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Strategies for E-Governance in India

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ABSTRACT: The main objective of National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) is to make all government departments accessible to all citizens over electronic media. This might be a complex process for establishing all government departments with latest hardware, software with necessary networking including sufficient training to employees. This paper deals with various strategies involved in providing e-governance to various government departments with detailed study

KEYWORDS: E-Government, e-Governance, Domain Framework, ICT

I. INTRODUCTION

E-Governance is commonly known as Electronic Governance, is an application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for delivering various government services in an effective and simple manner. According to Keohane and Nye (2000), "Governance implies the processes and institutions, both formal and informal, that guide and restrain the collective activities of a group. Government is the subset that acts with authority and creates formal obligations. Governance need not necessarily be conducted exclusively by governments. Private firms, associations of firms, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and associations of NGOs all engage in it, often in association with governmental bodies, to create governance; sometimes without governmental authority." E-Governance need not be limited to government organizations; it can be extended to private organizations for better services to citizens.

Through E-Governance all government services made available to common citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner². The terms "e-Government" and "e-Governance" are currently in widespread use. But, it is important for us to understand that there is a huge difference between two.

The first section starts with introduction to E-Government and E-Governance and also pointing out the differences between two. Next section focuses on E-Governance and explains various strategies involved in set up E-Governance in India. The final section concludes the paper with remarks and future scope.

II. RELATED WORK

Recently many researchers and government of India has shown interest in the area of e-governance and allotting sufficient funds to reach government services to common man properly. The major reason to develop such applications is to reduce corruption and to integrate different government organizations.

Shailendra C.Jain Palvia and Sushil S.Sharma briefly explained e-Governance and e-Government frameworks for public sectors and private sectors. They clearly pointed out the differences between e-Government and e-Governance with the taxonomy of applications in these sectors. They focused the status of e-Government around the world.

Vikas Kanungo, has focused citizen centric e-Governance in India and discussed about various strategies involved in it. He focuses mainly on the scenario of e-governance efforts in india and strategies / action plan for designing e-government projects for addressing immediate objectives with a vision for future in mind.

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Sameer Sachdeva, points out various gaps hindering implementation of e-Governance in India. He suggested a six point strategy for implementing e-Governance in India and thereby fulfilling the dream of better governance. He identifies the responsibilities for the executive, legislature and the citizenry and brings the needs for their training.

III. E-GOVERNMENT AND E-GOVERNANCE

E-Governance is a broader topic that deals with the whole spectrum of the relationship and networks within governments regarding the usage and application of ICT¹. e-Government is a narrower discipline dealing with the development of online government services to the citizen and businesses such as e-tax, e-transportation, e-procurement, e-participation etc.,. The “E” part of both e-government and e-governance stands for the electronic platform or infrastructure that enables and supports the networking of public policy development and deployment.

The E-governance in India is steadily reforming in computerizing various government departments with the help of previous experiences of e-governance procedures adopted by the governments. To proceed further the government approved a National e-Governance plan (NeGP) comprising of 27 Mission Mode projects and 8 components on May 18, 2006. The primary focus of e-Governance is to provide relations between customers (G2C), employees (G2E), government (G2G) and business (G2B). Government to customer (G2C) is to offer wide range of services to customers. The customer’s needs to be accessed through internet and should be able to access services. Hence, we should provide net facilities to rural as well as urban people for access and they should be properly educated to access these facilities. Government to Employees (G2E) is offering various services for getting information about employees like Provident Fund (PF) details, Pension Details etc., Similarly Government to Government (G2G) and Government to Business (G2B) focuses on providing services to governments as well as business needs like e-Commerce.

The two major departments, Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) and National Information Centre (NIC) are continuously striving to cater the various demands from the Government and also from the public. Even the present government of india is emphasizing acceleration of e-Governance in all the sectors. Hence these two departments are playing a crucial role in taking e-Governance right down to the grass root level by ensuring timely implementation of various projects in ICT at national level and state level.

