

# E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA: CONCEPT, INITIATIVES AND ISSUES

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## **Introduction;**

The “e” in e-Governance stands for ‘electronic’. Thus, e-Governance is basically associated with carrying out the functions and achieving the results of governance through the utilization of ICT (Information and Communications Technology). However, this would require the government to change itself – its processes, its outlook, laws, rules and regulations and also its way of interacting with the citizens. It would also require capacity building within the government and creation of general awareness about e-Governance among the citizens

## **ICT**

In India, the main thrust for e-Governance was provided by the launching of NICNET in 1987 – the national satellite-based computer network. This was followed by the launch of the District Information System of the National Informatics Centre (DISNIC) programme to computerize all district offices in the country for which free hardware and software was offered to the State Governments. NICNET was extended via the State capitals to all district headquarters by 1990. In the ensuing years, with ongoing computerization, tele-connectivity and internet connectivity established a large number of e-Governance initiatives, both at the Union and State levels. provides 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.

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.**

## **Types of Government Interaction in e-governance.**

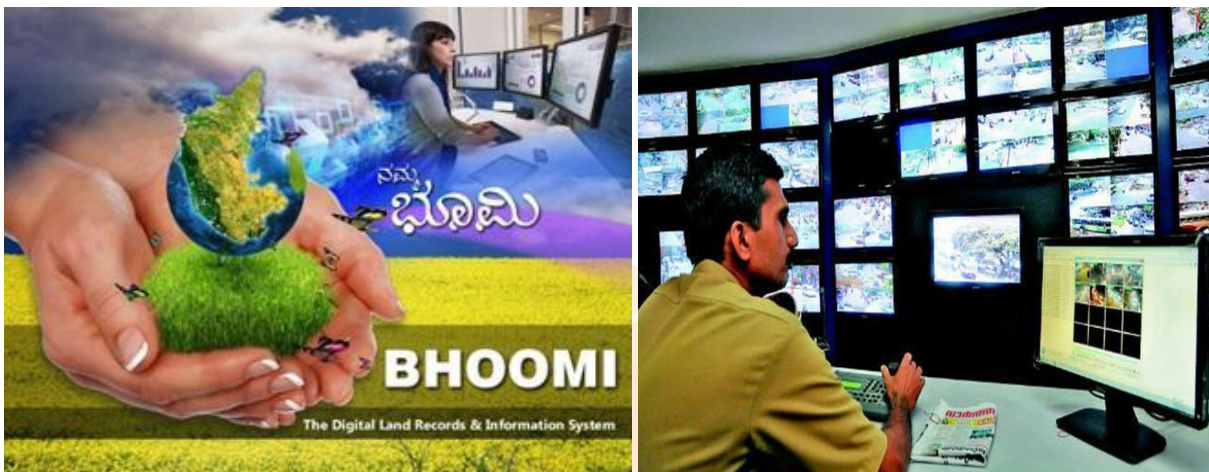
- ✓ **G2G: Government to Government**
- ✓ **G2C: Government to Citizen**
- ✓ **G2B: Government to Business**
- ✓ **G2E: Government to Employee**

## Government to Citizen (G2C) Initiatives:

**Computerization of Land Records:** In collaboration with NIC. Ensuring that landowners get computerized copies of ownership, crop and tenancy and updated copies of Records of Rights (RoRs) on demand.

**Bhoomi Project:** Online delivery of Land Records. Self-sustainable e-Governance project for the computerized delivery of 20 million rural land records to 6.7 million farmers through 177 Government-owned kiosks in the State of Karnataka

**Gyandoot:** It is an Intranet-based Government to Citizen (G2C) service delivery initiative. It was initiated in the Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh in January 2000 with the twin objective of providing relevant information to the rural population and acting as an interface between the district administration and the people.



Central government initiatives as mission mode projects (MMP)

**e-office:** The Government of India has recognized the need to modernize the Central Government offices through the introduction of Information and Communications Technology. e-Office is aimed at increasing the usage of work flow and rule based file routing, quick search and retrieval of files and office orders, digital signatures for authentication, forms and reporting components.

**Immigration, Visa and Foreigner's Registration & Tracking (IVFRT):** India has emerged as a key tourist destination, besides being a major business and service hub. Immigration Check Post is the first point of contact that generates public and popular perception about the country, thus necessitating a state of the art system for prompt and user-friendly services.

**UID:** The unique identification project was conceived as an initiative that would provide identification for each resident across the country and would be used primarily as the basis for efficient delivery of welfare services. It would also act as a tool for effective monitoring of various programs and schemes of the government.

**Pensions:** The pensions MMP is primarily aimed at making the pension/ retirement related information, services and grievances handling mechanism accessible online to the needy pensioners, through a combination of interactive and non-interactive components, and thus, help bridge the gap between the pensioners and the government.

