

● E-GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY MEASURES IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO STATE OF UTTARAKHAND



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Abstract

E-governance has been a buzz word in India for last one decade or so. In tune with Central Government e-initiatives, the Uttarakhand State Government has shown its interest and intent in ICT enabled governance to make all Government services accessible to the common man. Along with several e-initiatives, from National e-Governance Plan to Digital India programme of Central Government, the Uttarakhand Government has also reiterated the same vision by the Information and Communication Technology Policy, 2006 which promise to provide services to common man of State of Uttarakhand. To give legal impetus to these e-initiatives, Information Technology Act has been enacted in the year 2000 as amended in 2008 which provides legal mechanism for e-governance. The Central Government has exercised its rule making power to facilitate the e-governance in India. Its several rules assist e-governance, especially Electronic Delivery of Services Rules, 2011 which specify the form and manner of electronic services delivery. Further, Uttarakhand Right to Services Act, 2011 was another step forward. However, there is a gap between technological advancement and the law and policy response. Thus, the present paper examines e-governance regulatory mechanism in the India as well as in State of Uttarakhand to explore how far e-governance has contributed to achieve the objectives of good governance through law and policy intent.

Key words

E-governance, Good Governance, Information Technology, Information and Communication Technology and Digital India Programme.

I. INTRODUCTION

'It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things.'¹-Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince (1532)

The information and communication technologies (ICTs) permeate almost every aspects of our life. The information technology coupled with rapid advances in

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¹Government of India, *Transforming Governance: A Decade of e-Governance and the Next Wave*, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions and Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, January 2016, at 12, available at: http://www.nasscom.in/download/summary_file/fid/124184

communication has proved to be a powerful tool for good governance initiatives. The term governance refers to the way government carries out its work. It is the way government uses its authority to provide services, make policies and implement them. Good governance embodies qualities such as accountability, responsiveness, transparency and efficiency. Moreover, e-governance is the application of information communication technology to government functioning in order to create 'Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent' (SMART) governance. Therefore, the objectives of e-governance are similar to the objectives of good governance. It is the application of information communication technology for delivering government services, exchange of information and communication transactions, integration of various stand-alone systems and services between and among various phases and interactions within the entire government framework. However, many of information communication technology experiments aiming at enhancing citizen participation and engagement have not fulfilled the potential offered by new technologies, and many of them have manifested a regression towards improved information provision models of e-governance. This is mainly due to the lack of institutional and legal mechanism, as well as the lack of political will to fully explore the potential offered by information communication technology.

II. E-GOVERNANCE: CONCEPT AND DEFINITIONS

The revolution in information and communication technology (ICT) provides basis to the core concept of E-governance. The concept of e-governance is the use of ICT with the aim of improving information and service delivery, encouraging citizen's participation in the decision-making process and making government more accountable, transparent and effective. Thus, e-governance embodies qualities like good governance such as accountability, responsiveness, transparency and efficiency. It is generally understood as a use of ICTs for some fields of service areas, such as e-health, e-social service, e-education, e-enabled public utility services, e-courts, etc. These electronic public services may include information, communication, interaction and transaction services which provide different branches of public service, such as health care, social welfare, and education.²

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defined e-governance as the performance via the electronic medium in order to facilitate an efficient, speedy and transparent process of disseminating information to the public, and other agencies, and for performing Government administration activities.³ Further, the Council of Europe has defined it as the use of electronic technologies in three areas of public action: relations between the public authorities and civil society; functioning of the public authorities at all stages of the democratic process (electronic democracy); the provision of public services (electronic public services).⁴ These definitions visualize the use of the electronic medium in the exercise of authority in the management of a

²Ari-Veikko Annttiroiko, 'Introductory Chapter A Brief Introduction to the Field of E-Government', in Ari-Veikko Annttiroiko (ed.), *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications*, Volume I, Information Science Reference, New York, 2008, pp. xliii- xliv.

³Available at: http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.php-RL_ID=4404&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁴Available at: <http://www.coe.int/T/E/Com/Files/Themes/e-voting/definition.asp>



country's affairs along with articulation of citizens' interests leading to greater transparency and efficiency.

