



Concept, Initiatives and Issues of E-governance in India: An analysis

G.P.Rama Krishna, Research Scholar, Department of Politics & Public
Administration, A U Campus, Kakinada

Abstract:

The paper aim to analyze the Concept, Initiatives and Issues of E-governance in India whis is need to better corrupted less society. Given the current high level of political commitment and largely adequate sources of funding, India is likely to soon emerge as a leader in E-Governance. In spite of poor infrastructure, poverty, illiteracy, language dominance and all the other reasons India has number of award winning e-governance projects. Effective promotion schemes by the Indian government will also be a boosting factor to provide quality services to their citizens which means there is huge potential for the development of e-governance in various sectors.

Key words: E-governance, public administration, decentralization, corruption

Introduction

The “e” in eGovernance stands for ‘electronic’. Thus, eGovernance is basically associated with carrying out the functions and achieving the results of governance through the utilization of ICT (Information and Communications Technology). While Governance relates to safeguarding the legal rights of all citizens, an equally important aspect is concerned with ensuring equitable access to public services and the benefits of economic growth to all. It also ensures government to be transparent in its dealings, accountable for its activities and faster in its responses as part of good governance. E-governance, it is considered as a transformation effort – a transformation which is brought about by E-government by facilitating the decentralization of services and administration (Grant & Chau 2005). So, implicitly, these definitions imply the link between E-government and decentralization at the operational level, a link in which E-governance facilitates decentralization. E-governance offers

the possibility of transcending the very paradigm of decentralization and bringing in something that can be called as distributed governance. “Conventional government, with its top-down planning committees, hierarchical reporting relationships is too hierarchical to permit a significant de-concentration of authority and too slow and mechanical to ensure that, if it were attempted, it would remain responsive, transparent and accountable. As a result, conventional government could only decentralize.

In this manner, EGovernance has become a buzzword in public administration in the 21st century. Good governance is expected to be ensured through eGovernance by means of better access to services and democratic processes. Hence, there is an increasing expectation that ICT will be utilized in national and local governments not only for more efficient governance but also for improving public services.

Plan of E-governance



Over the years, a large number of initiatives have been undertaken by various State Governments and Central Ministries to usher in an era of e-Government. Sustained efforts have been made at multiple levels to improve the delivery of public services and simplify the process of accessing them. e-Governance in India has steadily evolved from computerization of Government Departments to initiatives that encapsulate the finer points of Governance, such as citizen centricity, service orientation and transparency. Lessons from previous e-Governance initiatives have played an important role in shaping the progressive e-Governance strategy of the country.

The Government approved the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), comprising of 27 Mission Mode Projects and 8 components, on May 18, 2006. In the year 2011, 4 projects - Health, E-Governance Infrastructure

Education, PDS and Posts were introduced to make the list of 27 MMPs to 31 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs). The Government has accorded approval to the vision, approach, strategy, key components, implementation methodology, and management structure for NeGP. However, the approval of NeGP does not constitute financial approval(s) for all the Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and components under it. The existing or ongoing projects in the MMP category, being implemented by various Central Ministries, States, and State Departments would be suitably augmented and enhanced to align with the objectives of NeGP. In order to promote e-Governance in a holistic manner, various policy initiatives and projects have been undertaken to develop core and support infrastructure.

<p>The diagram shows a circular flow of four components: SWAN (blue arrow), Data Centre (orange arrow), NSDG (green arrow), and CSC (pink arrow). The central text reads 'e-Governance Infrastructure'.</p>	<p>The major core infrastructure components are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State Data Centres (SDCs), 2. State Wide Area Networks (S.W.A.N), 3. Common Services Centres (CSCs) and middleware gateways i.e 4. National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG), 5. State e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG)and 6. Mobile e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (MSDG).
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The important support components include Core policies and guidelines on Security, HR, Citizen Engagement, Social Media as well as Standards related to Metadata,



Interoperability, Enterprise Architecture, Information Security etc. New initiatives include a framework for authentication, viz. e-Pramaan and G-I cloud, an initiative which will ensure benefits of cloud computing for e-Governance projects. The Government had approved the Scheme for establishing State Wide Area Networks (SWANs) across the country, in March, 2005.

