



**INDIA'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
JOURNEY @ 75**

V.SRINIVAS, IAS



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“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. The Government is committed to strengthening good governance, that is pro-people, and proactive governance. Guided by the ‘citizen-first’ approach, we remain untiring in our efforts to further deepen the outreach of our service delivery mechanisms and make them more effective.” – Prime Minister Narendra Modi¹

Introduction

At the outset, I thank the Economic Times for inviting me to the 3rd Digi Tech Conclave 2022 to speak on the subject India's Digital Transformation Journey @75.

The 75th Year of Indian Independence, the Amrit Kaal Period, represents a historical year in Indian democracy, marking the Nation's deep and abiding commitment to Constitutional values and democracy. In the years 2014-22, the Government of India has introduced far-reaching administrative reforms, in personnel administration and governance. The quest for a new narrative in Governance is characterised by strong institutions, higher accountability, data driven decision making, regulatory governance models and above all an ethical governance model with a zero-tolerance approach to corruption.

Maximum Governance – Minimum Government

The Government's policy has been “Maximum Governance – Minimum Government”. India has succeeded in transforming technologically obsolete institutions into modern day digital institutions which benefit millions of Indians. In the Amrit Kaal period, the Government's clarion call is for adoption of Next Generation Reforms by bridging the gap between government and citizens. This vision of Next Generation administrative reforms is outlined by Secretariat Reforms, Swachhta Campaigns, Benchmarking of Governance and Services, Redressal of Public Grievances & Improving Service Delivery, recognizing meritocracy and replication of good governance practices form the core of India's good governance model. In this interaction, it is my endeavour to present the Administrative Reforms that have facilitated

¹ Message of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji at the Sushasan Saptah dated December 20, 2021

the move from digitization to digitalization to digital transformation in creation of an agile, collaborative and connected government.

Digital Transformation of Governance:

Digital Transformation of Governance has been brought about by a series of deep and coordinated culture, workforce, and technology shifts that enabled transformation of governance models in strategic directions. An agile government has modernized with times, innovated faster, and met citizen demands/ expectations, become more resilient, delivered mission/ vision goals in prescribed time periods, complied with regulations and adapted to changes.

This was achieved by the following steps:

- a) National e-Services Delivery Assessment** - The National e-Services Delivery Assessment 2019 represented an assessment of the state of e-Services Delivery across the Nation. The NeSDA framework assessed all the Service Portals of States/ Union Territories and select Central Ministries on 7 key parameters. The services assessed were the most sought after by the citizen which were delivered online and maintained by concerned Ministry/ State/ UT.

In 2021, the NeSDA framework covered G2C and G2B services across 7 sectors, viz., Finance, Labour and Employment, Education, Local Governance & Utility Services, Social Welfare, Environment and Tourism sectors. A total of 56 services were assessed for every State/ UT and 27 services were assessed for Central Ministries. The NeSDA framework assessed all the State and Central Ministry portals on the key parameters of accessibility, content availability, ease of use and information security and privacy. The Service portals were assessed on an additional 3 parameters viz., End-Service Delivery, Integrated Service Delivery and Status and Request Tracking. In NeSDA 2021 study, 1400 services across all States/ UT's were evaluated, an increase of over 60 percent from that in 2019. Punjab and Tamil Nadu are the leading States providing all 56 mandatory services online and Jammu & Kashmir is the leading Union Territory in e-Governance. 69 percent of all possible mandatory e-services have been delivered by States/ UT's which is up from the 48 percent in NeSDA 2019. Citizen satisfaction was as high as 74 percent.

The trend for e-Services delivery shifting from silo departmental portals to integrated portals/ centralized portals resulted in higher citizen satisfaction. Several of the Central

Portals provide easy access to common services and create universally accessible digital resources. In addressing some of the biggest challenges that citizens face, the portals create collaborative digital platforms for participative governance. Some of the Central Ministries' portals that have made a difference in the lives of citizens include the following:

- 1) Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission bridges the gap amongst different stakeholders of healthcare ecosystem through digital highways, over 20 crore ABHA numbers created.
- 2) Bhavishya seeks to ensure an active and dignified life for pensioners by ensuring payments of all retirement dues and delivery of pension payment orders to the retiring employee on the day of retirement itself, implemented in 814 offices.
- 3) Civil Registration System seeks to promote uniformity in the registration of births and deaths across India and compilation of vital statistics based thereon.
- 4) DIKSHA Portal (PM e-Vidya) benefits 25 crores school children across India unifying all efforts related to digital/ online services to enable multi-modal access to education.
- 5) eSHRAM creates a National Database for Unorganized workers which are seeded in Aadhar, witnessed 33 lac completed registrations.
- 6) Jeevan Praman is a biometric enabled digital service for pensioners digitizing the process of getting a life certificate using an aadhar platform, has benefitted 5.63 crore pensioners.
- 7) National Generic Document Registration System is an application for use by Sub-Registrars and citizens by offering a complete user interface for property and document registration and enables citizens to buy land online.
- 8) National Integrated Database of Hospitality Management empowers India's tourism and hospitality businesses by electronic delivery of various hospitality services and showcase Incredible India.
- 9) Parivaahan Seva facilitates computerization of over 1300+ Road Transport Offices across India, lays down the standards for documents across the country and ensures inter-operability, correctness and timely availability of information.

There are also several District level seamless service delivery initiatives which have benefitted citizens. The Indore 311 Application of Indore Municipal Corporation, Silvassa

Citizen Connect Project of Silvassa Municipal Council, Panchayat Development Index of Bandipora District, J&K, Electronic Authority Services Enabling Application (eASE app), of Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand, Saksham Surajpur of Surajpur District Chattisgarh, Illegal Mining Tracking System (IMTS) of Chhota Udepur District, Gujarat, Divyang Mitra App of Nanded District Maharashtra are some of the prominent seamless service delivery applications at the district level.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, India developed a number of web and mobile applications at the Centre/ State/ District levels to help in monitoring and management of different aspects of the pandemic – dissemination of information, advisories, ePass systems, complaint management systems, COVID-19 tests management, tele-education, helpline portals and dashboards. The initiatives included COWIN portal, Aarogya Setu, COVID-19 India portal of MOHFW, COVID Management – information and dissemination of My GOV, Repat Portal of Vande Bharat Mission, Ministry of External Affairs, Karnataka State COVID war-room, Uttar Pradesh Higher Education Digital Library, Higher Education Department of Government of UP.

- b) Adoption of e-Office ver 7.0** – e-Office is aimed to bring in more transparency, efficiency and accountability in Secretariat functioning leading to increased productivity. One of the key areas of Digital Transformation witnessed in the Central Secretariat is the movement from a manual document, file and paper based functioning to an “electronic” environment which also involved digitization and storing of existing physical files and records and also creating new electronic files and records. Over 25 lac e-files are currently operational in the Central Secretariat and the number of physical files came down to around 10 lac.

Government has approved policy amendments in the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure 2019 which made it possible to issue virtual private networks to Deputy Secretaries of Government of India and Digital Signature Certificates upto Section Officers in Central Secretariat. DARPG received the Jury Category award in Digital India Awards 2021 for e-Office implementation conferred by the Rashtrapti ji on December 31, 2021.

Let me mention a few success stories:

- The uninterrupted functioning of the Central Secretariat in the pandemic and lockdown was possible because of e-Office. Deputy Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Additional Secretaries and Secretaries had access to Virtual Private Network and could take policy decisions on e-files during this period. Further 25 percent Under Secretaries were issued

laptops to ensure steady file movement. The adoption of Digital Signature Certificate upto Section Officer level brought credibility to the e-file system. Since 2018, I have witnessed the linear expansion in number of files on e-Office from 4,00,000 e-files to 26,36,116 e-files in 2022. The fortnightly increase in e-files in June 2022 is 27,694.

- The operationalization of 2 Secretariats in Jammu & Kashmir was possible because of e-Office. Jammu & Kashmir had a long-standing tradition of shifting the Secretariat from Jammu to Srinagar during summer months and back to Jammu in winter. The Darbar movement necessitated carrying over 280 truckloads of files between the 2 capitals. The DARPG collaborated with Government of Jammu & Kashmir to implement e-Office in both the Secretariats digitalizing several millions of file pages in using heavy duty scanners. The adoption of e-Office has enabled the simultaneous operationalization of both Jammu & Srinagar Secretariats and was one of the biggest reforms that stopped Darbar movement.
 - The adoption of e-Office in DRDO, represented a milestone as it demonstrated that Departments with multiple field offices could use e-Office for real time transfer of files. In 2022, DRDO collaborated with DARPG in propagation of the use of e-Office in DRDO and all field offices of DRDO and the Headquarters. This effectively shattered the notion that field offices with heavy project files could not handle paper on e-file system.
 - e-Office has enabled the seamless movement of files to IFD and Department of Expenditure. E-Office ver 7.0 is a significant advancement on e-Office ver 6.0 with a number of new features, enabling references to external offices. This has enabled seamless movement of files to IFD and Dept of Expenditure.
- c) **CPGRAMS:** The CPGRAMS is an online public grievance platform available 24x7 with security features mapped across all Ministries/ Departments, Attached, Subordinate and Autonomous bodies. Further the CPGRAMS is also being used by several Union Territories. 2021 witnessed 21 lac PG cases being received on the CPGRAMS with 19.95 lac cases being redressed. Over 80000 Grievance Officers have been mapped on the CPGRAMS system. CPGRAMS enabled massive scaling up in handling public grievances in the period 2014-2022, provides trackability of grievances, feedback and rating on disposal quality and an appeal facility to citizens.

