



Digital India - A Program to Transform India into a Digitally Empowered Society and Knowledge Economy

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Abstract

Digital India is a campaign launched by the Government of India to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or by making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology. It was launched on 2nd July 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high-speed internet networks. The total population of India is 1.252 billion whereas no. of individuals connected to the internet is less than the 50% is the sole reason for a policy like digital India is launched. The vision of Digital India program is inclusive growth in areas of electronic services, products, manufacturing and job opportunities etc. and it is centered on three key areas – Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen, Governance & Services on Demand and Digital Empowerment of Citizens.

The 2016 Union budget of India announced with 11 technology initiatives including the use data analytics to nab tax evaders, creating a substantial opportunity for IT companies to build out the systems that will be required. The objective of this paper is to study the Initiative of



Digital India Programme and how it helps to transform India into a Digitally Empowered Society and Knowledge Economy.

Key words: Digital India, Technology, Internet Network, Empowerment of Citizens, Data Analytics and Rural Households.

Introduction:

Digital India is a Programme to prepare India for a knowledge future. The focus is on being transformative – to realize IT + IT = IT. The focus is on making technology central to enabling change. Digital Literacy mission will cover six crore rural households. It is also planned to connect 550 farmer markets in the country through the use of technology. This campaign will also act as a facilitator for Right to Information which is mandated by the constitution of India, as the same right includes facilities to be provided for the purpose of accessing information. This includes:

- The creation of digital infrastructure
- Delivery services digitally
- Digital literacy

Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of this study is to study the Initiative of Digital India Programme. The other objectives of the study are:

1. To find the aims of Digital India
2. To analyse the components of Digital India
3. To study the Projects under Digital India Programme



Vision of Digital India:

- Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen
- Governance & Services on Demand
- Digital Empowerment of Citizens

Aims of Digital India:

The 3 major targets of the programme are:

1. To create a digital infrastructure as a utility to every Indian citizen. This includes providing high-speed internet, mobile phone and bank account enabling participation in digital & financial space, shareable private space on a public cloud, and creating a safe and secure cyber space.
2. The programme aims to take digital literacy to the next level, and will focus on finding ways to encourage people to opt for cashless financial transactions.
3. The initiative also aims at seamless integration across departments/jurisdictions, and ensuring availability of services in real time from online and mobile platforms.

Apps for Digital India

Digital India Portal, MyGov Mobile App, Swachh Bharat Mission App and Aadhaar Mobile Update App.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital India” initiative has been an intriguing subject matter of numerous researches from various disciplines because of its great significance and influence on the economy as a whole and particularly the technological sector. Being a recent move, there have been various researches on different aspects of the initiative ranging from the economical to social and ethical dimensions. Some of these researches retrieved through internet searches have been reviewed here.



- Prof. Singh began with the basic overview of what Digital India entails and led a discussion of conceptual structure of the program and examined the impact of “Digital India” initiative on the technological sector of India. He concluded that this initiative has to be supplemented with amendments in labor laws of India to make it a successful campaign.
- Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella, Elon Musk researched about Digital India and its preparedness to create jobs opportunities in the information sector. He concluded that creating new jobs should be continued with shifting more workers into high productivity jobs in order to provide long term push to the technological sector in India.
- Microsoft CEO, Satya Nadella intends to become India’s partner in Digital India program. He said that his company will set up low cost broadband technology services to 5lakhs villages across the country.

Components of Digital India:

India has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. India is running toward the progress with a lightning speed. Technology plays the key role in the development of any country and to ensure the steady and fast growth of the nation the government has to take necessary steps in the field of technology.

The Digital India Campaign has three core components as follows:

1. **Digital Infrastructure Creation:** Creating a strong digital infrastructure is necessary to deploy the various digital services across the country, especially in rural areas. In rural regions of India, there is very less or almost no electronics networks and that’s why deploying a digital network across the country is necessary.
2. **Digital Service Delivery:** Delivering the government and other services digitally is another core component of Digital India campaign. Changing the way of delivering the services from physical to digital makes it easier. The government of India digitalized many of its services under Digital India Campaign such as online Aadhar Card, Pan card,



Voting card, 7/12, registration and much more. The way we perform our daily money transactions is also made digital. Making all the money transactions online will help to stop the corruption as it will ensure the transparency in the transactions. We have written a separate article on Demonetization of 500 and 1000 notes and corruption in India.