State Wide Area Network

SWAN is envisaged as the converged backbone network for data, voice and video communications throughout a State/UT with the following salient features:

1. One PoP at each State / District / Block Headquarter
2. Each PoP has Configurable Aggregation Equipment to enable vertical & horizontal connectivity
3. Gateway to NICNET (National Backbone) for Inter-State connectivity.

State/ NIC would receive discounted price for BSNL BW cost (MoU signed)

Implementation Model

There are two Options for SWAN implementation as detailed : Option I – Public Private Partnership (PPP) Model State identifies a suitable PPP model (BOO, BOOT etc.) and selects an appropriate agency through a suitable competitive process for outsourcing the establishment, operation and maintenance of the Network. Option II – NIC Model State designates NIC (National Informatics Centre) as the prime implementation agency for SWAN for establishment, operation and maintenance of the Network.

Present Status

SWANs have been made operational in 34 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Puducherry, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya Rajasthan Dadar & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu. The States/UTs are utilizing the core infrastructure of SWAN for providing the closed user connectivity to various Government offices in the State/UTs. These offices access their applications through SWAN in secured environment hosted at State Data Centres (SDCs). Implementation of SWAN in remaining 2 States/UTs, Andaman & Nicobar Islands has issued LOI for the selection of Network operator and Jammu & Kashmir is in the process of finalisation of bid process.

SWAN integration with NKN



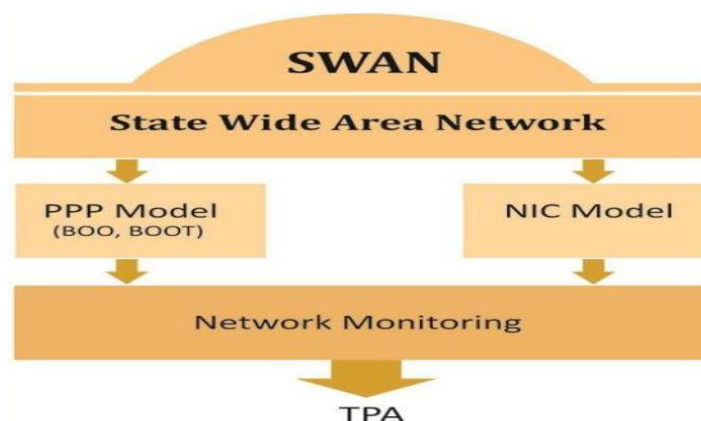
SWAN has been integrated with NKN in 29 States/UTs, namely Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Mizoram, Nagaland and West Bengal. SWAN integration with NKN at district level has also been initiated and at present 125 districts in Eight States, namely Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Pondicherry, Jharkhand and Rajasthan have been integrated with NKN

Bandwidth Utilisation

About 30 States/UTs are utilizing more than 60% of bandwidth of the existing link capacity. These are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Puducherry, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamilnadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Mizoram and Odisha.

Performance Monitoring of SWAN by TPA

To monitor the performance of SWANs, the Department has mandated positioning of Third Party Auditors (TPAs) in the States/UTs. As on date, 29 States, i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have empanelled the TPAs for monitoring the performance of the SWANs in the respective States/UTs. Remaining States/UTs are in the process of empanelment of TPA.



Vision of e-Governance in Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh is one of the few states in India that have taken up e-Governance Initiatives in a very serious

manner. Three ULBs (Urban Local Body), viz. Municipal Corporations of Hyderabad, Vizag and Vijayawada, were



the front-runners, based on which e-Governance initiatives were triggered off at the state level. In, Andhra Pradesh, the initiatives taken by these ULBs been self-driven and not part of any statewide plan. The state level initiative 'SUVIDHA' is proposed to be implemented in 118 Urban Local Bodies in the state excluding these three ULBs, as these ULBs have their own application modules already implemented. Even in the case of infrastructure provision, these ULBs already have their own set-up established, ahead of the state level initiatives. The following are the major ae governance activities in the state.

