

Digital India: A New Initiative

Md. Moazzam Sulaiman

Aligarh Muslim University Centre Murshidabad
Jangipur Barrage, Murshidabad, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

The present government has a strong commitment towards implementing the Digital India program in order to shift the nation towards becoming a digitally inclusive society and an economy based on knowledge through various infrastructural reforms like high-speed internet, mobile banking, convenient access to Common Service Centres (CSC) cyber security etc. By launching this initiative, the government hopes to connect with citizens in the most remote regions of the country and involve them in India's developmental story. The vision for this initiative is to achieve comprehensive development in sectors like electronics, services, products, manufacturing and job opportunities for the entire country. It consists of various initiatives within a comprehensive program, all focused on enhancing India's knowledge-based economy and delivering efficient governance to citizens through unified government efforts. This initiative was founded to ensure that the innovation process is made participatory in a way that is essential for economic and sustainable development. Government services are required to be delivered electronically in order to ensure transparency and accountability to the public based on authentic, interoperable data and delivery of integrated government applications through Unique ID, ePramaan and eSign services were the highlights of the 'Digital India' program. The Digital India campaign includes a wide range of user-friendly government services.

Keywords: Digital, Initiative, Program, Government, Knowledge, Economy, Infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION



Source: www.onmanorama.com/news/india/2023/08/17/digital-india-expansion.html

Today, India is witnessing a movement called "The Digital India", which was launched on July 1, 2015 as a leading program of the Indian government. A few years ago, internet access and digital connectivity were considered a luxury only for upper-class citizens. With digital connectivity, anyone living in rural areas can also access the latest educational, professional, social and healthcare related information. The window to the "New World" can only be opened by allowing for such facilities. The Indian government has successfully begun achieving the desired goals in this direction. The Digital India movement also incorporates components like the use of digital equipment for teaching, digitally empowered governance and social change through the digital revolution.

Several initiatives have been made to implement Information Technology (IT) to provide empowerment to individuals in various sectors such as health, education, labor and employment, commerce and more. The Indian government has started Digital India Week with the aim of imparting knowledge to individuals and empowering them via the Digital India Program. Different type of programs are being developed by Digital India, all aimed at getting India ready to transition into a knowledge-based economy and providing effective governance to citizens through collaborative efforts of the government. The Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) has envisioned and coordinated a Digital India program in partnership with different central ministries/departments and state governments. This initiative will ensure that government services and information are accessible at all times and locations through user-friendly and secure devices under the Digital India project, linking all services with e-power in preparation for a major program.

The Digital India program has expanded significantly and has had a profound effect on the lives of the Indian people and the future of the country. The main purpose of the campaign was to provide government programs and plans online for citizens to access directly, eliminating the need for intermediaries and thereby improving transparency and accountability in different sectors. With the campaign's slogan—"Power to Empower"—this campaign has brought attention to the advantages of e-governance and has provided Indians with a digital tool. The creation of a digital infrastructure for this campaign will help to increase digital awareness among all citizens.

The Indian government recently introduced Digital India to enhance the availability of government services in various regions of the country, especially in remote and rural areas. The campaign also seeks to increase the convenience

and user-friendliness of these services for the common man, or Aam Aadmi. The program is working to expand technology availability nationwide. The aim of the Digital India campaign is to transform the country into a society empowered by digital technologies. It ensures that the people of our nation can access government services electronically.

This program is designed to offer the essential facilities, focus and resources required for the nine pillars of development. It consists of Broadband Highways, widespread availability of Mobile Connectivity, Public Internet Access Program, e-Governance: Revolutionizing Government through Technology, e-Kranti - Electronic Delivery of Services, Information for All, Electronics Manufacturing, IT for Jobs and Early Harvest Programs. Each of these programs is intricate and falls under the jurisdiction of multiple ministries and departments.

VISION AREAS OF DIGITAL INDIA

The Digital India initiative focuses on three main vision areas.