The World Bank Report, *Digital Dividends Overview*, 2016 found that at global level, China has the largest number of internet users, followed by the United States, with India, Japan, and Brazil filling out the top five.⁵ By 2014, all 193 member States of the United Nations had national websites. For the most common core government administrative systems, 190 member States had automated financial management, 179 used such systems for customs processing, 159 for tax management, 148 of them had some form of digital identification, and 20 had multipurpose digital identification platforms.⁶ On average, 8 in 10 individuals in the developing world own a mobile phone, and the number is steadily rising. The number of internet users has more than tripled across the globe in a decade from 1 billion in 2005 to an estimated 3.2 billion at the end of 2015. This means that businesses, people, and governments are more connected than ever before.⁷ Thus, in a growing connected virtual world of knowledge with rise of Internet and web-based information systems, service delivery is now possible on anytime, anywhere basis. The use of internet, mobile phones, and the other communication devices spread, collect, store, analyze, and share information quickly.⁸ In India, the total number of Internet subscribers has reached to 331.66 million at the end of December, 2015. Out of 331.66 million, Wired Internet subscribers are 19.98 million and Wireless Internet subscribers are 311.69 million. The Internet subscriber base of 331.66 million at the end of December, 2015 is comprised of Broadband Internet subscriber base of 136.53 million and Narrowband Internet subscriber base of 195.13 million.⁹

III. E-GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY MEASURES IN INDIA

At policy level, first time the Central Government approved a comprehensive programme i.e. National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) on May 18, 2006 with the vision that make all government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man.¹⁰ Further, the Government of India has approved the 'Digital India' programme on July 02, 2015. The programme itself promises to transform India into a digitally empowered society by focusing on digital literacy, collaborative digital platforms and availability of digital resources or services in Indian languages. Besides this, the e-Courts project was

⁵World Development Report, *Digital Dividends Overview*, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Washington DC, 2016, at 5, available at: http://www-wds.worldbank.org/externaldefault/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2016/01/13/090224b08405b9fa/1_0/Rendered/PDF/World0develomp0l0dividends0overview.pdf

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Id.* at 2.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹Government of India, *The Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicators, October-December, 2015*, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, New Delhi, India, May 2016, at v, available at:

http://www.trai.gov.in/WriteReadData/PIRReport/Documents/QPIR_Oct_to_Dec-15.pdf

¹⁰Government of India, *National e-Governance Plan*, available at: <http://www.negp.gov.in/>

conceptualized on the basis of the 'National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology in Indian Judiciary' which was prepared by the e-Committee of Supreme Court of India in 2005.¹¹ Under NeGP, e-Courts Project as a Mission Mode Project was proposed to implement ICT in Indian judiciary in three phases over a period of five years.¹² Now, 'e-Courts' project is one of the plans as 'Technology for Justice' of e-Kranti (NeGP 2.0) under 'Digital India' programme.

The Central Government's Digital India Programme provides an opportunity to renew focus to the future of e-governance. One can say that path breaking IT development platform, Analytics, Cloud Computing coupled with key initiatives of the Government such as Unique ID, Jan Dhan Accounts and Digital Locker provide us an opportunity to break from the past to achieve good governance through e-governance which are truly citizen centric in letter and spirit. It is noteworthy that the 'Digital India' programme and especially fourth and fifth pillars i.e. 'e-Governance: Reforming Government through Technology' and 'e-Kranti- Electronic Delivery of Services' respectively are directly related with e-governance and critical for the success of e-governance, easy governance and good governance in the country. The Digital India programme has been devised to support all Central Ministries/Departments as well as all States/UTs in leveraging the emerging technologies, making use of newer business models and revamping of existing projects so as to deliver the services electronically to citizens in an efficient, transparent and affordable manner.

