Difficulties in Developing Citizen-Centric E-Governance in India

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Abstract: - **India is going through a stage, where colossal changes are occurring both in the corporate division and in addition in government space. The progressions are sweeping and the resident is profoundly affected. New skylines of financial development and flourishing are opening up and gigantic open doors are unfurling from which business world and additionally governments can profit. Alongside these open doors, new arrangements of difficulties have emerged. It is the ideal opportunity for the leaders in India to begin getting ready to address these difficulties.**

Keywords: **Corporate sector, economic growth, government**

1. INTRODUCTION

Worldwide movements towards expanded organization of IT by governments developed in the nineties, with the coming of the World Wide Web. The innovation and also e-administration activities (Heeks and Richard, 2006) have made considerable progress from that point forward. With the expansion in Internet and versatile associations, the subjects are figuring out how to misuse their new method of access in far reaching ways. They have begun expecting increasingly data and administrations online from governments and corporate associations to promote their municipal, expert and individual lives, hence making bounteous confirmation that the new "e-citizenship" is grabbing hold. The idea of e-administration has its inceptions in India amid the seventies with an attention on advancement of in-house government applications in the regions of resistance, financial checking, arranging and its sending to oversee information serious capacities identified with races, enumeration, charge organization and so forth. The endeavors of the National Informatics Center (NIC) to associate all the locale base camp amid the eighties was an exceptionally critical improvement. From the mid nineties, IT advancements were supplemented by ICT advances to expand its utilization for more extensive sectoral applications with approach accentuation on contacting country territories and taking in more noteworthy contributions from NGOs and private division also. There has been an expanding association of worldwide benefactor organizations under the system of e-administration for advancement to catalyze the improvement of e-administration laws and advances in creating nations. While the accentuation has been essentially on robotization and computerization, state governments have additionally tried to utilize ICT devices into availability, organizing, setting up frameworks for preparing data and conveying administrations. At a smaller scale level, this has run from IT robotization in singular divisions, electronic document dealing with and work process frameworks, access to privileges, open grievance frameworks, benefit conveyance for high volume routine exchanges, for example, installment of bills, impose contribution to meeting destitution easing objectives through the advancement of entrepreneurial models and arrangement of market data. The push has differed crosswise over activities, with some concentrating on empowering the citizenstate interface for different taxpayer supported organizations, and others concentrating on bettering occupations. Each State Government has stepped up with regards to frame an IT team to plot IT strategy record for the state and the national contracts have begun showing up on govt. sites. For governments, the more clear inspiration to move from manual procedures to IT-empowered procedures might be expanded effectiveness in organization and administration conveyance, yet this move can be imagined as a beneficial venture with potential for returns.

2. MAPPING E-GOVERNMENT

E-government (E-gov) is a function of four variables: governance (G), information and communication technology (ICT), business process re-engineering (BPR) and e-citizen (EC). It can be stated as an equation, which may be called the first e-government fundamental equation, thus:

$$E\text{-}gov = f\,(G,\ ICT,\ BPR,\ E\text{-}C) \ldots\ldots (1)$$

where E-gov = E-government, f = Function, G = Governance, ICT = Information and Communication Technology, BPR = Business Process Re-engineering, and E-C = Electronic Citizen. The four independent variables - G, ICT, BPR, E-C, require elaboration. There cannot be any e government (e-gov) without good governance, sound information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure support, a critical examination of existing administrative procedures followed by appropriate administrative reforms, here designated as business process re-engineering (BPR) and, finally, meeting the needs of e-citizen, a citizen who seeks public service delivery and interacts with state online, a citizen of the virtual state and a member of emerging e-society. The e-government function is not any free floating function in cyber space. It has a definite objective: to transform government. This objective is based on two basic premises: first, current government functioning, as exhibited by its public service delivery, is far from satisfactory. And, secondly, government can perform better, aided by the existing and emerging information and communication

technologies (ICTs). In this conceptualization, therefore, e-government is transformation, from giving rise to the second e-government fundamental equation, thus:

$$E\text{-gov} = T\text{-gov}…………………(2)$$

This conceptualization of e-government gives rise to four important corollaries, namely, first e government is an intermediary stage for transforming government. Thus e government is not an end in itself but a means for reaching an end. Secondly, e-government must aim at government transformation failing which its full potential will continue to remain unrealized. Thirdly, any e-government attempt must be based on administrative reforms, failing which the e-government attempt may not give desired results. And lastly, e-government should strive to reach the ultimate stage, still eluding the developing countries, when e-government becomes synonymous with government.

3. THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS OF E GOVERNMENT

The transformed government (t-gov) has two stages: 1. The process of transformation, and 2.The end result of transformation or the stage of transformed government (t-gov). In the second stage e-government becomes synonymous with government giving rise to the third egovernment fundamental equation, thus:

$$E\text{-gov}=Gov……………..…..(3)$$

where E-gov=E-government and Gov=Government. Equations (1), (2) and (3) taken together map e-government space and help us in developing a definition of e-government.

4. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING CITIZEN-CENTRIC GOVERNANCE

- The expectations of public from the Government are very high. Delivery of services has to be highly efficient to meet these expectations and the use of technology for delivery is inevitable. Traditional methods of delivery of services will no longer suffice. Investment decision for roping in technology have to be made on the basis of resultant efficiency of services. e-Governance can not happen until we are able to bring in paradigm shift in the attitude and mind-set of government functionaries. Shifting of focus from regimented processes to 'Citizen Centric Governance' involves a real transfer of power from the government officials to the common man. So it is important that the challenge of bringing about this change in the mind-set of the government officers is met head on.
- Lot of efforts have been made to bring in technology. Yet, the net result is hardly commensurate with the effort. Partly it is due to the old mind set of our old official system and this needs to be changed quickly.
- Technology is but one tool to usher in change. On its own, ICT can do little to improve the lot of the common man. However, with pro-active governance, ICT can become a very powerful agent of change. All that is needed is keen desire to re-work government processes and objectives to suit the requirements of the citizens. The common man now-a-days is fully ready to adapt to fast changing technologies and the excuses "citizen is not ready for change" is no longer available to governments which do not want to change. Radical change is needed in the way governments address the problems of the citizens.

- The first step towards 'Citizen Centric Governance' would be analysis of the requirements and understanding the need of the citizens. Similar to research activities taken by Corporate sectors to understand the needs of customers across different categories of age groups, gender, income etc, Government should undertake studies to understand citizen requirements. This will help in proper designing and positioning of 'services' thereby increasing usage of e-services by the citizens.

- The analysis of the requirement of the citizen should not be at variance with the expectation of the citizens. Citizen looks forward for a one stop solution from the government that can be accessed easily for getting a desired government service. Currently he has to run from pillar to post even for the simple activity of filing an application form and has to approach multiple government agencies for application processing. There is a need for 'Integrated Service Delivery' mechanisms cutting across boundaries between departments and organizations that can be accessed easily by the citizens. There is a need to develop a common vision and a common objective oriented action plan. This can provide a common implementation framework for e-Governance.

- The government should look at providing a 'single window' means for delivery of multiple citizen services. Probably, the best approach would be to encourage citizens to avail e-services from the citizen-portal. The Common Services Centers (CSC) scheme of the Government is a step in the right direction with increased access of ICT infrastructure to the citizens. We should be able to design a delivery mechanism which provides easy and affordable access to a host of most needed services at the citizen-portal. This will motivate the citizens to use such means and also build the common man's confidence in the delivery system for public services. It is important that the system adds value for the citizen in terms of saving time, avoiding delays and eliminating harassment. The system can thus pave the way for a good quality of life for all citizens. This will boost the productivity of the country as a whole.

- Service excellence has been a long held goal for the private sector and increasingly, in the government sector for many countries. With the introduction of online services in recent years by governments around the world, the provision of excellence in e-Governance services is becoming an equally sought after goal. The measurement of e-Governance quality is addressed here with particular reference to India, a country with a population of approximately one billion people, where a

high standard of e-Governance provision can be expected to have a positive impact on a very large number of people. Global best practices must be analyzed and adopted in this regard.

- It is important to create an enabling environment and atmosphere to conceptualize, design, develop, implement and adopt the best e-Governance solutions. Capacity building initiatives will be required for the necessary change in attitude as well as management of change, consequent to re-working of processes and systems. It will also be important for the governments to adopt scientific means for evaluation of such measures. Learnings are available globally for such evaluation. There are examples of Government Departments adopting a very business-like evaluation process for assessing the impact of e-Governance measures. United States has adopted an "American Customer Satisfaction Index", a uniform, national cross-industry measure of satisfaction for the quality of goods and services available in the United States both in the corporate and public sector. A number of Federal Government Agencies use this Index for evaluation of hundreds of services and programmes. Similarly, the Singapore Government uses a 'Citizen Satisfaction Index' to gauge the effectiveness of its policies and plans. The Governments in India need to work out similar systems for a very professional and business-like approach to the business of governing people.

- Successful e-governance initiatives can never be taken in haste. Particularly for the democratic nation of the billion people like India, Governance should enable seamless access to information and seamless flow of information across the state and central government in the federal setup. No country has so far implemented an e-governance system for one billion people. Some of the requirements for implementing successful e- governance across the nation are :

  ➢ _ E-Governance framework across the nation with enough bandwidth to service a population of one billion.

  ➢ _ Connectivity framework for making the services reach rural areas of the country or development of alternative means of services such as e-governance kiosks in regional languages.

  ➢ _ National Citizen database which is the primary unit of data for all governance vertical and horizontal applications across the state and central governments.

  ➢ _ E-governance and interoperability standards for the exchange of secure information with non-repudiation, across the state and central government departments seamlessly.

  ➢ _ A secure delivery framework by means of virtual private network connecting across the state and central government departments.

  ➢ _ Datacenters in centre and states to handle the departmental workflow automation, collaboration, interaction, exchange of information with authentication.

For success of an e-governance project and superior service delivery, it is imperative that the government agency focuses on whole citizen experience. Focusing on the citizen is essential for long term success. The govt. agency needs to integrate information from all points of citizen interaction. The overall architecture for e-Governance needs to ensure that the architecture components are extensible and scalable to adapt to the changing environments. The e-Governance (Misra, 2006) applications that are emerging as islands of successes have to be interoperable.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

India has a unique responsibility as a nation in transition from "developing" to "developed" economy. We are the role model for a number of countries and it is our responsibility as a nation to be the thought leaders for transforming governance to 'e-Governance' and further on to 'i-Governance'. The Indian Central, State and Local Governments will rise to the occasion and very soon our vision of effective 'Citizen Centric Governance' will be realized across the country.

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