Source: https://images.slideplayer.com/41/11146654/slides/slide_4.jpg

1. Digital Infrastructure to Every Citizen

A country that has good connections is crucial for a nation that is well served. When even the remotest villagers in India have access to broadband and high-speed internet, it will be possible to provide electronic government services, targeted social benefits and financial inclusion to all citizens of India. Ensuring fast internet access and enabling online service delivery are important goals of the Digital India Program. Establish a framework for digital identification,

promote financial access and guarantee convenient access to common service centers.

Public clouds should offer "digital lockers" for quick online access to documents for departments and government agencies and these should be accessible to everyone. The plan also aims to ensure that cyberspace is a safe and secure environment.

The key points of this vision are as follows:

- High-speed internet access is considered an essential service for providing services to the public.
- Every one citizen each individual has a distinct, enduring, online and verifiable digital identity from the time they are born until they pass away.
- Access to the digital and financial realms is made easier for citizens with the use of a mobile phone and a bank account.
- Accessing a Common Service Centre is easy.
- On a public cloud, individuals can share in a private setting.
- Cyberspace is an environment that is safe and protected.

2. Digital Services and Governance on Demand

Continuous attempts have been undertaken at different levels to enhance the provision of public services and streamline the method of accessing them. The advancement of electronic governance in India has advanced from simply computerizing government departments to focusing on citizen needs, improving services and being transparent.

The approval of the National eGovernance Plan (NeGP) in 2006 aimed to provide a comprehensive approach to e-governance efforts nationwide, incorporating them into a unified vision of the future of e-governance. The concept is being utilized to construct significant national infrastructure that reaches even the most remote communities while simultaneously implementing a massive digitization effort to provide reliable and convenient internet access.

The basic objective of this initiative is to ensure that all government services are easily accessible to the public in their local area via common service supply outlets while also ensuring the effectiveness, clarity and reliability of these services at a reasonable cost in order to meet the essential needs of the public.

Ensuring that governance and services are accessible to all citizens and stakeholders in the country requires the presence of the following key elements:

- Services that are smoothly connected between departments or regions.
- Instant access to services via online and mobile platforms.
- All rights of citizens should be transferable and accessible through the cloud.
- Services have been adapted into a digital format to simplify conducting business.
- Digital and paperless financial transactions.
- Utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in decision-making and for promoting development.

3. Digital Empowerment of Citizens

Right now, Indians are constantly communicating with each other through mobile and computer networks. The concept of Digital India aims to transform India into a digitally literate, digitally resourced and digitally empowered nation. The focus is on digital literacy, digital resources and digital platforms in collaboration with one another. The program also emphasizes the inability of digital resources and services in native languages to be accessed by users participating in the new governance system. Technology is the main factor driving India's economic expansion and it will boost growth in governance and service provision.

The major elements of this vision are as follows:

- Widespread digital literacy.
- Every digital resource is accessible to everyone universally.
- All government document/certificate will be stored in the cloud for easy access.
- Presence of digital resources and services in various Indian languages.
- Cooperative online platform for inclusive governance.
- Transferability of all rights for individuals via the cloud.

Pillars of Digital India Scheme to Realize its Objectives



Source: https://iesl.lk/SLEN/59/Realizing_a_Digital_Dream.php

Digital India is an encompassing program that covers several ministries and departments under the Government of India. Thus, the program's areas of emphasis range across many parallel domains. The authorities have identified nine specific pillars to streamline the program's functioning.

These pillars are as follows:

1. Broadband Highways

Broadband for All (Urban), Broadband for All (Rural) and National Information Infrastructure (NII) are the three components included in the initiative.

Broadband for All Rural

Under this plan, until December 2016, the target was to connect 2.5 million panchayats with national optical fiber networks in the country. The Department of Telecom is the main department involved in this project.

Broadband for All Urban

Setting up virtual network operators to provide service delivery and communication infrastructure is necessary for new urban development.

