



## **THE GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA ISSUES AND CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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### **Abstract:**

*E-governance is the application of information and communication technologies to change the transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of informational and transactional exchanges within government, between government agencies of National, State, Panchayatx Municipalize and Local levels, citizens and businesses, and to empower citizens through access and use of information. Countries throughout the world have implemented electronic government or e-government.*

*E-governance has become essential in a rapid growing and demanding economy like India, In the fast paced digital era, the Indian government has been proactively steering the nation towards a more transparent and efficient administration through the adoption of Digital governance. E- governance, or electronic governance, involves the use of information and communication technologies to enhance to provide of government services, strengthen administrative system and promote citizen empowerment.*

*Key words: e-governance, digital era, citizen empowerment, efficiency and effectiveness*

### **Introduction:**

E-governance is a system that helps to establish lines of transparency, accountability, roles, people's participation and decision-making authority for the digital presence of an organization or government. Digital tools include websites, mobile sites, social media platforms, policies, and services that are promoted on the internet. Digital governance assigns clear accountability for who has policy making authority for managing all digital tools and processes for the government and it assigns accountability for the same. Information Technology opens up tremendous opportunities to provide basic government services to a much broader segment of the population at the optimal quality, time, place and cost.

The central government and state governments has embarked on implementation of various e-Governance initiatives, to help citizens gain one-stop access to information and services in a secure way and to provide better, efficient, transparent and responsive services, leveraging Information & Communication Technology tools (ICT). Central and state governments are giving priority to e-governance with the aim of providing faster and better services to the people of the country. Many programs are being implemented as part of this. The following are the objectives set forth for the present paper.

### **Objectives:**

1. To Examine the e-governance and various services delivery in India
2. To address the issues and challenges in e-governance innovations and best practices

### **Various e-services in governance**

**e-Office:** As part of the modernization of central government offices, this office has been designed with ICT connectivity. This reduces the workload of the employees and provides fast and quality services to the public.

**IVFRT (Immigration Visa and Foreigners Registration and Tracking):** Foreigners and



NRAs coming to India will get better services through IVFRT. Activities of foreigners can be observed.

**Direct Cash Transfer/ Direct Benefit Transfer:** The aim of the cash transfer program is to increase the purchasing power of the people and remove economic inequality. Many welfare programs are implemented through Aadhaar. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA) implemented for employment generation Social security examples of this are the old age and disability pensions being provided.

**e-Suvidha:** Projects above Rs.50 crore and below Rs.1000 crore can be reviewed through this portal. Although our country is progressing in terms of e-governance, public awareness and digital literacy in rural areas will be crucial for its implementation.

The success of e-Governance depends on the availability of high-speed internet and the spread of mobile technologies like 4G and 5G services across the country.

**Unique Identification Project (UID):** As part of this project, all the people of the country will be allotted a unique code in the form of 12 digit Aadhaar number by UIDAI - Unique Identification Authority of India. Citizens can avail various services through Aadhaar. Aadhaar is useful for availing the benefits of government welfare schemes. This can be used to assess the extent to which the policies of the government have affected the citizens.

**M-Governance:** Better, faster and more convenient e-governance services provided by the government to citizens through mobile phones (Apps) are called M-Governance services.

- M Governance provides services on mobile phones through wireless.
- Through the use of m-governance apps and services, this governance can easily reach remote areas.
- The upgraded version of e-governance is called M-Governance.

#### **Mode of implementation in different states:**

**Lokwani Project:** It is being implemented in Uttar Pradesh. Lokwani is a single window, self sustainable single window e-governance service. Through this, services like essential services, land records and grievance redressal are being provided in the state.

**Bhumi Project:** Through this project, along with maintenance of land records in Karnataka, essential services are being provided to rural areas.

**Gnanduth:** This is G2C e-Governance implemented in Madhya Pradesh. Through this, the public services required by the rural areas and the people of the district will be provided by the district administration.

**Project Friends (Project Firends):** This is an e-Governance initiative set up by Kerala State for tax payments.

**FRIENDS:** Fast Reliable Instant Efficient Network for Disbursement of Services. Friends of Janaseva Kendras in district centers provide these services.

**E-Mitra:** This project was designed in the state of Rajasthan with the objective of providing quality government services to the rural and urban people.

**MCA 21:** It is a corporate giant with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs e-Governance.

**Khajane Project:** It was set up in Karnataka to correct the deficiencies in the treasury system and design a computerized treasury. This is a B2B project. It tracks government budget, financial transactions and tenders.