The system of governance is changing and the preferred policy of the government ensuring transparency and accountability has been made legally feasible with the statutory recognition of e-governance. Chapter III of the Information Technology Act, 2000 containing section 4 to 10 A provide the legal mechanism for e-governance. Section 6¹³ of Information Technology Act, 2000 provides the foundation of e-governance.¹⁴ Whereas section 6A of the Act, 2000 provides for appointment of Service Providers by appropriate Government for e-governance services. By virtue of this Section, the appropriate Government may authorize any service provider to set up, maintain and upgrade the computerised facilities and perform such other services as it may specify, by notification in the Official Gazette. The service provider may be an individual, private agency, private company, partnership firm, sole proprietor firm or any

¹¹Available at: <http://ecourts.gov.in/>

¹²e-Court Project, *Project Monitoring Website for E-Courts Mission Mode Project*, available at: <http://ecourts.gov.in/>

¹³Section 6 of Information Technology Act, 2000 provides as: (1) Where any law provides for (a) the filing of any form, application or any other document with any office, authority, body or agency owned or controlled by the appropriate Government in a particular manner; (b) the issue or grant of any license, permit, sanction or approval by whatever name called in a particular manner; (c) the receipt or payment of money in a particular manner, then, notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, such requirement shall be deemed to have been satisfied if such filing, issue, grant, receipt or payment, as the case may be, is effected by means of such electronic form as may be prescribed by the appropriate Government. (2) The appropriate Government may, for the purposes of sub-section (1), by rules, prescribe- (a) the manner and format in which such electronic records shall be filed, created or issued; (b) the manner or method of payment of any fee or charges for filing, creation or issue any electronic record under clause (a).

¹⁴K. Mani, *A Practical Approach to Cyber Laws*, Kamal Publishers, New Delhi, 2008, at 13.



such other body or agency. The appropriate Government may also authorize any service provider to collect, retain and appropriate service charges from the person availing such service.¹⁵ In this connection, the Central Government has power to make rules to provide the manner in which the authorised service provider may collect, retain and appropriate service charges under Section 6A (2) of the Act.¹⁶ Moreover, the Central Government framed Information Technology (Electronic Services Delivery) Rules, 2011 in the exercise of powers conferred by Section 87 (2) (ca) of the Act read with Section 6A (2) of the Information Technology Act, 2000. Further, the Information Technology Act, 2008 (Amendment Act) amended relevant provisions of the Indian Penal code, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1891 and the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 to facilitate e-governance. However, one can find that there is no legislation that makes electronic delivery mandatory for priority public services or any mandatory timeline for transforming public services. Key institutional aspects of the introduction of e-service delivery have not been set out in formal legislation such as the role, functions and responsibilities of different Government organizations, the mechanism for coordination across Government, the definition of an oversight mechanism, and the relevant financial arrangements.

One can find that if any law mandates that documents, records or information are required to be retained for any specific period, then, that requirement shall be deemed to have been satisfied if the same is retained in electronic form.¹⁷ It also makes audit of electronic documents mandatory wherever physical documents, records required audit.¹⁸ Publication of official gazette in electronic form is permitted by Section 8 of the Act, 2000. Therefore, where any law requires publication of rule, regulation, order, bylaw, notification or other matter in the gazette, publication thereof in electronic form is permitted. Likewise, Section 4(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 obligates public authorities in India to maintain all its records duly catalogued and indexed in a manner and form which facilitates the right to information and ensure that all records that are appropriate to be computerised are, within a reasonable time and subject to availability of resources, computerised and connected through a network all over the country on different systems so that access to such records is facilitated. Thus, one can say that e-governance and Right to Information are interrelated and two sides of the same coin.

With the initiation of national programmes like Unique Identification number and increased collection of citizen information by the government, concerns have emerged on their impact on the privacy of persons. In order to understand these concerns and identify interventions issues, Justice A.P.Shah, former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court,¹⁹ suggested a comprehensive legislation to safeguard privacy and also the office of a central privacy commissioner to develop and apply it. Even when suggesting the establishment of a privacy commissioner, who could impose penalties for violations, it

¹⁵Section 6A(2) of Information of Technology Act, 2000.

¹⁶*Id.* at Section 87(2)(ca).

¹⁷*Id.* at Section 7.

¹⁸*Id.* at Section 7A.

