Campaigns, Benchmarking of Governance and Services, Redressal of Public Grievances & Improving Service Delivery, recognizing meritocracy and replication of good governance practices formed the core of India's good governance model. Technology adoption in the Central Secretariat also gained significant momentum with ASO's/ SO's/ Under Secretaries undergoing reskilling in Emerging Technologies using i-GOT Mission Karmayogi. The Digital March of the Central Secretariat has had significant spill over effects to Attached/ Subordinate/ Autonomous bodies, all of whom adopted e-Governance practices.

State Secretariats adopted e-Office and 16500 services were operationalized as e-Services. Strong Digital Platforms formed the bulwark of the Digital Public Infrastructure push of India in the G20 deliberations as a global public good. Technology impact in governance was most visible in Jammu & Kashmir which provided an all-time high of 1080 e-services, adopted e-Office saving crores of rupees from abolition of the Darbar movement, developed the JK-IGRAMS, convened regional conferences and national conferences on e-Governance.

Maximum Governance – Minimum Government

India's governance model in the years 2019-2024, has undergone radical reforms. e-

Governance has simplified a citizen's interface with Government, brought government and citizens closer and enabled benchmarking of service quality. The Central government's e-governance models have benefitted in bringing transparency and openness to government processes. The widespread adoption of e-Office ver 7.0 has created paperless offices in all Ministries/ Departments in the Central Secretariat 93 percent files being handled as e-files and 94 percent receipts being handled as e-receipts. In 2023, CPGRAMS helped redress 21 lac Public Grievances and in 2024 till June 16 lac Public Grievances were redressed. The organizational reforms coupled with significant reforms in Personnel Administration like Mission Karmayogi, Lateral Recruitment, timely promotion policies, regional conferences for replication of good governance practices, recognizing excellence in public administration by scaling up the scheme for PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration represent the new paradigm in India's governance model. New India's strong institutions are best symbolized by adoption of e-governance practices. The best manifestation of "Maximum Governance – Minimum Government" policy is a "Digitally Empowered Citizen" and a "Digitally Transformed Institution".

The PM's Awards Scheme for Excellence in Public Administration 2023

The PM's Awards Scheme for Excellence in Public Administration 2023 was restructured to encourage constructive competition, institutionalization of best practices, factor-in holistic approach through convergence of schemes, promote Jan-Bhagidari, focus on technology driven innovations with participation from all District Collectors of India. The category of Holistic Development of Districts provided a broad indicator into the significant progress achieved by the Districts across India in achieving saturation with innovative leadership.

Saturation Approach and Inclusive Development Reaching the Last Mile

Barpeta District in Assam is an aspirational district situated in western part of Assam with a population of 16.93 lacs, with 173 riverine islands and 9 development blocks. The District Administration of Barpeta adopted a convergence and saturation approach -"Barpeta: Scaling New Heights", leveraging technologies and data monitoring as also innovative initiatives which resulted in saturation of schemes. GIS based field monitoring was implemented through the portal SAMPADA which

monitored school visits by officials, e-file and e-billing systems were introduced for administrative efficiency. Jan Bhaagidari was seen in formation of health clubs, youth clubs, and people led IEC practices. SHG's were leveraged for scheme verification and served as micro-vendors for government programs. Saturation was achieved with ODF+ villages, MGNREGS convergence, Sampoorn Ghar with PMAY houses with all basic amenities for households. Large numbers of Street Vendors were enrolled for PM SVANidhi, craftsmen were enrolled for enrolled for PM Vishvakarma, 100 percent target completion was achieved under the Kisan Credit Card Scheme, and 96 percent of beneficiaries were ready for payment under PM-Kisan. The District Administration Barpeta was successful in reaching the last mile across all programs and represents a role model for implementing saturation approach in the Country.

Gumla District in Jharkhand with 69 percent tribal population, tough topography, 46.7 percent multidimensional poverty and left-wing extremism presented unique challenges for holistic development. Despite the challenges, the saturation approach was successfully implemented with Ayushman Bharat, PM Ujjwala distribution, PM Vishwakarma registration and PM Awas Yojana Grameen Sanctions being saturated for primitive and vulnerable tribal group families of Gumla district. The District administration strived to revive government assets, operationalized the Gumla Science Centre, developed additional classrooms in 25 schools, functional science labs in 43 schools, SMART classes in 100 schools and computer labs in 93 schools. An online public-grievances portal "Sarvodaygumla" was operationalized, weekly grievance redressal camps were held and grievances were redressed in a timebound fashion. A convergence approach for PM Poshan Abhiyan was adopted with convergence between Raagi farmers of Palkot Block and the Anganwadi centers of Gumla. Health Screening Camps for sickle cell diseases and for students was commenced, Project Asha was commenced for fighting epilepsy and superstitions. For enhancing Jan Bhagidari, public meetings were held by senior officers in all Gram Sabhas and camp courts were conducted. Technology was leveraged extensively for ensuring transparency and real time monitoring of Government schemes, and information related to government schemes was accessible on open government data.