National Information Infrastructure (NII)

National Information Infrastructure (NII) will provide a cloud platform and high-speed connectivity to all government departments up to the level of panchayat. Consequently, they will merge both the network and cloud infrastructure domestically. The components of its infrastructure include the State Wide Area Network (SWAN), the National Optical Fiber Network (NOFN), the Government User Network (GUN), the National Knowledge Network (NKN) and the MeghRaj Cloud. The purpose of NII is to unify all of them.

2. Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity

This pillar aims to boost network accessibility nationwide and bridge the connectivity gaps across India. The DoT is the nodal department for the execution of the plans under this pillar. The initial cost of the project was estimated to be around 16,000 crore rupees when it started in 2014. The government will cover 42,300 villages that are currently not included to provide universal mobile connectivity throughout the country. The plans under the pillar are being implemented in a phased manner. This pillar also focuses on the northeastern part of the country and aims at connecting the entire Northeast to the rest of the country, at least in terms of mobile communication (Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity, 2019). This work is being completed in a phased manner. Most people, both rural and urban, use the internet on their mobile phones alone,

as personal computers are relatively expensive and hard to get. This is exactly the area that this pillar is trying to address.

3. Public Internet Access Program

As a pillar under the Digital India initiative, the Public Internet Access Program creates an avenue for public access to online services. This pillar is served by two subcomponents:

Common Services Centres

The fundamental concept of this platform is to establish Common Service Centres (CSCs). (around 250,000) functioning at the gram panchayat level to provide government services. CSC is designed to serve government end-points and business transactions while providing multiple functions.

Post Offices as Multi-Service Centres

Overall, 1.5 lakh post offices are set to be upgraded to a multi-service center to allow for convenient completion of various government tasks.

4. e-Governance- Reforming Government through Technology

A key foundation of the Digital India campaign, e-Governance--Improving Government through Technology--aims to eliminate bureaucratic hurdles in government operations. One of the biggest handicaps in securing government services is the sheer length of forms that need to be filled up.

Simplifying the Application - Any application should be based on the user and require necessary and minimal information from the user.

Online Application - The application is online, which makes tracking possible.

Online Repositories- It is essential for academic degrees, identification papers, certificates, etc. to be stored in online repositories so that citizens do not have to make physical deposits.

Integration of Services and Platforms

Aadhar, payment gateways, the exchange of information via open application programming interfaces, mobile services, middleware etc. must be mandatory to facilitate integrated and inter-service for residents and trades.

Electronic Databases

All records and data should be in electronic format, not paper-based.

Workflow Automation inside Government

Automating the workflow in government departments and agencies is essential for optimizing government processes and providing transparency to citizens.

Public Grievance Redressal

Information technology should be utilized to automate, respond, and analyze data in order to recognize and address ongoing issues. These improvements would mainly focus on enhancing the process.

5. e-Kranti— Electronic Delivery of Services

This pillar aims to improve the method of government services through the usage of technology like online portals and mobile apps, reducing paperwork and simplifying procedures for accessing them. Start-ups have contributed to this initiative by developing digital platforms and mobile apps for the delivery of government services and by providing digital solutions for service delivery. The priority focus areas of the e-Kranti include digital service delivery as part of the Digital India initiative (e-Education), Health (e-Healthcare), Planning, Justice, Security and Cyber Security.

e-Education

- Every school will have access to broadband connectivity.
- WiFi is accessible in all 250,000 schools without any charges.
- Programme for Enhancing Digital Literacy.
- Online courses that are open to a large number of participants are known as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

e-Healthcare

- Internet-based medical consultation.
- Digitized medical records.
- Online-based provision of medications.
- National platform for sharing patient data across India.

Technology for Farmers

- Price information in real time,
- Ordering inputs online.
- Mobile banking allows for online access to cash, loans and relief payments.

Financial Inclusion

- Banking on mobile devices.
- Micro-ATM initiative.
- Common Service Centres (CSCs)/Post Offices.

