e-Governance in India

e-Governance (Electronic Governance) is associated with carrying out the functions and achieving the results of governance through the utilization of ICT (Information and Communications Technology). ICT facilitates efficient storing and retrieval of data, instantaneous transmission of information, processing information and data faster than the earlier manual systems, speeding up governmental processes, taking decisions expeditiously and judiciously, increasing transparency and enforcing accountability. It also helps in increasing the reach of government – both geographically and demographically.

2.   Benefits of e-Governance include:

  i.   Better access to information and quality services for citizens: ICT makes available timely and reliable information on various aspects of governance.

  ii.   Simplicity, efficiency and accountability in the government: Application of ICT to governance combined with detailed business process reengineering leads to simplification of complicated processes, weeding out of redundant processes, simplification in structures and changes in statutes and regulations. The end result is simplification of the functioning of government, enhanced decision making abilities and increased efficiency across government – all contributing to an overall environment of a more accountable government machinery. This, in turn, would result in enhanced productivity and efficiency in all sectors.

  iii.   Expanded reach of governance: Rapid growth of communications technology and its adoption in governance helps in bringing government machinery to the doorsteps of the citizens. Expansion of telephone network, rapid strides in mobile telephony, spread of internet and strengthening of other communications infrastructure facilitates delivery of a large number of services provided by the government.

3.   National eGovernance Plan (NeGP) was approved by Cabinet in 2006 with a vision "To make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and to ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services at affordable costs to realise the basic needs of the common man". The approach of NeGP was based on: (i) Centralised Planning - Decentralised Implementation, (ii)BPR: Pre-decided Service levels - Identified Services, and (iii) Services to Common Man at 'doorstep'. While some progress in eGovernance was been made through launch of 31 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and establishment of core ICT infrastructure, various infrastructure, technical and process barriers impacted up scaling of e-Governance.

4.   To address the challenges concerned, the Government envisaged e-Kranti i.e. "NeGP 2.0" based on the following objectives:

i.   To redefine NeGP with transformational and impact making e-Governance initiatives
ii. To enhance the portfolio of citizen centric services
iii. To ensure optimum usage of core infrastructure
iv. To promote rapid replication and integration of eGov applications
v.   To leverage emerging technologies
vi. To make use of more agile implementation models

5.   Further the following principles were in-grained in e-Kranti:
i.   Transformation and not Translation
ii.   Integrated Services and not Individual Services
iii. GPR to be mandatory in every MMP
iv.   Infrastructure on Demand
v.   Cloud by Default
vi.   Mobile First
vii. Fast Tracking Approvals
viii. Mandating Standards and Protocols

6.   The vision of e-Kranti, approved in March-2015, is "Transforming e-Governance for Transforming Governance". The Mission of e-Kranti is to ensure a Government wide transformation by delivering all Government services electronically to citizens through integrated and interoperable systems via multiple modes, while ensuring efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs. Subsequently, 13 new MMPs were added into e-Kranti portfolio in 2014.

7.   The ambitious Digital India programme launched in July, 2015 is centered on three key areas, namely Infrastructure as Utility to Every Citizen, Governance and Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens. The 'Digital India' programme is envisaged to be coordinated by DeitY and implemented by the entire Government.

8.   The nine components of Digital India are namely Broadband Highways, Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity, Public Internet Access Programme, e-Governance: Reforming Government through Technology, e-Kranti - Electronic Delivery of Services, Information for All, Electronics Manufacturing, IT for Jobs and Early Harvest Programmes. Each of these components is a complex programme in itself and cut across multiple Government Ministries and Departments.

9.   Some of the key initiatives taken under Digital India include:
i.   Common Services Centres (CSC) 2.0: More than 2.06 lakh CSCs are operational. CSCs given license by RBI under Bharat Bill Payment System in June, 2016.

ii. e-Districts: Launched in 621 Districts and providing more than 900 e-Services.

iii. State Wide Area Network (SWAN): Operational in 34 States / UTs.

iv. Electronic Transaction Aggregation & Analysis Layer (e-TAAL): Integrated with 3051 eServices. More than 62.67 Cr eTransactions delivered per month.

v. BharatNet (NOFN): Optical fibre reached in more than 50,700 Gram Panchayats.

vi. Digital Literacy: 94 lakh people enrolled, out of which 68 lakh trained.

vii. Public Hotspots: 2504 wi-fi hotspots commissioned at 1227 locations.

viii. Digital Locker: More than 20 lakh users have uploaded more than 23 lakh documents.