Kulgam district in Jammu & Kashmir with a number of hilly blocks and mountainous terrain, with limited working season and challenging security situation with militancy, made significant strides in achieving saturation of priority programs and reaching out to far flung areas. Ayushman Bharat Yojana became the biggest health security net for Kulgam district with 100 percent district being saturated and 28000 cases settled. The registration of Ayushman Bharat cards was done in villages and hamlets through a sustained campaign with Schools, Colleges and Panchayats being co-opted to reach out. Kiosks were introduced in every hospital for the registration process. Similar village level campaigns were conducted for implementing the schemes of PM-Vishwakarma, PM-Poshan, PM-Awas Yojana (Grameen and Urban), PM-SVANidhi, Mission Indradhanush, PM-Ujjwala, and Har Ghar Jal. Beneficiaries got door-step delivery of services, infrastructure development was witnessed under almost all schemes.

The saturation approach to implementation of priority sector schemes was witnessed as a mass movement for good governance practices across the Nation. Many districts across India - Banda, Bahraich, Vizianagaram, Eluru, Sukhma, Kondagaon, Nalbari, Sehore, Barwani, Nalanda, Pathankot, West Garo Hills, Nashik and Bikaner reported high levels of saturation across priority sector schemes.

Innovations in Governance

Technology has been a force multiplier and several technology-led innovations in governance have come forth as transformative changes in ease of living for citizens.

Face Authentication technology represents an indigenous development that can be used anytime, anywhere, and requires only an entry-level smartphone for authorization. Face Authentication is simple, secure and user friendly with capture of face image on own device for authentication. It is secure against leakage of captured image. In 2024, the authentication success rate was 85 percent, with over 4 crore transactions/ month and 74 entities were using face authentication. Usage on other devices and platforms such as desktop, windows is also possible. Face authentication promotes inclusivity amongst divyaang, hard manual labour, senior citizens and

represents a significant step for ease of living. Face authentication made Jeevan Praman for Pensioners very easy, is used for cashless health benefits with PMJAY, skill trainings in Jails in Uttar Pradesh, hassle free beneficiary identification for eligibility check in PM Ujjwala Yojana and financial disbursal made easy for PM Awas Yojana. Face authentication also promotes ease of doing business and good governance with several usages ranging from employee attendance from individual mobile phones, e-sign services, opening of bank accounts, scholarship distribution and SIM issue by telecom companies.

Cyber Tehsil of Madhya Pradesh is an online, paperless, faceless and automated process of mutation and updation of land records after sale deed. It seeks to end territorial disputes and covers all undisputed, encumbrance free sale/ gift registry cases of full land parcels. The buyer need not visit the Tehsil office, and application for mutation is taken at Registration office itself at the time of sale deed. After execution of the sale-deed, the data from registration portal (SAMPADA) is automatically transferred to revenue portal (RCMS). A certified copy of the order/ updated land record is delivered to the concerned via email/ whatsapp. There is a dedicated helpline call, email support, chatbot and online ticket raising facility available for the citizen's assistance. Amendments were made in the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code 1959 by introducing the provisions for Cyber Tehsil. The centralized Cyber – Tehsil was established at Bhopal and scaled up to all 55 districts of the State in February 2024.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry during the pandemic period identified a digital solution for the government's delivery of essential goods and services in the retail segment, which led to the birth of the **Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).** The ONDC connects all buyers and sellers for e-commerce transactions in goods and services and is similar to UPI for financial transactions. It can be extended to B2B and B2C domains. The ONDC has 22 Buyer apps, 71 seller apps and 16 logistics service providers, 10 million monthly transactions, 5.48 lac sellers and service providers across 600+ cities and 1200+ cities from where orders have been delivered. Most of these cities are tier 2 cities and 80 percent of small sellers and service providers are working on the network. ONDC has enabled digital public service delivery across

financial services, agriculture, health, logistics, education and skilling. It has enabled bridging the digital divide by ensuring cashless inclusivity. Government envisages ONDC as a solution for market access, digital enablement and promotion & outreach.

