Digital India – Route Towards Development

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ABSTRACT   This paper deals with the governmental movement digital India. Authors had cleared the concept of digital India and its importance. And the concept was presented as the major route of development in country.

Key words: digital India.

Introduction:

Since World War II, development economists have taken particular interest in the problems of relatively backward economies and yet there is no specific definition of underdevelopment which is universally acceptable. To most of the western economists, underdevelopment is just a lack of development. To this school of thought a low level of per capita national product is an indicator of economic development. Thus, for them, almost all Latin American, African and Asian countries can be characterized as under developed.

The density of population is high in India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and China. Most social scientists, particularly the economists, blame rapid growth of population in the countries for their economic backwardness and yet some of the highly developed countries in Europe are far more densely populated than the countries in Indian subcontinent. Pressure of population on land is distinctly less in African and Latin American countries, but these countries as much suffer from problems of underdevelopment as the countries in Asia.

If we talk about India which is on the way of development and the largest democratic nation, we have been independent since 68 years, but still India is fighting with the problems like poverty and unemployment and other social problems like lack of communication, lack of road connectivity between rural and urban area, connectivity problems, and many more.

Almost after many years, India got a clear majority government with the aim of the development of the whole nation (macroeconomic aspects). The newly elected government came up with some innovative ideas like "Swachh Bharat Mission", "Make in India"," Skill India", "Digital India" etc. Digitalization in India was already initiated in early 90s,especially in communication and technology but GOI was not able to implement it in proper manner due to political instability and transforming the country with new economic policy, i.e.

scrapping of planning commission and giving importance to NITI Ayog to compete with the world. India's make over from present to future is only possible by adopting the following equation:

India Talent + Information Technology = India Tomorrow

What is Digital India?

The Government of India re-initiated the concept of Digital India with the objective of integration of government department and people of India with the aim of ensuring that the government services are easily made available to citizens electronically by reducing paperwork. As stated by Joseph Schumpeter, "Innovation leads to profit." The objective is to come out with innovative ideas and practical solutions to realize Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of a digital India. His vision is to empower every citizen with easy access to digital services, knowledge and information. The program comprises of various initiatives, each targeted to prepare India for becoming a knowledge economy and for bringing good governance to citizens through synchronized and co-ordinate engagement of the entire government by year 2018.This is under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Communication and IT with estimated cost of Rs 1,13,000 crores. We can claim that "Digital India is a scheme which includes connection of all villages through international network". This will make the nation strong for the knowledge based transformation and delivering good governance to citizens by synchronizing and better co-ordination with both Central and State Government.

The vision of Digital India program also aims at inclusive growth in areas of electronic services, products, manufacturing and job opportunities. The vision of Digital India focuses on three key areas –
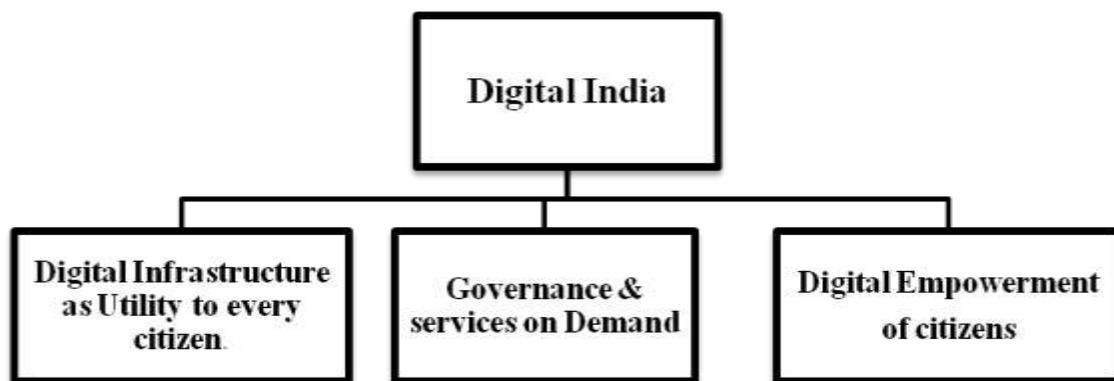
Digital Infrastructure as utility to every citizen:

Basic requirements mean '*roti*, *kapda*, *makaan*,' which means the requirements of food, clothing and shelter. But in 21st century, the meaning of such basic requirements has changed to digitalization and online access via international network. In economics, utility means satisfaction. So every citizen,specially rural people can be satisfied by connecting through high speed broadband so that people can easily get benefits from the government like subsidy, social benefits, and other financial benefits.These kinds of benefits are only possible with Unique Identification Number (i.e. Aadhaar Card / Pan Card). This facility includes online

paperless transactions by which every citizen can get benefits, especially farmers because there will not have any kind of interference by middleman (i.e. financial transaction, subsidies). A key component under this vision is *high speed international network as a core utility* to facilitate online delivery of various services. The contribution from IT department who has positively contributed to the economy growth, employment and productivity, also includes the universal access to mobile network connectivity of 55,619 uncovered villages by the year 2018.