¹⁹Government of India, Report of the Group of Experts on Privacy (Chaired by Justice A P Shah, Former Chief Justice, Delhi High Court), 2012, at 3, available at: http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/genrep/rep_privacy.pdf

recognised the central role of existing judicial forums by retaining the jurisdiction of civil courts. While many may see privacy as the core issue in the Aadhaar programme, privacy itself transcends it. As our everyday lives become connected, comprehensive privacy legislation is an essential safeguard.²⁰

To give legal impetus to Unique Identification number, the Aadhaar Act, 2016 was passed to provide efficient, transparent, and targeted delivery of subsidies, benefits and services, the expenditure for which is incurred from the Consolidated Fund of India, to individuals residing in India through assigning of unique identity numbers to such individuals. It can be used for all benefit that will linked to consolidated fund of India. The UID Authority shall take special measures to issue Aadhaar number to women, children, senior citizens, persons with disability, unskilled and unorganised workers, nomadic tribes or to such other persons who do not have any permanent dwelling house and such other categories of individuals as may be specified by regulations.²¹

It is to be noted that the UIDAI must use its regulatory powers under Section 23 to set up a robust grievance redressal mechanism, including an ombudsman, to adequately bolster its accountability quotient. Doing so is necessary not just to protect privacy but also to underline the seriousness of the state in delivering services to vast sections of the population that are identity-less and excluded. Aadhaar represents a prototype of a new welfare State- smarter, responsive and oriented towards improving material lives while being respectful of rights. Its failure, either owing to civil society activism or wanton future subversion for surveillance purposes, might be the final straw for a State machinery on the brink of irredeemable discredit.²²

IV. E-GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY MEASURES IN STATE OF UTTARAKHAND

It may be noted that the Uttarakhand is selected as a case study for the present paper to explore how far e-governance has contributed to achieve the objectives of good governance. The State was carved out of the State of Uttar Pradesh on November 9, 2000. The Government of Uttarakhand promises to leverage benefits of information technology for the growth of the State. However, there is a geographical inequality in Uttarakhand, the hill region districts are less developed than plain region in terms of infrastructure i.e. electricity, roads, irrigation etc. It leads to economic disparity in the State which faces the challenge of promoting livelihoods to retain citizen through local employment and income generation and to enhance their quality of life.

The formation of the new State created high expectations related to development and better living standards of people of State of Uttarakhand. The Government of

²⁰Apar Gupta, The Basis Of Privacy, March 29, 2016, available at: <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/aadhaar-bill-the-basis-of-privacy/>

²¹Government Notifies Aadhaar Act, March 28 2016, available at: <http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/Government-Notifies-Aadhaar-Act/2016/03/28/article3350746.ece>

²²Arghya Sengupta, Aadhaar project: Last chance for a welfare state, April 8, 2016.



Uttarakhand had registered a society named 'Uttaranchal E-Governance Initiative Project Management Unit'.²³ This society functions as State's nodal agency named as Information Technology Development Agency (ITDA). The ITDA is an independent and autonomous body to guide and monitor various projects and provide expert inputs, monitor, evaluate and execute State's information technology initiatives and projects.

The Information and Communication Technology Policy was approved by the Cabinet on 27th June 2006. This policy document is an extended document of the New Industrial Policy 2003 of the Government of Uttarakhand. The vision and goal of the Uttarakhand Information & Communication Technology Policy, 2006 is to make the State of Uttarakhand fully digitalized i.e. a networked society where information flow and access across all sections of the society, enabled through effective information and communication technology infrastructure which would propel the economic growth of the State, leading to a very high quality of life of its citizens.²⁴ The vision aspires to reduce various divisions such as the digital divide, economic divide, literacy divide and the social divide. With knowledge playing the leveller, information and communication technology infusion could gradually remove these divides.