Poshan Tracker is an important governance tool under Mission Poshan 2.0 to ensure transparency in nutrition delivery support system at the Anganwadi center. It is a job aid for the Anganwadi worker, available in 24 languages, monitors nutritional delivery with 13.95 lac Anganwadi center reporting on Poshan Tracker. Baseline data on nutritional indicators has been made available on real time basis in Poshan Tracker. The Poshan Tracker enables daily tracking, growth monitoring, beneficiary migration and has a provision for a home visit scheduler.

National Conferences on e-Governance and National e-Governance Awards

Government implements the Awards Scheme for National Awards for e-Governance. This Scheme is recognized as amongst the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in the country. In the year 2023, 425 nominations were received out of which 16 nominations were conferred the National e-Governance Awards. The National Annual e-Governance Conferences were held at Mumbai in 2020, Hyderabad in Jan,2022, Katra in November 2022. This year the 26th National e-Governance Conference was held at Indore, Madhya Pradesh on August 24-25, 2023.

The key takeaways from the 26th National e-Governance Conference were the following:

- The Conference drew inspiration from the words of Prime Minister Modi who stressed on the role of technology in making governance and justice delivery systems reach the poorest of the poor, the marginalized and women living in the hinterland. The vision of Prime Minister of India's techade can be realized through a vigorous and all pervasive digital governance push

- Closer synergy amongst researchers, academia, industry and start-ups in the field of e-Governance is the way forward for India to be an Atma Nirbhar Nation. The Vision India@2047 on Governance is truly e-Vision India@2047 marked by saturation and benchmarking of high quality e-services reaching out to the last man

in the queue for service delivery in the true spirit of Antyodaya, focus on young policy makers and creating interactive fora between academia and start- ups.

- Open Digital Platforms are tremendous force multipliers, and critical for providing affordable, inter-operable technology to India's citizens. Digital Governance can enable massive reach and benefits in the conduct of Special Campaigns aimed at reducing pendency and institutionalization of Swachhata with the objective of providing good governance.

The National e-Governance Conferences have had significant spillover effects into the e-Governance in States/ Union Territories where they were held. The biggest transformation was witnessed in Jammu & Kashmir where the number of e-services were scaled up from 15 in 2019 to 225 in 2022 to 1080 in 2023. This represented a remarkable achievement. The dissemination of the award winning nominations through the National e-Governance Webinar Series is a new initiative of DARPG.

Regional Conferences

DARPG regularly conducts Regional Conferences for replication of good governance practices and e-Governance practices. In 2022-24, Regional Conferences were held at Srinagar, Benguluru, Itanagar, Mumbai, Bhopal, Jaipur and Guwahati. Regional Conferences attended by 500 officers/ conference have helped in presenting the State's best governance practices in addition to PM's Award winning nominations. DARPG has also commenced curating the Regional e-Governance conferences which have enabled in dissemination of the best e-Governance conferences. The Regional Conferences enabled the creation of fully digital public institutions, strengthen linkages between stakeholders, strengthen state portals and service portals for digital empowerment. The movement for saturation of e-services across the Nation has been significantly strengthened in this period.

Good Governance Index 2021

DARPG launched the Good Governance Index (GGI) framework to gauge the performance of the States/UTs following the recommendations of the Group of Secretaries on Governance and published the ranking for States and UTs for 2019 and 2021. The GGI framework assesses the state of Governance across the States and UTs and ranks

States/UTs. The objective is to create a tool which can be used uniformly across the States/UTs to assess the impact of various interventions taken up by the Central and State Governments/UTs. The GGI 2019 encompassed 10 Sectors and 50 Indicators and GGI 2021 encompassed 10 sectors and 58 indicators. Each sector carries equal weightage and is composed of indicators carrying different weightages. The sectors of GGI 2020-21 are: 1) Agriculture and Allied Sectors, 2) Commerce & Industries, 3) Human Resource Development, 4) Public Health, 5.) Public Infrastructure & Utilities, 6) Economic Governance, 7) Social Welfare & Development, 8) Judicial & Public Security, 9) Environment, and 10) Citizen-Centric Governance.