**Banking:** The Banking MMP is yet another step towards improving operational efficiency and reducing the delays and efforts involved in handling and settling transactions. The MMP which is being implemented by the banking industry aims at streamlining various e-services initiatives undertaken by individual banks.

Implementation is being done by the banks concerned, with the banking Department providing a broad framework and guidance.

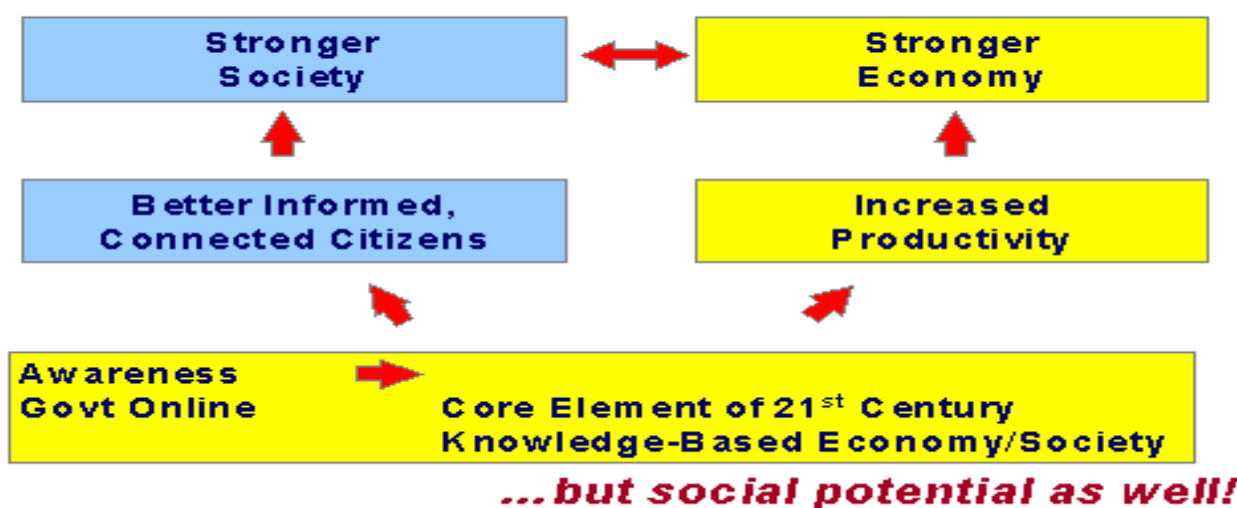
**Aadhar Enabled Payment system (AEPS)** : AEPS is a bank led model which allows online interoperable financial inclusion transaction through the Business correspondent of any bank using the Aadhaar authentication. This has helped in financial inclusion. The four Aadhaar enabled basic types of banking transactions are as follows:-

1. Balance Enquiry
2. Cash Withdrawal
3. Cash Deposit
4. Aadhaar to Aadhaar Funds Transfer
5. Digital India program

This programme has been envisaged by Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY). The vision of Digital India aims to transform the country into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. The programme will be implemented in phases from the current year till 2018. The Digital India is transformational in nature and would ensure that Government services are available to citizens electronically. It would also bring in public accountability through mandated delivery of government's services electronically, a Unique ID and e-Pramaan based on authentic and standard based interoperable and integrated government applications and data basis. The program aims at providing digital infrastructure as a utility to every citizen as well as high-speed internet as a core utility in all gram panchayats. The overall scope of this program is "to prepare India for a knowledge future", "to make technology central to enabling change" and "to become an umbrella program covering many departments"

**Advantages of e-governance:**

## E-governance Does Not Only Hold Economic Potential...



**Challenges In E-Governance:** There are large numbers of potential barriers in the implementation of e-Governance. Some hindrance in the path of implementation, like security, unequal access to the computer technology by the citizen, high initial cost for setting up the e government solutions and resistance to change. Challenges identified as trust, resistance to change, digital divide, cost and privacy and security concerns.

**Digital Divide:**

The digital divide refers to the separation that exists between individuals, communities, and businesses that have access to information technology and those that do not have such access. Social, economic, infrastructural and ethno-linguistic indicators provide explanations for the presence of the digital divide. Economic poverty is closely related to limited information technology resources.

**Conclusion:**

We have seen how the concept of e-governance and m-governance has evolved in Indian scenario and how much it is required for transparency and accountability on the part of government and at the same time it is also a toll to increase the participation of people in policy making by empowering them with the right information at right time. The penetration of internet, telecommunication services in India has increased in the last decade and this gives a ray of hope to the citizens of India to fight with the long persisting problems of poverty, corruption, regional disparity and unemployment. But at the same time, due to slow pace of project completion, red-tape and resistance from the side of government employees and citizens too has not given the desired result.

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