The latest E-government projects include collection, dissemination of election results in 2014, SMS based monitoring system for fair price shops in Tamil Nadu, Launching of Prime Ministers Web site for public grievances etc.³

IV. STRATEGIES INVOLVED IN SETUP E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

E-Governance mainly depends upon internet connectivity across different locations in India to implement. Without net connectivity the services cannot be extend to citizens. Hence connectivity plays a crucial role in extending the service. Other major aspect is to usage of service. A full switch to Government to Customer e-Governance will cost a large amount of money in development and implementation.⁴ In addition, Government agencies do not always engage citizens in the development of their e-Gov services or accept feedback. These services can be problematic to citizens who lack computing skills, language barriers and necessary mailing facilities etc.,⁵.

- Lack of technical infrastructure/framework across India

At larger extent we have been using computers for the purposes of word processing and for simpler tasks only. Due to lack of technical infrastructure the facilities are not extended to gross or root level in rural areas. Hence the government is focusing of extending net facilities to rural areas by providing sufficient funds in the budgets. In recent Budget, the government has focused for spending more amounts in extending technical facilities to rural areas. Western countries are able to use 4G technology, but we are still striving to access 2G facilities to rural areas.

- Lack of coordination between Govt. Department and Solution developers

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Designing of any application requires a very close interaction between the govt. department and the agency developing the solutions. At present the users in govt. departments do not contribute enough to design the solution architecture. Consequently the solution developed and implemented does not address the requirements of an e-governance project and hence does not get implemented.

- To build institutional capacity

Apart from building technical infrastructure, the Government needs to build its institutional capacity. This will include training of Government employees, appointment of experts. Along with the Government has also to create an Expert database for better utilisation of intellectual resources with it. Apart from this, the Government has to equip the departments with hi-technology and has also to setup special investigating agency.

- To build legal infrastructure

For better implementation of e-governance, the Government will need to frame laws which will fully incorporate the established as well as emerging technology. Changing technology has changed many pre-established notions; similarly the technology is growing and changing rapidly. It is important, that the Government makes laws which incorporate the current technology and has enough space to incorporate the changing future technology. These IT laws need to be flexible to adjust with the rapidly changing technology. Currently India has only the IT Act, 2000 which is mainly E-Commerce legislation. India has also modified many laws to include electronic technology; however it is not sufficient to cover e-governance completely.

- To make all information available online

The Government has to publish all the information online through websites. This can be facilitated through centralised storage of information, localisation of content and content management. The information of government is public information; therefore the citizens are entitled to know every piece of information of the Government, because the Government is of the People, by the People and for the People.

- To popularise E-governance

Literacy percentage in India is alarming. The whole world is moving towards e-governance, but India still lacks in the literacy department. The people need to be educated and made e-literate for e-governance to flourish. There are very few e-literate people in India is very low. The Government needs to campaign for e-governance, increase people's awareness towards e-governance. Government can only encourage people to go online if it can make people feel comfortable with e-governance. This can be done through educating the people about the advantages of e-governance over physical governance. This can also be done through raising awareness of the leaders who can motivate the people to go online.

- Centre-State Partnership

Indian setup is quasi-federal. Therefore Centre-State and inter-state cooperation is necessary for smooth functioning of the democratic process. This cooperation is also necessary for successful implementation of e-governance. This cooperation shall extend to Centre-state, inter-state and inter-department relationships. For the same the Government can setup a Central Hub like the current Government of India portal, for accessing the information of all the organs of the central government and also all the state government. The states can cooperate with the Centre to create a National Citizen Database.

- To set standards

Finally it is important to set various standards to bring e-governance to the quality and performance level of

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private corporate sector. The Government of India is currently working on standards management and has various drafts prepared for the same. These standards include following: Inter-operability standards, Security standards, Technical standards, Quality standards. Government websites in India currently have no uniform standard. Many Government of Maharashtra websites differ in standards within even two of its WebPages. There is no set standard as to quality of the information, document, the formats, etc. It is very important for the Government to set uniform national standards to be followed by all the Governments and agencies.

V. CONCLUSION

Government's main motive is to reduce corruption and benefiting citizens by providing all government services to root level. To achieve this, government should spend huge amount of funds and making citizens to be a part. The real challenge is how to develop successful e-Governance projects and proper care to reach it to citizens. But, it is not that much of easy by providing e-services to all government departments in view of literacy. This paper has focused on defining e-Governance and e-Government and differentiating these two and then focuses some of the strategies involved in developing a successful e-Governance project.

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