The GGI 2020-21 categorizes States and UTs into four categories, i.e., (i) Other States – Group A; (ii) Other States – Group B; (iii) North-East and Hill States; and (iv) Union Territories. GGI helps assess the status of governance in States & UTs. Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa to the composite score of 10 sectors under GGI 2021 assessment. Uttar Pradesh has shown a 8.9 percent increase over the GGI 2019 performance. The GGI 2021 says 20 States have improved their composite GGI scores over the GGI 2019 scores. This indicates that the overall governance in the States of India is moving in the positive direction. The biannual publication of Good Governance 2023 is under formulation and will be released in the coming months.

District Good Governance Index

District being a basic unit in field administration and governance, implementing various programmes and innovative projects for the well-being of citizens, measuring their performance becomes important for proper assessment and planning which will lead to the development of the districts and region as a whole. The District Good Governance Index (DGGI) represents next generation administrative reform in benchmarking governance at district level. This Index is prepared after extensive stakeholder consultations for benchmarking governance in all the districts of a State on a number of indicators under different sectors. The ranking brings healthy competition amongst districts to address existing gaps, plan to bridge these gaps and aid decision making tools.

District Good Governance Index of Jammu & Kashmir **—** The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances have conceptualized, formulated and released the DGGI for Jammu & Kashmir in consultation with the Government of Jammu & Kashmir. India's first DGGI was designed and developed for the UT of Jammu and Kashmir by Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad as knowledge partner was launched by the Home Minister of India on 22 January 2022. The DGGI is a framework comprising of performance under ten governance sectors having 58 indicators with 116 data points. The DGGI helps to identify the impact of various government interventions at District-level and provides a futuristic roadmap for improving District-level governance and service delivery with targeted interventions.

District Good Governance Index of Gujarat — The DGGI for Gujarat provides significant data insights to the State of Gujarat and other stakeholders in their efforts to address existing gaps, plan to bridge these gaps and aid as decision making tool. The ranking is expected to bring about healthy competition amongst districts in the quest to provide citizen centric administration and governance. DGGI Gujarat is first for any big state of India, as the Index benchmarks governance in all the 33 Districts of Gujarat on 65 indicators under 10 sectors. The DGGI Gujarat was released by Chief Minister, Gujarat in the valedictory Session of the three day '10th Chintan Shibir' – a brainstorming session for senior and junior government officials of Gujarat – at Kevadia in Narmada district of Gujarat on 21st May, 2023.

District Good Governance Index of Arunachal Pradesh — DGGI Arunachal Pradesh is first DGGI for a north-east State of India. The Index benchmarks governance in all 25 districts of Arunachal Pradesh on 65 indicators under 8 sectors. The ranking brings about healthy competition amongst Districts and provide guidance to the State Government as well as District administration of Arunachal Pradesh in their efforts to address existing gaps, plan to bridge these gaps and aid as decision making tool. The District Good Governance Index of Arunachal Pradesh was released on 8th June 2023.

Good Governance Week

The Nation-wide weekly celebrations of Good Governance were organized by DARPG in 2021, 2022 and 2023. The hallmark event of Good Governance Weeks 2021 and 2022 was the weeklong Nation-wide campaign 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore 2022' aimed at redressal public grievances and improving service delivery.

Prime Minister Modi in his message on the eve of Good Governance week 2021 said

> *"In the Amrit Period of Independence, we are marching ahead rapidly to create a transparent system, efficient process and smooth governance to make development all-round and all-inclusive. In this context, the theme of the week – Prashasan Gaon ki Ore assumes even greater significance."*

The second nationwide campaign 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore' was conducted from on December 19-24, 2022. Guided by the principle of Citizen-First, the Government strived to make the eco-system transparent and faster by simplifying procedures and processes at every level. Various citizen centric initiatives including redressal of public grievances, online services, disposal of service delivery applications sought to expand the outreach of service delivery mechanisms and make them more effective. The emphasis was on projecting the immense potential of technology to bring citizens and government closer, as a powerful tool to empower citizens as well as a medium to optimise transparency and accountability in day to day functioning. The Government's endeavour was to increase the impact of governance and reduce the interference of government in every citizen's life, to increase opportunities and remove obstacles from the citizen's path.

During the *Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore* Campaign District Collectors organized special camps/events at Tehsil Headquarters/Panchayat Samitis to resolve public grievances and for improved service delivery. The campaign was monitored centrally on a real time basis through a Dashboard created for this purpose on the 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore' Portal. In 2023, the Good Governance Week events included a series of workshops on Good Governance, Secretariat Reforms, Institutionalizing Swachhata and Reducing Pendency, Capacity Building programs, Innovations in State Governments, and Pensioner centric reforms.