India has several best practices in States to handle public grievances – SWAGAT portal of Gujarat, Jan Sunwai portal of Uttar Pradesh, e-Janaspandana of Karnataka, CM Window of Haryana, Mo Sarkar of Odisha, JKIGRAMS of J&K, Aaple Sarkar of Maharashtra, SPANDANA of Andhra Pradesh, Janahita of Telangana, Jan Sampark of Rajasthan are some of the top performing public grievance portals.

Government has made significant efforts for a comprehensive grievance redressal system, several measures for strengthening CPGRAMS have been introduced. Monitoring dashboards for stakeholders facilitate deeper analysis of grievances, capacity building of stakeholders under the Sevottam Scheme for effective redressal of grievances, universalization of CPGRAMS ver 7.0 for auto-routing of grievances to last mile, integration of State portals with CPGRAMS, operationalization of feedback call centers, developing an inclusive system by using common service centers, and a regional language interface. The operationalization of the National COVID Grievances Monitoring Dashboard enabled the grievance redressal during the pandemic with an average time of 1.45 days. The grievances received on CPGRAMS portal are redressed in a period of 30 days. The CPGRAMS monthly report is published by DARPG covering areas of grievance redressal index and category wise grievance redressal.

Government introduced a category for “Improving Service Delivery and Redressal of Public Grievances” in the Scheme for Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2020 which received significant nominations. An experience sharing session on “Technology Platforms for Redressal of Public Grievances” was held by DARPG which showcased the Grievance Redressal Platforms being adopted across States. For Improving Service Delivery, the DARPG has pursued collaboration with the Right to Services Commissions across India. The Nagpur Regional Conference aimed at bringing greater focus to Improving Service Delivery in Governance and greater visibility to Citizen Charters.

The National e-Governance Awards

Government implements the Awards Scheme for National Awards for e-Governance. This Scheme is recognized amongst the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in the country. 2021 witnessed an all-time high of 1377 registrations and 698 nominations being received on the DARPG portal. Amongst the National e-Governance Awards winners 2021 were the Central Government Initiatives of Department of Justice, Ministry of Rural Development, Department of School Education, MoHFW and MyGov. Amongst the Award Winners from State Governments were innovations from Punjab, UP, Chattisgarh, Telangana, Odisha, Daman and Diu and Karnataka. The Award Winners from Districts include nominations from Goalpara Assam, Nagaur Rajasthan, Dehradun Uttarakhand, Solan Himachal Pradesh, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Bandipora and Srinagar of J&K, Indore of MP, Godda of Jharkhand and Mon District of Nagaland. In the category of outstanding research by Academic Institutions the nominations from AIIMS New Delhi and IIT Roorkee received the Awards. The NeGA recognized the performance of Indian Oil Corporation in the category Excellence in adopting Emerging Technologies. The National e-Governance Awards are disseminated for replication through the Annual National e-Governance Conferences, the last 3 National e-Governance Conferences were held at Shillong 2019, Mumbai 2020 and Hyderabad 2022. The Hyderabad Declaration 2022 lays down the e-Governance roadmap for 2022 - Annex-1. For improving service delivery the Nagpur Resolution 2019 lays down the roadmap - Annex-2.

Conclusion

The thrust of administrative reforms has been to bring the Government and Citizen closer by use of digital technology pursuing Next Generation Administrative Reforms with the policy objective of “Maximum Governance – Minimum Government”. The citizen is the centrality of the civil servant’s odyssey and commitment to larger public good against all odds is the defining goal. There has been significant adoption of office automation, fintech, artificial intelligence and block chain into governance making a transformative journey in the period 2014-22. We can be sure that in any global future governance model, India will play a significant role as democracy, a meritocracy empowered with digitally transformed institutions.