Indian telecom sector is the world's fastest growing telecom sector, substantial growth of mobile phones in country, especially in rural area, provides a ready and general base for delivery of public services electronically like notification of banking transaction (ATM services, online selling and purchase, Railway and airways reservations). Around 80% of the people use international network through mobile device and it has already captured the attraction of the country. Recently '*Pradhan Mantri Jan DhanYojna'* has also been launched to bring about broad financial inclusion of all households in the state. The plan envisages universal access to banking facility with at least one basic banking account per family, access to credit, insurance, pension facility and it also envisages channeling all government benefits to the beneficiaries' bank account.DEITY formulates **Common Service Centre**, which is already implemented at village level for delivery of financial, social, private and government service in areas like health, education, pension and agriculture. Current scenario says that there is an inadequate access to government services and internet in rural area but this scenario can be changed with the help of CSCs by helping people to learn computer skill and vocational training so that

people can get work and by this family income can also increase. The main initiative under **Digital India** is **Digital Locker**. Suppose during the situation of disasters like earthquake or fire, when a person loses his/her document, the digital repository would be accessible for them anytime-anywhere to get benefits from the government. Finally now the question also arises of security. Are uploaded document (pan card, birth certificate, registration copy of properties) safe? Of course the answer is "No", it's not safe. So to avoid such risks and for safety measures, National Coordination Centre on cyber security has also been proposed as one of the major projects under Digital India.

Governance and services on demand:

According to the theory of Micro Economics, demand should always be equal to supply. To fulfill the various demands of the citizens, the government is focusing on supply by making e-governance application. It can be operated from all types of devices like mobiles, tablets or laptops under the ministry of information and communication technology (ICT). Government services will be made available to citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner. The main objective of Governance and service on demand is to make all the government services accessible to the common man in his area, through common service delivery outlet. Such services at affordable cost fulfill the basic needs of common man. Many times it happens that person wants approvals and clearance from authority's external area of department, so now the focus is on providing single window operation to all services and it will consume less time for an individual. This is exemplified under The National e-governance Policy. Presently the lack of internet connectivity is a problem and by this there is a problem in receiving

government service. With the help of mobile connectivity, bank accounts and status of entitlement, internet access of every citizenand focus on digital literacy will also help citizen aspire for better job by registering themselves on various websites like Naukri.com or TimesJobs.com (which provide public/private sector job vacancy awareness), People can even purchase goods from online stores at cheaper rates as compared to the local or regional market. Even study material for various exams can also be downloaded in the form of e-books.Anyone can have their railwayand airway reservation as well as they can also get schedule regarding the same. In short people can get all the benefits from mobile and online platform. People can express their views on various social networking websites like facebookand twitter. Government of India has introduced 'MeghRaj' to accelerate delivery of e-services in the country while optimizing ICT spending of the Government. Areas like public distribution system, BPL entitlement, social sector benefits, LPG and other subsidies are available. This platform includes various benefits like people do not have to move here and there for their registration process. A major milestone was achieved in October 2014 with the launch of PF portability through the Universal Account Number. Employees now need not worry about transferring the funds lying in their PF accounts when their location changes.All the financial transaction for the citizens will be cashless and electronic measures so that people can easily purchase any product through Debit/Credit Card or else they also can withdraw cash from bank whenever they need.

Digital Empowerment of citizens:

Digital Literacy and Digital resources can result in better livelihood opportunities and become economically safe. But the main focus is to make sure at least one member of the family can be e-literate, so that he/she can easily help their other family through the various digital resources, document/certificates which are available with some other places in physical form and have to submit at some different places. Many times it happens that aperson has to run for the document and authentication from reliable sources but if that person has already uploaded that document on the online repository then he doesn't need to submit it in physical form at required place. Indians are having different verbal communications in different part of the country so DEITY has initiated the program for communication without any language barrier. Digital platform can be useful for both, the Government andthe Citizen. So, it can happen that the citizen can directly give suggestions to the government from the given link on the websites. They can also rate the government initiatives/policies and energetically participate in government actions.

Various policies in states:

India has been harnessing the benefits provided by the Information and Communication Technologies to provide integrated governance, reach to the citizens faster, and provide efficient services and citizen empowerment through access to information. The aim is to redefine Governance in the ICT age to provide, SMART Governance.

Government of India tries to tell that "India is divided into two areas", i.e. rural and urban India and would require personal efforts to join the nation together. One of the

ways to combine the two is through Digitalization. Government even said that the Internet will be provided in each and every house, including rural area. On the other hand, the statistics show a different picture. According to the statistics, India's future is lagging behind and to achieve the targets, it would require a long way for making the whole nation digitalized.