Planning

- Using Geographic Information Systems(GIS) for decision making.
- Countrywide GIS Mission Project.

Justice

- E-Courts, e-Police, e-Jails and e-Prosecution refer to electronic systems for courts, police, jails and prosecution.

Security

- Mobile based emergency services.

Cyber Security

- Centre for Coordinating National Cyber Security.

6. Information for All

The mission of "Information for all" within the framework of Digital India's nine pillars aims to eliminate the divide between government services and Indian citizens by reducing communication barriers. It has become a reality for citizens to meet all their needs in one place with minimal effort by simply using a few clicks or taps on their phones.

- The Indian Government utilizes a range of online platforms to provide information to citizens about their services and initiatives. MyGov.in has been launched as a platform for exchanging ideas/suggestions with the government. It will enable citizens to communicate with the government in both directions.
- The Government utilizes email, telegram and text messages to share information on special events and programs.
- **Online hosting of documents and information:** In today's interconnected world wide web, it is crucial to ensure universal access to the abundance of information available. Offering online storage for documents and files enables individuals to conveniently retrieve information and simplify their quest for the truth.

7. Electronics Manufacturing

This pillar aims to encourage the production of electronic goods within the nation and prevent any imports until 2020. This pillar also focuses on boosting domestic electronics production and reaching zero net imports.

- One of the challenging initiatives in India involves electronics manufacturing and achieving zero imports of digital goods as part of the nine key pillars. Completing a series of tasks is necessary for the success of the plan, including offering incentives, implementing taxes, removing cost disadvantages and promoting economies of scale to support local manufacturers.

- Coordinating initiatives to enhance skills in fields like PhDs, consumer electronics, smart electric meters, smart cards, medical electronics, incubators etc.
- Current programs and structures are being enhanced in order to accomplish these objectives.

8. IT for Jobs

This pillar talks about providing skill development to young people so that they can take advantage of opportunities in the IT field. Subject to the fact that IT/ITES is one of the fastest-growing job sectors, this pillar is particularly important in enhancing the employability of Indian job seekers. The DeitY is the nodal department for this pillar. This plan seeks to make youths from villages and smaller towns employable. It also seeks to cover the northeastern part of the country. In the North East BPO Promotion Scheme (NEBPS), there is an effort to set up Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) operations across smaller towns in the Northeast. Under the scheme, financial and other incentives will be provided to companies setting up their BPO centres. Another priority area of the pillar is to train the rural workforce in telecom services and other services related to the telecom sector. It offers e-services around the clock (24/7) in every sector and creates additional employment opportunities.

9. Early Harvest Programs

This pillar of the Digital India program is a combination of multiple programs that would convert the country into a digitally empowered nation. The government is preparing to implement a biometric attendance system enabled by Aadhaar in all central government offices located in Delhi. An online app will allow attendance to be recorded and viewed by all concerned stakeholders. Early harvest programs include an IT platform for messaging, Government greetings switching to e-greetings, biometric attendance and much more. Wi-Fi throughout the country is available to everyone on university campuses, as well as secure government emails, public Wi-Fi hotspots, e-books for school books, weather information via SMS, disaster alerts and the National Portal for Lost and Found Children.

Initiatives under the Digital India Program:

The Digital India Initiative consists of three primary categories: Infrastructure, Services and Empowerment.