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HYDERABAD DECLARATION**INDIA'S TECHADE: DIGITAL GOVERNANCE IN A
POST PANDEMIC WORLD**

Dated: 7-8 January 2022

The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DAPRG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Telangana organized the 24th National Conference on e-Governance at Hyderabad during 7-8 January 2022.

Under the visionary leadership of the Prime Minister, the e-Governance landscape of India has radically changed in scale, scope and learning paradigms. As India celebrates 75th year of Independence as Azaadi ka AmritMahotsav, the Prime Minister's clarion call for adoption of Next Generation Administrative Reforms for bringing citizens and government closer was the focus of the Conference deliberations. Secretariat Reforms, Swachhta Campaign, Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery which form the core of India's good governance model were deliberated. During the pandemic, the widespread adoption of e-Office helped create paperless offices in the central secretariat and enabled smooth governance functioning. CPGRAMS helped redress 20 lac public grievances in 2021. The National e-Governance Awards were conferred in the Inaugural Session. The Two-day Conference held exchanges of views between the Award winners and Unicorns.

The Conference has unanimously adopted the Hyderabad declaration outlined below after intensive deliberations during the sessions held over twodays.

The Conference resolved that Government of India and State Governments shall collaborate to:

1. To bring citizens and government closer through digital platforms.
2. Transform citizen services through use of technology by leveraging the artifacts of India Stack that include Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker, UMANG, e Sign and consent framework.

3. Fast track the implementation of the national level public digital platforms in key social sectors viz. Health, Education, Agriculture, etc by adopting open interoperable architecture for joined up connected services.
4. Operationalize the data governance framework to facilitate data sharing within Government entities as also make available all data on data.gov.in except for a negative list. Enable protocols for data collection, data harvesting, data privacy, data anonymization, data security, and data preservation that can help build a data economy.
5. Foster responsible use of emerging technology such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Blockchain, 5G, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, etc for Social Empowerment.
6. Make India the global hub for emerging technology through creation of large pool of skilled resources on futuristic technologies
7. Ensure resilient Government Infrastructure with robust technological solutions to withstand pandemic like disruptions.
8. Foster a spirit of research and development and process reengineering in ongoing government services
9. Uplift good governance to higher level through healthy competition among States and UTs and among Central Ministries by benchmarking services.
10. NeSDA 2021 to be adopted in collaboration with MeITY for improving e-Governance landscape.
11. Integration of all State/District portals with CPGRAMS for seamless Redressal of Public Grievances
12. Replication of awarded projects under National Awards for e- Governance 2020 – 21 and their nomination for dissemination of best practices through Regional conferences
13. Adoption of e-office version 7.0 in all ministries and departments
14. Use technology for propagating end to end service delivery without human interference to the citizen at the grass root level
15. Make “digital” the primary aspect of government service design and delivery and provide requisite infrastructure to achieve that.

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ANNEX-2**NAGPUR RESOLUTION****A HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR EMPOWERING CITIZENS**

Dated: December 22, 2019

The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions and the Government of Maharashtra and Maharashtra State Commission for Right to Public Services organized the Regional Conference on “Improving Public Services Delivery – Role of Governments” at Nagpur during December 21 - 22, 2019.

The Conference has unanimously adopted the Nagpur Resolution: A Holistic Approach for Empowering Citizens outlined below after intensive deliberations during the sessions held over two days.

The Conference resolved that Government of India, the Government of Maharashtra, the Maharashtra State Commission for Right to Public Services and the participating State Governments shall collaborate to:

1. To empower the citizens by policy interventions for better service delivery through timely updation of citizens charters, implementation of enactments and benchmarking standards for continuous improvement;
2. To empower citizens by adopting a bottom-up approach to bring massive improvements in quality of grievance redressal and reduction in timelines of grievance redressal;
3. To adopt a holistic approach of systemic public grievance reforms through improved mapping, formulation of monitoring matrix, data collection and evaluation in quality of grievance redressal;
4. To provide an enabling environment for States and Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India for creating web portals and to adopt a holistic approach for improved service delivery through digital platforms;
5. To focus on dynamic policy making and strategic decisions, monitoring of implementation, appointment of key personnel, coordination and evaluation;

6. To achieve a sense of common identity by exchange of technical expertise in the areas of Improved Service Delivery between the paired States under the Ek Bharat – Shresht Bharat Program;
7. To work towards long-term engagements in the areas of Improved Service Delivery for Empowering Citizens through greater cooperation between the DARPG and the participating States and,
8. To ensure timely publication of Good Governance Index to identify the quality of governance in 10 sectors especially those pertaining to welfare and infrastructure at the Union, State and District levels.

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