**E-Governance in Telangana:**

**T-HUB:** Innovations and innovations are being promoted in Telangana through the T-Hub portal. Aspiring entrepreneurs, corporates, investors; Tea Hub provides the necessary support and enabling environment for next-generation products and new business models offered by government agencies.

**Me-Seva:** MeeSeva has been envisioned to bring public services closer to the citizens and enable 'Anywhere-Anytime' access to citizen-centric services through multiple platforms and modes. It started in 2011 and has emerged as the primary mode for electronic delivery of G2C and G2B services from multiple departments in the Government of Telangana.

Electronic Service Delivery delivers citizen services through 4,500 centers spread across the State. MeeSeva handles on an average 1,00,000 to 1,50,000 transactions per day and nearing 17 crore transactions. MeeSeva registers about 1.5 Crore transactions every year. Serves about 2.5 Crore citizens per annum. There are about 50 Departments offering more than 600 services through Electronic Service Delivery. Telangana has consistently topped the States' list of number of e- transactions released by the Electronic Transaction Aggregation and Analysis Layer (e-Taal), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India. Smart Governance is a key focus area of the ITE & C Department. In this regard, Electronic Service Delivery has been adopting emerging technologies like Big Data, AI, ML, etc., for re-engineering processes involved in delivery of G2C, G2B and G2G services.

**Telangana State Portal:** Features of Telangana state, culture, implementation of government schemes and affairs are incorporated in it. This includes certificates issued by the state government.

**e-Procurement:** It aims to procure various types of goods online and provide them at affordable prices.

**T - SWAN (Telangana State Wide Area Network):** As part of this, mandal and district centers will be connected through broadband connectivity. 34 Mbps internet connection, 20 Mbps intranet facilities are provided.

**Telangana State Video Conferencing Services (TS n- State Wide Video Conferencing):** The aim is to provide better governance to the people through mutual coordination and cooperation between the Chief Minister, Ministers and heads of various government departments.

**SoFTNET n TnSAT:** In which the syllabus of academic classes through T-SAT expert channels, necessary coaching classes for competitive examinees are conducted. T-SAT channel currently has more than 5 lakh subscribers.

**e-Return, VAT-Return:** Income tax returns can be submitted transparently and quickly through this filing. The relevant taxes can be paid in the commercial tax online section.

**Other major initiatives of Telangana****Government: T-App Folio:**

Electronic Service Delivery has implemented one of its kind m-Governance initiatives, T-App Folio, which enables delivery of G2C, B2C, VAS, and info services. T App can be accessed on Smart phones (App, Mobile Web) as well as feature phones (USSD, IVRS, and SMS).

**T-Wallet:**

T-Wallet is the official digital wallet of Telangana State, launched on 1st June, 2017. It is the first digital wallet owned by any State Government in India. It has an Anytime Anywhere digital payment option for everyone.

**Real-time Digital Authentication of Identity (RTDAI):**

RTDAI enables a document-less, presence-less governance mechanism using Big Data, AI, ML, etc. wherein the quality of Government Departments' interaction with citizens can be significantly improved.

**Facial Recognition in Elections for Voter Identification**

State Election Commission, Telangana has used facial recognition application as a solution for real-time digital verifiability of the voters for 10 polling booths involving close to 7,000 voters in Kompally Municipal elections in December, 2020. This was the first time such technology was used in Elections in India. Facial Recognition through RTDAI was also deployed in the verification of voters in 'Mahesh Bank Elections' held in December, 2020.

**RTA FEST**

Through Friendly Electronic Services of Transport (FEST), launched in July, 2020, the citizens of Telangana can avail numerous services of the Transport Department through a Smartphone from their home, anytime, anywhere, without physically visiting the RTA office. Except for services where a driving test or physical inspection of the vehicle is required, all services would be offered in a contactless and presence-less manner through FEST.

**Degree Online Services, Telangana (DOST)**

Leveraging RTDAI, authentication of students for admission into Degree Programs of the State was made completely online through DOST Authentication service. This ensured that the students could complete the authentication process without stepping out during the Covid-19 pandemic. The DOST authentication process has been continued to be implemented for the Degree Admissions.

**Samagra Vedika**

Samagra Vedika, a smart Governance solution that uses Emerging Technologies such as Big Data and ML, integrates the Govt. databases for informed decision making. It ensures proper delivery of subsidies and increase in revenues for Government departments.