Infrastructure		
Sl. No.	Initiatives	Website
01	Aadhaar	www.uidai.gov.in
02	Bharat Broadband Network (BBNL)	www.bbnl.nic.in
03	Centre for Excellence – Internet of Things (COE-IT)	www.coe-iot.in
04	Computer Emergency Response Team- India (CERT-IN)	www.cert-in.org.in
05	Common Service Centres (CSCs)	www.csc.gov.in
06	Cyber Swachhta Kendra	www.cyberswachhtakendra.gov.in
07	Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY)	www.ddugjy.in
08	DigiLocker	www.digisevak.gov.in
09	DigiSevak- Volunteer Management System (VMS)	www.digisevak.gov.in
10	Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (DISHA)	www.ndlm.in
11	Digitize India Platform (DIP)	www digitizeindia.gov.in
12	Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)	www.dbtbharat.gov.in
13	E-Basta	www.ebasta.in
14	Electronic Development Fund (EDF)	www.edfindia-canbankventure.com
15	E-Signature (eSign)	www.cca.gov.in
16	Earth System Science Organization (ESSO)- Indian National Center For Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)	www.incois.gov.in
17	E-Trade	http://etrade.gov.in
18	Garv Grameen Vidyutikaran Mobile App	www.garv.ddugjy.in
19	Government E-Marketplace (GeM)	www.gem.gov.in
20	Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY)	www.hridayindia.in
21	Integrated Health Information System (IHIP)	www.nhp.gov.in
22	Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)	www.irctc.co.in
23	Jeevan Pramaan	www.jeevanpramaan.gov.in
24	Meghraj	https://cloud.gov.in
25	Mobile Seva App Store	www.apps.mgov.gov.in
26	National Super Computing Mission (NSM)	https://nsmindia.in
27	Open Government Data (OGD)	www.data.gov.in
28	Rapid Assessment System (RAS)	http://ras.gov.in
29	Single Window Interface for Trade (SWIFT)	www.icegate.gov.in
30	State Wide Area Network	http://meity.gov.in/content/state-widearea-network-swa

Services		
Sl. No.	Initiatives	Website
01	Accessible India Campaign and Mobile App	http://accessibleindia.gov.in
02	Agrimarket App	www.mkisan.gov.in
03	Beti Bachao Beti Padhao	www.wcd.nic.in
04	Bharat Interface For Money (BHIM)	www.bhimupi.org.in
05	Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) [www.ncrb.gov.in]-	http://www.ncrb.gov.in/BureauDivisions/CCTNS/cctns.htm
06	Crop Insurance Mobile App	www.mkisan.gov.in
07	Digital All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)	https://ehospital.nic.in
08	E-Granthalaya	http://egranthalaya.nic.in
09	E-Panchayat	www.epanchayat.in
10	Electronic Business (e-Biz)	https://www.ebiz.gov.in
11	ECI EVM Tracking	https://apps.mgov.gov.in
12	E-District	https://edistrict.gov.in
13	E-Greetings	https://egreetings.gov.in
14	E-Hospital	https://ehospital.nic.in
15	E-National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)	www.enam.gov.in
16	E-Office	www.eoffice.gov.in
17	E-Pathshala	http://epathshala.nic.in/
18	Employees Provident Funds Organisation (EPFO) Web Portal & Mobile App	www.epfindia.gov.in
19	E-Prison	http://eprisons.nic.in
20	E-Procurement Portal (CPP)	www.eprocure.gov.in
21	E-Sampark	www.sampark.gov.in
22	Electronic Transaction Aggregation and Analysis Layer (E-TAAL)	www.etaal.gov.in
23	E-VISA	www.indianvisaonline.gov.in
24	Farmer Portal	http://farmer.gov.in
25	Fertiliser Monitoring System (FMS)	http://urvarak.co.in
26	Geographic Information System (GIS)	www.ncog.gov.in
27	Geological Survey of India (GSI)	https://www.gsi.gov.in/
28	Goods and Service Tax Network (GSTN)	www.gstn.org
29	ICDS Systems Strengthening and Nutrition Improvement Project (ISSNIP)	www.wcd.nic.in
30	Khoya Paya	http://khoyapaya.gov.in
31	Kisan Suvidha	www.kisaansuvidha.com
32	Knowledge Management System (KMS)	https://kms.negd.in
33	Learning Management System (LMS)	www.lms.negd.in