The National e-Services Delivery Assessment 2021

The National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) was undertaken to boost the e-government endeavours and drive digital government excellence. The study Report assesses States, Union Territories (UTs), and focus Central Ministries on the effectiveness of e-Governance service delivery. NeSDA helps the respective governments to improve their delivery of citizen centric services and shares best practices across the country for all States, UTs and Central Ministries to emulate.

The Department has undertaken NeSDA 2019 and 2021. The preparation of NeSDA 2023 is currently in progress. In assessment of State portals, Kerala remains a front runner and the progress made by Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh in NeSDA 2021 is commendable. In Service portals, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and Meghalaya has topped the rankings. All States/ UT's have shown improvements in the promotion of integrated service portals and the number of services being offered on their State portals. India's e-Governance policies have shown improvements and citizen satisfaction levels have risen. In many ways Technology succeeded in Bringing Government and Citizens closer. The NeSDA 2021 report assessed 1400 e-Services across States and UT's and reported that India's e-Services had grown by 60 percent in the period 2019-2021. 69 percent of the mandatory e-services have been delivered by States/ UT's in 2021 up from 48 percent in NeSDA 2019. 74 percent of the respondents of the nation-wide citizen survey are satisfied/ very satisfied with the e-services.

DARPG is collaborating with States and Union Territories to ensure timely implementation of the recommendations of the NeSDA 2021 for rolling out of all mandatory e-services by States and Union Territories in a time bound manner. The DARPG is also coordinating with States and Union Territories to strengthen the State Portals and Service Portals to enhance the ease of living of citizens. The objectives of the monitoring/ collaboration are to adopt the 56 mandatory services and to saturate e-service delivery by all the States/UTs. DARPG has designed the NeSDA-Way Froward, Status of Implementation Dashboard in line with the focus areas of e-Governance. While Central and State Governments are taking utmost care and importance to improve their service delivery through digital channels, this enhanced dashboard aims to create the baseline for online service delivery and build an

inclusive digital ecosystem. The monthly reports institutionalise the nation's endeavours for improved delivery of e-services and prepare States/UTs for NeSDA 2023. The objectives of the monthly progress are saturation of e-services, to promote faceless and suo-moto entitlement-based delivery of services, identification of bottlenecks in the implementation of recommendations process and dissemination of best practices. Starting from April 2023, 12 monthly editions have been released till April 2024. In this period April – December 2023 the Nation's e-services increased from 11500 to 16500. It is expected that the number of e-services will reach saturation by 2025.

Effective Redressal of Public Grievances

Prime Minister Modi has said "*Effective Redressal of Public Grievances*" is one of the most important aspects of Indian democracy, accorded highest priority to the subject with focus on citizen engagement. The Prime Minister's commitment to an effective grievance redressal mechanism emanated from his early years in Government as Chief Minister Gujarat when he launched the SWAGAT portal in 2003. The SWAGAT portal of Gujarat celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2023, was a pioneer in introducing citizen interaction, categorization of grievances and effective redressal of public grievances.

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances is the nodal agency in respect of policy initiatives on public grievance redressal mechanisms and citizen centric initiatives.

Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) is an online platform available to the citizens 24x7 to lodge their grievances to the public authorities on any subject related to service delivery. It is a single portal connected to all the Ministries/Departments of Government of India and States. Every Ministry and States have role-based access to this system. CPGRAMS is also accessible to the citizens through standalone mobile application downloadable through Google Play store and mobile application integrated with UMANG. The citizen can access the system online through the portal www.pgportal.nic.in. The efficacy of the CPGRAMS portal has been an important thrust area of the Nation's Grievance Redressal Systems. The CPGRAMS portal has been recognized as amongst India's top 100 technology solutions for Vision India@2047. It has

also been recognized as a state of the art system by the Commonwealth for replication in all Commonwealth countries. The IBM Centre for Business of Government expressed interest in deeper understanding of CPGRAMS.

The grievances received by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances are forwarded to the concerned Ministries/ Departments/ State Governments/ UTs who deal with the substantive functions linked with the grievance for redress under intimation to the complainant. India's policy for grievance redressal has placed emphasis on timely grievance redressal and quality of grievance redressal. The upper limit of 30 days were introduced, along with staggered redressal of grievances priority wise, with an appeal mechanism in cases where the citizen is not satisfied.