On 1st July 2015 the Centre launched its Digital India campaign, with the aim to empower Indians and boost economic growth. Below is the short description about the states where digitalization is implemented. Several state Governments have also taken various innovative steps to promote e-governance and have drawn up a roadmap of IT implementation and delivery services to the citizens on-line. In states like Punjab, state government instructed the entire Government departments to become digitalized; Kerala is already on the top and achieved the target and got the title as "Digital State". Himachal Pradesh post office department is set to sell mobile phones to spread the message of Digital India. Other states like Gujarat has implemented various initiatives like *MahitiShakti*, request for Government documents, filling the forms, census, tender notice and many other things are available online. Andhra Pradesh is having various initiatives like e-Seva, CARD, VOICE, MPHS, FAST, e-Cops, AP online—One-stop-shop on the Internet and Online Transaction processing.[i]

Indian telecom industry undergoes a high speed of market liberalization and development since 90s, and now it has become the top growing telecom market. India has the world's second largest number of mobile phone users and also world's second largest internet user base with over 300 million as of June 2015. But, expanding the internet convenience in the country would also need a huge investment in the security of all these services providing hardware establishments.

Security concerns become more evident as social media and the entire e-commerce space move towards the digital wallet space. India being home to few of the most successful e-commerce start-ups in the world such as Flipkart, Myntra, Paytm, Olx and others, it is expected that by the end of 2015, total number of users making online transactions in India will cross 40 million. Yet, there are people who do not have complete faith on the online transaction space. The government will also have to ensure better fraud management and needs to scratch out laws to control the limitation of going digital in monetary transactions better.

Overall major initiatives in Digital India

Scheme parameter	Current status	Target	Deadline	Budget
Broadband for rural gram panchayat	20k villages connected under NOFN (April 2015)	2,50,000 Gram Panchayats	December 2016	32k crores Rs
Universal Access to mobile Connectivity	42,300 uncovered (June 2015)	Uncovered Villages	March 2018	16k crores Rs

National Information & Infrastructure	Under SWAN,NKN and NOFN, SWAN has made operational 34 villages	Nation-wide	March 2017	15,686 crores Rs
Development of Common service	1,40,712 operational common services centers	2,50,000 gram Panchayats	March 2017	4,750 crores Rs
Development of post-offices as multiservice center	N/A	1,50,000 post offices	2years	N/A
Wi-Fi enabled university	1038 institute connected on NKN 368 institutes connected on NMEICT	Over 1500 institutes	N/A	790 crores Rs
Public Wi-Fi hotspots	Delhi-2, Banglore-6 Patna, 20km Wi-Fi corridor, Ahmedabad-9 zones, Mumbai-1	Cities with population>1 million and tourist center 2500 Wi-Fi hotspots	December 2015	N/A
Skill Training in small/town villages for IT sector	N/A	1 crores student	5 years	200 crores Rs
Electronic manufacturing	During 2013-14, import of electronic and telecom instrument from China was at 1,03,240 crores VS total export of telecom instrument at 272 crores Rs	Net zero import	By 2020	N/A

(times e. , Digital india initiative, 2015), (Government, 2015)

Success of this program will make India Digitally empowered and the leader in usage of IT in delivery of services related to various domains such as health, education, agriculture, banking, etc.(times e. , Digital india, 2015)

Conclusion and Suggestions:

Google CEO,SundarPichaihas also supported Digital India campaign with a promise to provide free Wi-Fi connectivity to 100 major railway stations in India by the end of 2016 in the first phase. At, the same time Google will evaluate the project to make out how it can expand the free Wi-Fi spot facility scheme further to other railway stations. They said that provisions are already on in various stations to make the scheme a reality.

We feel that banking sector should also think about few reforms likeCheque-lesstransfer facility, so that burden can be reduced and transactions can be expedite.BIZAG, an initiative by the Government of Gujarat, is already working in

the digitalization of education at Micro Level. Digital India will upgrade this to a macro level, which would benefit a huge number of citizens. The Vice Chancellor of Gujarat University has said in his statement that the process for the smart classes has already started in many departments of the University as a pedagogical structure, which reflects Digital India.

Implementation of various above mention suggestionscan empower people and community in many areas, thereby bridging the gap between Rural and Urban India. For the development of a nation "Digital India" Campaign will work but it can only be possible with greater participation and cooperation by the citizens because the above mentioned facilities and implementation of the policy will require huge investments, implementing new laws, amending the old

ones and changes in the digital network structure in different parts of the country. We believe that "**DIGITAL INDIA IS THE NEED FOR TOMORROW'S INDIA**"

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The superior man acts before he speaks, and afterwards speaks according to his action.

~ Confucius