34	MADAD APP	www.madad.gov.in
35	M-Asset	http://assetdirectory.gov.in
36	Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA 21)	www.mca.gov.in
37	M-Cessation	http://nhp.gov.in
38	M-Kavach	www.cdac.in
39	Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS)	http://nrhm-mcts.nic.in
40	M-Raktkosh	www.eraktkosh.in
41	National Career Service (NCS) Portal	https://www.ncs.gov.in
42	National Knowledge Network (NKN)	www.nkn.gov.in
43	National Scholarship Portal (NSP)	www.scholarships.gov.in
44	National Ujala Dashboard	http://ujala.gov.in
45	National Voters Service Portal (NVSP)	www.nvsp.in
46	Nikshay	http://nikshay.gov.in
47	Nirbhaya App	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.smartcloud.nirbhaya&hl=en
48	Online Labs (OLABs)	www.olabs.edu.in
49	Parivahan Portal	www.parivahan.gov.in
50	Passport Seva Project (PSP)	www.passportindia.gov.in
51	Project Management and Information System (PMIS)	www.pmis.negd.gov.in
52	Project Monitoring Website For E-Courts	http://ecourts.nic.in
53	Public Financial Management System (PFMS)	https://pfms.nic.in
54	Saransh	http://saransh.nic.in
55	Shaala Darpan	www.darpan.kvs.gov.in
56	Shaala Siddhi	http://shaalasiddhi.nuepa.org
57	Sms-Based Mid-Day Meal Monitoring Scheme	http://mdm.nic.in
58	Soil Health Card	www.soilhealth.dac.gov.in
59	Startup India Portal and Mobile App	www.startupindia.gov.in
60	Sugamaya Pustakalya	https://library.daisyindia.org
61	Swatch Bhaarat App	https://swachhbharat.mygov.in
62	SWAYAM	www.swayam.gov.in
63	UDAAN	http://nsdcudaan.com
64	Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance (UMANG)	www.umang.gov.in
65	Un-Reserved Ticket Through Mobile Application (UTS APP)	www.utsonmobile.indianrail.gov.in

Empowerment		
Sl. No.	Initiatives	Website
01	Aadhaar Enabled Payment System (AEPS)	www.npci.org.in
02	BPO Scheme	https://ibps.stpi.in
03	Digidhan Abhiyaan	www.digidhan.mygov.in
04	MyGov	www.mygov.in
05	National Mission on Education Using ICT	www.nmeict.ac.in
06	North East BPO Promotion Scheme (NEBPS)	www.meity.gov.in/nebps
07	Nrega-Soft	www.nrega.net
08	Open Forge	https://openforge.gov.in
09	Pahal (DBTL)	http://petroleum.nic.in/dbt/index.php
10	Paygov India	www.paygovindia.gov.in
11	Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (PMGDISHA)	www.pmgdisha.in
12	Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)	www.pmjdy.gov.in
13	Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)	www.pmkvyofficial.org
14	Smart Cities [www.smartcities.gov.in]-	https://smartcities.gov.in
15	Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)	www.dfpd.nic.in
16	Visvesvaraya PhD Scheme for Electronics and IT	http://phd.medialabasia.in

CONCLUSION

The Indian government is significantly involved in advancing the country's digital transformation through the implementation of capacity building and awareness programs to digitize the nation's economy. The government's priority is to create Digital India by linking every household, village, panchayat, university and government agency. It is safe to say that the Digital India initiative, which is the dream project of the Indian government has significantly transformed the country's technological landscape. Not only does it put more emphasis on digital empowerment but it also makes a decisive effort at streamlining governance in the country. From indigenous manufacturing to the supply of government services from electronic payments to educational transformation, the Digital India initiative encompasses a large array of convenient citizen services. Proper execution of the Digital India initiative will result in improved agricultural returns per capita, enhanced cost output ratio for

industrial products and higher service quality for all sectors of the economy. It promotes transparency across all systems and procedures, thus enhancing quality of life. The government alone cannot make this dream project successful; it needs the support of all citizens and other stakeholders of the nation. Every citizen must help this dream project succeed through participation.

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