Under CPGRAMS 7.0 grievances are routed to the last mile grievance officer level. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has issued guidelines to all Ministries/ Departments to sensitize grievance officers for effective redressal of public grievances. There exist several digital portals in Government of India for effective redressal of public grievances – CPGRAMS, Rail Madad and e-Nivaran all of which are linked to CPGRAMS. All Ministries/ Departments have designated nodal Grievance Redressal Officers for effective redressal of grievances. Periodic reviews by the Hon'ble Prime Minister have enabled ushering-in of transformational reforms in CPGRAMS as represented by the 10 Step reform program of CPGRAMS launched in 2022.

The implementation of CPGRAMS 10-Step reforms has resulted in a linear increase in the number of public grievances being redressed every month to over 1 lac cases and reduction in timelines for disposal to 16 days in central ministries/ departments for the past 22 months. The CPGRAMS portal has mapped 1.01 lac Grievance Redressal Officers, and 25 lac citizens have registered themselves to file over 20 lac grievances/ year. The grievance redressal time has come down from 28 days in 2019 to 10 days in March 2024. Considerable success was achieved in effective redressal of public grievances during the COVID-19 pandemic with launch of the COVID-19 Grievance Redressal Dashboard and portal on the CPGRAMS portal. This was a period in which 1.25 lac COVID-19 public grievances were redressed with an average disposal period of 1.45 days. The CPGRAMS is being included in the Digital Public Infrastructure toolkit for replication in foreign countries.

The status of the grievance filed in CPGRAMS can be tracked with the unique registration ID provided at the time of registration of the complainant. CPGRAMS also provides appeal facility to the citizens if they are not satisfied with the resolution by the Grievance Officer. After closure of grievance if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, he/she can provide feedback. If the rating is 'Poor' the option to file an appeal is enabled. The status of the Appeal can also be tracked by the petitioner with the grievance registration number. Since July 2022, DARPG has also reached out to the citizen filing a grievance through CPGRAMS by contacting him through an outbound call centre and soliciting his feedback on his closed grievance.

The State Governments have evolved advanced mechanisms for redressal of public grievances. States have operationalized public grievances cells which receive complaints from citizens and forward those to the concerned departments and follows them up. Several Chief Ministers hold regular citizen interactions through physical meetings/ virtual meetings for hearing and redressal of public grievances. In several States, Senior Officers visited districts and villages as part of Good Governance Week celebrations in 2021 and 2022 when Nation-wide campaigns for Effective Redressal of Public Grievances were conducted. The impact of multiple grievance redressal platforms functioning in unison in the Good Governance Week from December 19-25, 2022 was quite significant – 315 lac service delivery applications being disposed and 6 lac Public Grievances being redressed. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has collaborated closely with States in several initiatives for effective redressal of public grievances.

The areas of collaboration included:

i. Institution of an award category for Improving Service Delivery and Redressal of Public Grievances under the Scheme for Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2020

ii. National Workshop on Technology Platforms in Public Grievance Redressal on 18 February 2021 and the National Workshop on Sevottam in November 2022 and May 2023

iii. One Nation – One Portal initiative by integration of CPGRAMS with State Grievance Portals and reverse integration.

iv. Sevottam Capacity Building Programs for Grievance Redressal Officers.

v. Publication of Monthly Reports from 2022

vi. Collaboration with Government of Jammu & Kashmir for revamping the Awaaz e-Awam portal and relaunch as JKIGRAMS. A new version of the portal will be launched as "Jan Samadhan" portal on July 23, 2024.

CPGRAMS Reforms – A Foundation for SMART Government

In pursuance of the decisions taken by the Prime Minister on 16 April 2022, CPGRAMS reforms were implemented by DARPG for improving quality of grievance disposal and reducing the disposal time. A comprehensive 10-Step CPGRAMS Reform program was adopted after several rounds of consultations with key stakeholders. DARPG established collaborations with Common Service Centre (CSCs), Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT-K), National Institute of Smart Governance(NISG), National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad (NID), Quality Council of India, Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Centre for Good Governance Hyderabad and Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) Gurgaon through MOUs and work orders.