Coming to the existing regulatory framework of e-governance in State of Uttarakhand, the Uttarakhand ICT Policy, 2006 aspires vision to reduce various divisions such as the digital divide, economic divide, literacy divide and the social divide. With knowledge playing the leveller, information and communication technology infusion could gradually remove these divides. The dynamic nature of IT requires periodic revisiting of the on-going policies and strategies. In particular, a need has been felt to unite the State e-governance model with the 'Digital India' Programme - an initiative of the government of India with a vision 'to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy'. The ICT Policy, 2006 is an outdated policy to meet today's fast growing and changing circumstances in relation between society and technology. It is noteworthy that Uttarakhand has not yet amended its policy. This policy documents prescribe ineffective objectives and these objectives have been shown in the form of ideal or goal to be achieved. The objectives should be clear, precise and specific. Since usage of ICT is increasing, the government first and foremost duty is to provide quick and cheap mechanism to access the services promised by the government. In order to achieve this, the Government of Uttarakhand has to revisit its policy document to keep pace with the changing time.

It is important to note that in pursuance of the provisions of Clause (3) of Article 348 of the Constitution of India, the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly passed the 'Uttarakhand Right to Service Act, 2011'²⁵ (20 of 2011). The objective of this Act is to provide delivery of services to the people of the State of Uttarakhand within the given

²³Government of Uttarakhand, Home Page, Information Technology Development Agency (ITDA), available at <http://www.itda.uk.gov.in/>

²⁴Government of Uttarakhand, *Vision & Goals (Part II), Uttarakhand Information & Communication Technology Policy, 2006*, Information Technology Development Agency (ITDA), available at: itda.uk.gov.in/files/Acts-Rules/IT_Policy.pdf

²⁵As Passed by the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly and assented to by the Governor on October 04, 2011.

time limits.²⁶ The 'services' under the Act means any service notified under Section 3. Section 3 of Uttarakhand Right to Service Act, states that the State Government may by notification from time to time, notifies the services. Thus, if e-services is notified by the State Government, it will provide services to State's people in time bound manner.

The available opportunities gaps between 'haves' and 'haves not' will divide the societies of Uttarakhand and will create various types of social unrest in the nearest future. The first step in handling the widening digital gap is, understanding the breadth and depth of any cultural, racial, education, knowledge or literary divide that exists in any given jurisdiction. It is incumbent on governments to bridge these divides and ensure that there are no inequities between those who have the capacity to engage in online transactions with governments and those who do not have access or do not wish to participate in the online world. This is a big challenge in ensuring successful e-governance and the delivery of e-services.²⁷ It is to be noted that there are many citizens who currently cannot participate in the information society, and they will be left behind. Only by understanding and addressing the digital divide and the needs of the citizens will make local governments to realize the vision of true e-governance.²⁸ Due to hilly area, lack of infrastructure and low per capita income, mobile governance is a present day need of State of Uttarakhand. Mobile enabled development or leveraging the mobile revolution to enable development impact is part of a broader phenomenon. It takes electronic services and makes them available via mobile technologies using devices such as mobile phones. It has the potential to help make public information and governance services available 'anytime, anywhere' to citizens and officials. Thus, suited for the rural and especially hilly areas where Internet access rates are low, mobile phone usage is growing rapidly.

V. E-GOVERNANCE AND REGULATORY MEASURES: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Privacy and security have emerged as critical practical issues for e-governance advocates seeking to deliver services to citizens while complying with existing and emerging legislation and public expectations. A familiar range of straightforward legal questions may emerge regarding the substantive adequacy of legal norms intended to protect citizens' physical and informational privacy, often conceived as a dimension of their personal security.²⁹ A breach of privacy, for example, may occur when an individual's information is shared with unintended parties. In contrast, we use security to mean the steps that are taken to ensure that information is not shared. It may consist of a password, encryption, or firewalls, for example. A breach of security, for example,

²⁶Available at: http://www.cm.uk.gov.in/files/English_1.pdf

²⁷Tan Yigitcanlar, 'E-Government and the Digital Divide' in Ari-Veikko Anntiroiko (ed.), *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications*, Volume I, Information Science Reference, New York, 2008, at 1723.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹Keith Culver, 'E-Government as a New Frontier for Legal Theory', in Ari-Veikko Anntiroiko (ed.), *Electronic Government: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications*, Volume I, Information Science Reference, New York, 2008, at 3741.



would occur if a password is compromised and credit card information is stolen. As we conceptualize privacy and security. They may be visualized as overlapping circles, distinct, but affecting each other.³⁰