Owing to its utility and potential, Samagra Vedika was mentioned in the Economic Survey of India, 2019 presented in the Parliament.

Telangana State Technology Services (TSTS) is the 'Nodal Agency' for e Governance initiatives including Hardware and Software procurement for all departments of Telangana. TSTS handles major Mission Mode Projects for the state like State Data Centre (SDC), State Wide Area Network (SWAN), Video Conferencing (VC) and Secretariat Campus Area Network (SCAN). TSTS manages the e-Procurement portal and funds, and acts as the fund manager for all IT, E&C department's budget funds.

**Other e-Governance Solutions Dharani****Portal:**

In co-ordination with CCLA, IGRS Department, TSTS is the nodal agency to provide



complete technical support for Dharani, a Telangana government's initiative to implement a new and completely IT driven Integrated Land Records System. As on 31 March, 2022, Dharani Portal has completed about 14.62 lakhs registrations and collected an amount of Rs.2533 Cr.

### **AUA-ASA Project**

TSTS has launched authentication services as Authentication User Agencies (AUAs) to all the Government departments by using Aadhaar from August, 2017. Type of Services being offered by TSTS:

- Authentication Services for identifying the correct beneficiary/user.
- KYC Services to fetch Demographic Details of Citizen .
- AADHAAR Based Attendance System – A fool-proof Aadhaar based biometric Attendance system.

### **SCA Project and Operations & Maintenance of Govt. Owned Meeseva Centres in Urban Areas**

TSTS is designated as Service Centre Agency (SCA) to handle the operations of ESD SCA centres and Govt. Owned Meeseva centres to ensure better quality service delivery of Mee Seva services by proper management of the Franchisees. There are about 3000 Franchisees and 108 Govt Centres and 75% of Mee Seva transactions happened through TSTS Franchisees.

### **Friendly Electronic Services in Transport Dept (FEST)**

FEST is based on RTDAI to Presence Less and Contact Less Services using a 3-factor authentication by leveraging state-of-the-art technologies. Citizens of Telangana can avail 17 services of Transport department through a smartphone from their home, anytime, anywhere, without visiting the Transport department, except Driving test or physical inspection of the vehicle. **FEST won the Digital Technology Sabha Award, 2021 in the Artificial Intelligence category. Challenges and Issues of e-Governance:**

The various issues facing e-governance are: So many technical issues facing e-governance like Internet transactions are a major concern due to a lack of security. Insurance, banking, and utility bill payments are all handled by e-government platforms. Misuse of personal data is another aspect that has proved challenging. Coordination between the ministries, communication gaps, and data transfer limitations. Economic Issues like implementing e-governance operations and maintaining services are very costly. usability: Any government-developed model must be reusable. E-governance is a nationwide plan that should include software or programs that government agencies can use. The government needs to constantly maintain such platforms and introduce new software to meet citizens' current demands. Providing technologies independent of heavy immovable hardware.

Social Issues like Many people in rural areas cannot access such a portal due to language barriers, insufficient infrastructure, etc. Illiteracy is a major factor that renders such platforms useless. A major chunk of the population can't understand English. The government must meet the gap and add different languages to their portals. Informed citizens, concerned institutions, and government departments should take it as a responsibility to spread the information and promote e-services. Increasing cyber crimes such as spoofing, data tampering, data leaking, transactional frauds, etc., are posing





problems for e-governance. Such activities create trust issues for citizens and limit the use of such platforms. The unequal distribution of technology limits users and bars people from availing the perks provided under schemes of e-governance. To protect citizens' information, the government needs to have a high level of protection. Better infrastructure can provide better connectivity to remote areas and help the overall development.

### **Conclusion**

Digital governance is one important initiative taken by governments worldwide, enabling them to handle and carry out their duties. The government must address these issues and provide a better service to its people. The government must ensure proper infrastructure and awareness programs are put into place. These measures can help people from the fringes of society benefit from the various e-governance schemes. Today's society seems to be constantly changing day by day and the main reason for this is technological changes. Cell phones, smart watches, Internet, social media, various media, are affecting daily life, production and service sectors. Similarly, production processes and various services are greatly accelerated. In education and medical fields, technology plays a vital role in online training, admissions, teaching, conducting examinations, implementation of various government welfare and development programs. Innovation and adoption of technology is a must. But it is imperative to proceed judiciously by setting appropriate limits in its use.

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