The 10-step reforms of CPGRAMS are outlined as follows:

i. Universalization of CPGRAMS 7.0 - Auto-routing of grievances to the last mile

ii. Technological Enhancements - Automatic flagging of urgent grievances leveraging AI/ML

iii. Language Translation – CPGRAMS Portal in 22 scheduled languages along with English

iv. Grievance Redressal Index - Ranking of Ministries / Departments on their Performance

v. Feedback Call Centre - 50-seater call centre to collect feedback directly from every citizen whose grievance is redressed

vi. One Nation One Portal - Integration of State Portal and other GoI portals with CPGRAMS.

vii. Inclusivity and Outreach - Empowering the remotest citizen to file grievances

through CSC's

viii. Training and Capacity Building - Conducted by ISTM and State ATIs under SEVOTTAM scheme for enabling effective grievance resolution

ix. Monitoring Progress - Monthly reports for both the Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs

x. Data Strategy Unit - Established at DARPG for insightful data analytics

Two PMUs were established at DARPG – (a) PMU with QCI team for preparation of the CPGRAMS Monthly Reports for Central Ministries and States and (b) PMU with CGG Hyderabad team for preparation of Grievance Redressal Index in addition to the Data Strategy Unit with Data Analytics specialists in collaboration with National Institute of Smart Governance. The Public Grievances Division of DARPG was strengthened with comprehensive redeployment and all vacant posts being filled up. DARPG collaborated with 22 State Administrative Training Institutes for implementation of the Sevottam Program following extensive discussions with HIPA Gurgaon.

In pursuance of the deliberations in the Chintan Shivir, DARPG has further enhanced the processes for establishing greater citizen connect – the steps include improvements in call centre engagement with citizens, speech records being examined in senior level meetings, training programs for operators, sharing speech records of appeals filed through call centre with appellate officers, introduction of chat bot, introduction of outgoing call centre and addition of new call centre operators.

The CPGRAMS reforms received considerable national and international appreciation. The India Today featured CPGRAMS reforms as amongst 100 big tech ideas for the revolutions needed in 10-key sectors to make India a developed Nation by 2047. In April 2024, "CPGRAMS: A Foundation for SMART Government" was presented at the 3rd Biennial Meeting of the Pan-Commonwealth Heads of Public Service/ Secretaries to the Cabinet on "Institutionalization of SMART Government to enhance public service delivery" and was recognized as a state of the art grievance redressal system that has engaged and empowered citizens across India which has had a transformative impact on the transparency and accountability of government. The evolution of India's vision to use AI for

further policy, process and people-related changes, to operationalize the CPGRAMS mobile app and adopt the CPGRAMS 7.0 version in all States/ UT's was also recognized in the Outcome Statement of the Commonwealth Biennial Meeting.

Best Practices in State Grievance Portals

SWAGAT (Gujarat): The CMO Gujarat operates an ICT based program since April 2003 for effective, transparent and speedy redress of the grievances of the citizens at various levels of the government throughout the State by direct interaction with Hon'ble Chief Minister. The SWAGAT portal is a combination of digital and communication technology in the form of a program to resolve public grievances effectively. Under SWAGAT, citizens can register their grievances at village, taluka and district levels. Citizens can view the status of their application online, using their allotted password and login ID at any internet access point. The software application enables an online review of sub-district, district SWAGAT and State SWAGAT outcomes and disposal of grievances is also monitored by the software. Cases for attention of Chief Minister are selected as those that are long standing, acute humanitarian issues, difficult to resolve at other levels in Government and those that have policy implications.

Applications are registered in 3 categories – (i) Policy Matters where a limitation or gap in the policy requires attention (ii) Long Pending grievances where the application has remained unresolved after initial application (iii) First time grievances which are sent to lower levels. There exist four levels of SWAGAT – on every 4th Thursday of the month the SWAGAT hearings are held in the State Capital Gandhinagar by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat through video conference The District SWAGAT is held in all 33 districts and the Sub-District SWAGAT and GRAM SWAGAT are also held as per prescribed schedules. The four levels are well integrated by software. SWAGAT has enhanced the accountability of Government, systemic changes as decisions lead to policy reform, high citizen's satisfaction, total transparency and monitoring system as also awareness at highest levels of authority on public grievances. SWAGAT received the 2010 UN Public Service Award in improving transparency, accountability and responsiveness in Public Service.