Privacy, as a dimension of personal security, is typically taken to refer to our interest in controlling what others know about us in order to secure freedom of thought and conduct against others' interference with exercise of those freedoms. The exercise of privacy involves withholding of personal information to some desired extent, often involving highly context-dependent choices regarding the personal interests satisfied by relinquishing privacy.³¹ The kind of public trace or persona created by selective disclosure of personal information has long been important in various ways. Consider, for example, many persons' interest not just in the fact of having a credit record, but in having an accurate credit record maintained and made consistently available across a network of users to enable him or her to secure credit as desired.³²

Consumer transactions on the Internet are growing rapidly. However, to reach its full potential, e-commerce must earn the confidence of consumers that reasonable mechanisms exist to ensure fair dealing, and, in the event of a consumer complaint, that accessible and effective methods of dispute resolution are available. Though the industry self regulation is an important component of consumer protection, but there is a need of comprehensive statutory protections at the Central and State levels. Finally, consumers will make the judgment as to which of these approaches is the most effective in protecting their rights in cyberspace.³³

One of the biggest challenges has been the approach for e-initiatives policy integration. Projects have been designed in a siloed manner for one department, not considering citizens needs or integration requirements with other departments. Second, only a handful of e-governance projects have prepared detailed action plans as part of their initial scoping. This compounds the problem of lack of continuity of leadership and dedicated team by adding another layer of uncertainty for successful implementation of the project.³⁴ Third, there is inadequate focus on capacity building and leadership development to manage e-governance projects. The problem of capacity within the government to design e-initiatives that deliver outcomes continues to be a challenge.³⁵ Fourth, in today's scenario it can be seen that many large IT companies are losing interest in participating in e-governance projects because even if PPP projects are designed with user charges to cover investments and returns, the payment model assumes the Government ownership- wherein government still collects money and then

³⁰Internet Law & Policy, Janine S. Hitler, J.D., Ronnie Cohen, J.D. Prentice Hall, Uppar Saddle river, New Jersey, 2002, at 76.

³¹*Supra note 29* at 3741.

³²*Ibid.*

³³*Supra note 30* at 221.

³⁴Government of India, *Transforming Governance: A Decade of e-Governance and the Next Wave*, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions and Department of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology, January 2016, at 24.

³⁵*Ibid.*

decides payment. This means projects are seeking private sector funding for government expenditure with an expectation that all risks will be borne by the private sector. This approach is demotivating and discourages the private sector to participate in e-governance projects. It may also be noted that in many e-governance projects designed and implemented, there has been a complete absence of incentive or disincentives for effective implementation. IT projects were low on the priority of policy makers.³⁶ Finally, in a rapidly changing world of technology, there is a need for continuous technology skills up gradation to manage large transformation projects. But with less talent infusion or professional training opportunities, the e-governance nodal agencies are not up-to-date in meeting the expectations of various stakeholders and government leadership.

VI. CONCLUSION

E-governance can become pill of all ills of governance. Technology is a boon for good governance and good governance can be achieved through e-governance. However, technology is not enough for e-governance. It must be democratized. Simultaneously, attitude of stakeholders to use technology for governance is of prime importance. With changed in attitude of people, technology based e-governance will be a great help in achieving the goal of good governance. One can say that e-governance is the vehicle of good governance. The strong political will, the policy and regulatory frameworks as well as dedicated institutions are necessary elements for successful e-governance initiatives strategies. A clear road map with a set of milestones should be outlined by Government of India with the ultimate objective of transforming the citizen-government interaction at all levels to the e-governance mode by 2020. This may be enshrined in a legal framework keeping in view the gigantic dimension of the task, the levels of required coordination between the Union and State Governments and the diverse field situations in which it would be implemented. To sum up in the words of A. P. J. Abdul Kalam:

"Technologies in computers and communications have led to the death of time and distance. Computers and networks work extremely fast and technologies can improve anything and everything. Challenges have inspired some very creative responses in our country. Let every forum of Information Technology professionals discuss and bring out a comprehensive set of recommendations continuously for the effective implementation of anytime-anywhere citizen-centric e-governance systems across State and Central governments in our country."