1. Online booking system for sand purchase
2. Online MPHS Multi-Purpose Household Survey
3. Online Citizen Friendly Services of Transport department (CFST)
4. MeeSeva
5. Online Post Matric Scholarship
6. Online Complaint Registration
7. Online application facility for IT industry
8. e-Filing of commercial taxes
9. Complaint Redressal System
10. Employee Information System(EIM)- Department of School Education
11. Prajavani (AP) - An e-effort to Empower
12. Online market information of Department of Sericulture
13. Andhra Pradesh Government's Gazette
14. Andhra Pradesh Government Orders (GO)

The GoAP's vision of e-Governance is 'to leverage information technology to attain a position of

leadership and excellence in the information age and to transform itself into a knowledge society'. In line with this strategy, the CDMA in AP has undertaken an ambitious project, 'SUVIDHA', which is an Electronic Municipal Administration System. The State Government has also implemented the 'e-Seva' project as a one-stop-shop for providing a range of services to citizens from different Government agencies.

The progress of the e-Governance initiatives in the State has the following key features:

Macro planning

Plan for the sector as a whole emerging:

In AP there are two initiatives that are taking place, one under the CDMA and the other by the ULBs themselves as mentioned earlier. The CDMA is currently handling the process of various e-Governance initiatives at the state level and already in about 5 ULBs the implementation is stated to be under progress.

□ Integration of Government initiatives with Urban Sector:

The state is currently integrating various initiatives, which have until now been existing as islands in some of the ULBs. For instance, connectivity for linking various ULBs with the district head quarters and the CDMA at Hyderabad is addressed through the enhancement of the bandwidth of the APSWAN (State Wide Area Network). This would provide opportunities for integration of data from various ULBs. Moreover, through facilities like the e-Seva (a



common counter for providing interface with citizens), the government is able to provide single service point for various needs of citizens.

b. Infrastructure

Infrastructure well planned: The hardware infrastructure, connectivity, etc. have been well planned with technical inputs from professional firms. The government also has a well laid out state level plans (concerning various departments), into which the municipal e-Governance initiatives are being dovetailed. To enable the flow of data from the ULBs to district data centres and from district data centres to central data centre, the infrastructure and connectivity have been planned.

Data Centre for ULBs established: In AP, there are two levels of data centres for the ULBs: one at the district level and the other at the state level. Apart from this, the GoAP has established APSWAN, into which these technical backbones are getting integrated. Though there is some connectivity and traffic related issues, the data centres have excellent technical infrastructure.

c. Legislative

Legislative changes aspects not considered: There has been no significant state level initiative for amending the existing legislations, rules and regulations for enabling implementation of the e-Governance initiatives. There have been cases where clearances have been provided by way of GOs and approvals to help implementation of the initiatives on a case to case basis.

d. Development approach

□ **PPP/Contracting out observed:** The initiatives have involved various private parties as input suppliers, contractors

and consultants. Also AP has the advantage of having institutions like the NISG and CGG who provide various intellectual and value inputs.

□ **Several parallel initiatives (CDMA, APUSP, CGG, etc.):** Various agencies like the CDMA and APUSP (Urban Support Project funded by the World Bank) are involved in similar initiatives. In this regard there is certain duplication of efforts. For instance, accounting module has been designed under each of these initiatives implementation in the ULBs.

e. Human resource

□ **Human resource aspects yet to be covered:** HR aspects have not been specifically considered in the case of AP for the purpose of engaging, managing and handling skilled manpower required for the initiatives at the ULB/state level. This may become a critical factor in time to come.

f. Citizen Interface

□ **e-Seva Counters:** e-Seva counters are a one-stop-shop for over 150 G2C and G2B services. e-Seva offers a wide range of services under one roof to the citizens. Such services are rendered irrespective of jurisdictional limits of ULBs.