JK-IGRAMS (Jammu & Kashmir): JK-IGRAMS along with LG's monthly mulaqaat with citizens and review with officers provides the institutional framework to citizens that is accessible to all in Jammu & Kashmir. The JK-IGRAMS portal is www.jkgrievance.in and key features include decentralization of grievance system by mapping subordinate offices upto block level, setting up of 2 call centers in Jammu and Srinagar for registering grievances, Collectors have been made epicenter and all Districts/ Blocks linked to CPGRAMS, Grievance Analysis teams deployed to study and share findings for monthly mulaaquat with LG J&K. The impact increased disposal from 41 percent to 74 percent in 4-months time in all categories. The dedicated call center provides a unique JKIGRAMS number which is forwarded to the grievance officer and online status is available to the citizen for effective follow-up. Various analytical reports and other MIS options on the portal assist administration in data filtering.

SAMADHAN (Uttar Pradesh): SAMADHAN is an integrated web based application system which brings all grievance redressal mechanism to one platform and enables instant and easy communication between Government and Citizens resulting in speedy redressal of their grievances from anywhere and anytime and It also provides facility for submission of grievances online by aggrieved citizen. The Grievance input mechanism has Janta Darshan by Chief Minister at State level and District Collector at District level. The SAMADHAN portal integrates different channels and portals including the PG-Portal, Anti Bhu Mafia Portal, Anti-Corruption portal, CM Helpline etc. The citizen relationship management contains online registration and tracking of grievances, project management and monitoring, analytical reports, calls/ SMS/ e-mail, integrated & single platform, send reminders and giving feedback. Feedback is obtained through the CM Helpline call center and the complainant can also provide online feedback through portal. Negative feedback is reviewed by one level higher, through grading opinion, if senior officer finds disposal of the grievance insufficient/ not satisfactory then he/ she can revive the disposed complaint.

Building Administrative Leadership

The National Centre of Good Governance is mandated to build administrative leadership, and has collaborated with several countries to promote good governance.

Over 3000 international civil servants have visited NCGG in the period 2019-2024 for capacity building programs and several significant milestones were achieved. 1500 Bangladesh Civil Servants, 1000 Maldives Civil Servants, 150 Cambodian Civil Servants, 150 Gambian Civil Servants, 100 Sri Lankan Civil Servants, as also Civil Servants from Myanmar, Tanzania, Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia have attended capacity building programs at the National Centre for Good Governance. India's governance models of digital public infrastructure, zero tolerance for corruption, effective redressal of public grievances, Scheme for Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration, e-Office, priority sector schemes were appreciated and several schemes are being replicated in the neighboring countries.

Conclusion

I have tried to present the critical elements of Good Governance: Policies and Priorities in the context of India's governance model 2024. Having been a part of several administrative teams at District, State and Union Governments and also having served in an international institution – the International Monetary Fund, I must point out that there exist moral and human elements in the making of an administrator. No responsibility of government is more fundamental than the responsibility of maintaining the highest standards of ethical behavior. It is important to exercise compassion, benevolence, fairness and optimism. Administrative leadership needs to establish procedures that promote ethical behavior and hold individuals and organizations accountable for their conduct, as also to prevent all forms of mismanagement of funds.

Intellectual and professional accomplishments are just as important. A deep understanding of the constitutional and legal framework within which the administrator has to function is an essential part of governance. Intimate knowledge of machinery of government and of the procedures and practices of administration are critical to successful ensure skillful implementation. Administrative leadership is judged by performance, over a long period in top positions, carrying out major and diverse responsibilities and by success in dealing with critical situations as well as normal problems and by contributions to making of new policies and programs. Administrators who take up initiatives and display deep commitment to building up new systems and

institutions and contribute to the shaping of legislation stand the test of time and leave their mark on administrative history.

Let me conclude with a quote of Prime Minister Modi:

"*Remember the time before independence…yes, people had different methods of working but the goal was big – the freedom of India. In this Amrit Kaal we have to come together and work towards another big goal of a Viksit Bharat".*

Jai Hind.

Brief CV of V.Srinivas, IAS

V.Srinivas serves as Secretary to Government of India, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and holds additional charge of Director General of the National Centre for Good Governance. He represents India on the Council of Administration of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Brussels since 2018. He is a recipient of the Digital India Award 2020 for implementation of e-Office in the Central Secretariat. He has authored 3 books - *India's Relations with International Monetary Fund: 25 Years in Perspective 1991-2016; G20@2023 The Roadmap to Indian Presidency; The March to New India: Governance Transformed 2014-2019*, published over 250 papers, and delivered over 150 orations. In Government of Rajasthan he has served as Chairman Board of Revenue and Chairman Rajasthan Tax Board. He is a senior administrator, a respected academician and an institution builder par excellence.