- 3. Digital Literacy:** Learning is not limited to textbooks now. Digital literacy provides many services for digital learning such as using electronic devices such as laptops, computers, tablets and smartphones for learning. Distance Education enables students from all around the country to learn whatever they want with online courses. Digital literacy helps any individual to learn skills from operating digital devices to the advanced learning courses which can be learned online.

9 Pillars of digital India:

These are the points that the Government of India hopes to achieve growth on multiple fronts with the Digital India Program. Specifically, the government aims to target nine 'Pillars of Digital India' that they identify as being:

1. Broadband Highways
2. Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity
3. Public Internet Access Programme
4. e-Governance – Reforming Government through Technology
5. eKranti – Electronic delivery of services
6. Information for All
7. Electronics Manufacturing
8. Digital or IT for Jobs
9. Early Harvest Programmes



These are the primary principles of DI which covers each and every sector of the country to be digitalized.

Projects under Digital India Initiative:

Here are some of the projects and products that have been launched, or are ready for deployment, as part of the Digital India initiative:

1. Digital locker system to minimise usage of physical documents and enable their e-sharing via registered repositories.
2. MyGov.in as an an online platform to engage citizens in governance through a "Discuss, Do and Disseminate" approach.
3. Swachh Bharat Mission Mobile app to achieve the goals set by this mission.
4. e-Sign framework to allow citizens to digitally sign documents online using Aadhaar.
5. e-Hospital system for important healthcare services such as online registration, fee payment, fixing doctors' appointments, online diagnostics and checking blood availability online.
6. National Scholarship Portal for beneficiaries from submission of application to verification, sanction and disbursal
7. Digitise India Platform for large-scale digitisation of records in the country to facilitate efficient delivery of services to the citizens.
8. Bharat Net programe as a high-speed digital highway to connect all 250,000 gram panchayats of country -- the world's largest rural broadband project using optical fibre.
9. BSNL's Next Generation Network to replace 30-year old telephone exchanges to manage all types of services like voice, data, multimedia and other types of communication services.
10. BSNL's large scale deployment of wi-fi hotspots throughout the country.



11. Broadband Highways' as one of the pillars of Digital India to address the connectivity issue while enabling and providing technologies to facilitate delivery of services to citizens.
12. Outsourcing Policy to create such centres in different north-eastern states and in smaller towns across the country.
13. National Centre for Flexible Electronics to promote research and innovation in the emerging area of flexible electronics.
14. To make Post Offices multi-service centres.
15. To connect all schools with broadband and free wifi.
16. Electronics Development Fund to promote innovation, research and product development to create a resource pool within the country as also a self-sustaining eco-system of venture funds.

Impact of Digital India by 2019:

1. Broadband in 2.5 lakh villages, universal phone connectivity
2. Net Zero Imports by 2020
3. 400,000 Public Internet Access Points
4. Wi-fi in 2.5 lakh schools, all universities; Public wi-fi hotspots for citizens
5. Digital Inclusion: 1.7 Cr trained for IT, Telecom and Electronics
6. Jobs Job creation: Direct 1.7 Cr. and Indirect at least 8.5 Cr.
7. e-Governance & eServices: Across government
8. India to be leader in IT use in services - health, education, banking
9. Digitally empowered citizens - public cloud, internet access.

Challenges:

- **Each Pillar/program has own challenges**
- **Human Resource Issues**



- NIC - not equipped for a fraction of this task (obsolesce) - needs revamping & restructuring
- DeitY – needs program managers – at least 4 more officers at senior levels
- Ministries – Need a Chief Information Officer / Chief Technology Officer (CIO/CTO)
 - Could begin with CIOs 10 major Ministries
 - Can be anyone – from within or outside government
 - To be patterned as AS & FAs – dual reporting
- **Financial Resource Issues**
 - Mostly structured around ongoing programs : Better focus, need some restructuring
 - Some others are process improvements or better utilisation of resources
 - A few new programs may be needed – particularly in Electronics manufacturing and Skill Development
- **Coordination Issues**
 - Program covers many other departments
 - Need commitment and effort
 - Leadership and support critical for success

Conclusion:

Digital India campaign will help India to reach the heights in the technology world and make the life of masses simpler. This program will make the working of India transparent and government will be more accountable to the public by making them aware of their rights and including them in the policy making process. At the same time including the motor vehicle documents digitally will reduce corruption by traffic policemen. This program is a complete package which will facilitate the country to be included in the First World.



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