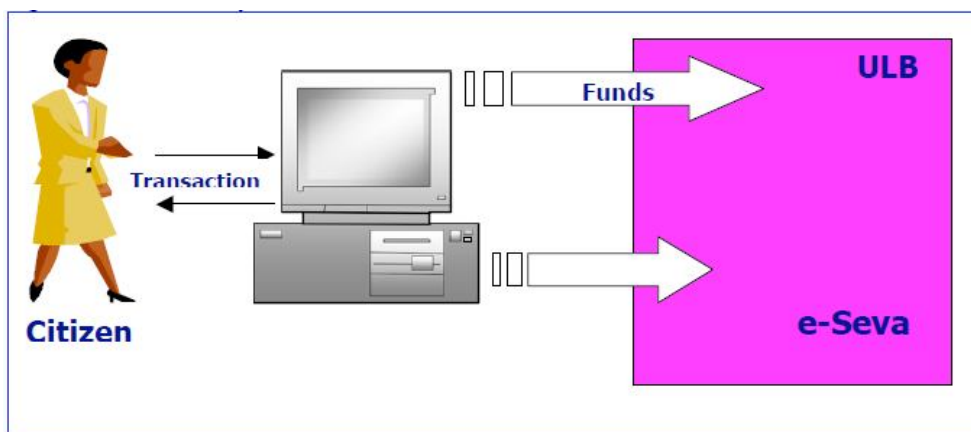
□ **'SUVIDHA':** This is an e-Governance project undertaken by the DMA, which aims at computerizing key municipal functions in 118 ULBs across the state. It covers 16 modules spread over two broad areas namely Municipal Administration and Municipal Management Information Systems. In about 5 ULBs, the initiative is under implementation.

g. Scaling

Full scale rollout in all ULBs: Full scale rollout has been planned in all ULBs in the State. Out of the 16 modules, 2 have

already been implemented across the state. While the above gives the highlight of the state-wide initiatives, the details with regard to these are discussed elsewhere in this section of the report.

Relationship between e-Seva and 'SUVIDHA'



A snapshot view of the e-Governance initiative in Andhra Pradesh ('SUVIDHA')

Present initiatives for e-governance

The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet has approved the implementation of the ₹2,400-crore e-Pragati project, a comprehensive e-governance project simplifying the process of delivery of government and citizen services. Developed in association with Wipro in eight months, this project provides a comprehensive framework for implementing e-governance, transforming the State into Digital AP and facilitating electronic delivery of services to citizens. According to the government, with e-Pragati, Andhra Pradesh becomes the first State to conceive and execute state-wide

enterprise architecture. The e-Pragati project covers 33 Secretariat departments and over 300 government agencies in the State. It seeks to provide 745 services in the government to customer (G2C), government to business (G2B), government to enterprise (G2E) and government to government (G2G) areas. It consists of 72 projects grouped into 14 packages, with estimated outlay of ₹2,358 crore. These will be funded and implemented over a three-year period. Of this, the government will invest ₹1,528 crore and the rest will be through public-private participation (PPP).



Table: E-Governance initiative in Andhra Pradesh:

S.No	Parameter	Details of AP Initiatives
1	No. of Modules Planned	16
2	No of Modules Implemented	2
3	Platform/Programming Language(s)/Technology	J2EE (JSP, Servlets & EJB)
4	Software Architecture	3-tier
5	Deployment Architecture	Centralized at district level
6	Database	IBM DB2
7	Connectivity	APSWAN
8	Hardware Platform (Servers)	RISC, Xeon
9	Hardware Platform (Clients)	Pentium
10	Operating System (Servers)	Unix, Linux
11	Operating System (Clients)	Windows 2000 – Professional
12	Software Applications (Implemented)	Property Tax, Birth & Death
13	Build or Buy	Contracted out
14	Development Process	Rational Unified Process (RUP)
15	Backup Procedures	Backup to tape on a daily basis. Also, backup to state data centre daily
16	PPP Arrangements	Danlaw – Nagarjuna Infotech, CMC, e-Seva
17	Citizen Interfaces	e-Seva & Citizen Facilitation Centres, Website
18	Documentation	Good focus on documentation.
19	Use of Local Language	Not used.

Conclusions:

E-Governance enhances the relationships between G2G, G2C, G2B, C2G and B2G using ICT. Thus, E-Governance not only provides information about various activities of a Government but also involves citizens to participate in

government's decision making process. During the last few years, many initiatives have been taken by different state governments in India for using IT as a tool in the functioning of Government so as to provide better services to citizens. . E-Governance can be considered as a major resource that



could help attaining better synergies. There is no doubt that the effectiveness of e-governance vehicles depends upon the participation of citizens and the provision of information, both the aspects need to be treated in the best possible manners. Effective promotion schemes by the Indian government will also be a boosting factor to provide quality services to their citizens which means there is huge potential for the development of e-governance in various sectors .

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