



## **Governance to Good Governance in India: Need for a Paradigm Shift**

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A broad consensus emerged in both rich and poor countries in 1990s, that the governments have become too costly and too ineffective. Consequently efforts were initiated for re-engineering and re-inventing them. New thinking began to focus on how could the governments be made to work more effectively. The emergence of powerful global trend of liberalization further necessitated changes in the functioning of governments. It was also acknowledged that the concept of government has become inadequate in the changed context on account of its narrow connotations and it needs to be replaced by the broader concept of governance that emphasized transparency, participation and accountability.

As a matter of fact, the governance encompasses institutional, structural and functional arrangements for the processes of decision-making, policy formulation, policy implementation and information flow. It envisages effectiveness of leadership and takes into account the nature of relationship between the ruler and the ruled.<sup>1</sup> Governance, is not only concerned with the integrity, efficiency and economy in government but also its effectiveness in terms of the needs for which it has been created.

Good governance also implies provision of services for the people. It is presumed to enable optimization of the security and welfare of citizens. Its measure is the capacity of government to improve, both tangibly and intangibly, the quality of life of people. If they remain hungry, democracy loses legitimacy. Democracy, accountability, honesty and commitment to serve are the sine quo-non for good governance. However, there is an inherent danger in measuring good it on the basis of process alone.<sup>2</sup>

Good governance also aims at providing a responsive administrative framework. It underlines that economic development must aim at long term goals.

<sup>1</sup>. Sevageldin, I, and Landell. Mills, P. Governance and the External Factor, Proceedings of the World Bank Annual Conference on Development Economic, World Bank, Washington, 1991, pp. 4. <sup>2</sup> Hage G. Geingob: Establishing and Maintain Good Governance in Post Conflict Situations; Asian Review of Public Administration, vol. XI, no. 1, Jan-June, 1991, pp. 19.



These, can be achieved only by ensuring transfer of power through democratic elections, presence of political opposition and accountability of the government through the provisions for Right to Information, separation of powers, effective internal and external audit, low levels of corruption and nepotism, official competency in terms of trained public servants, realistic policies and ensuring human rights such as freedom of religion and movement, impartial and accessible criminal justice system and the absence of arbitrary governmental power.<sup>3</sup>

### **Institution Building and Capability**

Good governance requires building of institutions for enhancing the state effectiveness. If poor systems persists, it becomes very difficult to dislodge them how so ever inefficient or unfair these may be as strong vested interests develop for maintaining the *status quo*. Good policies cannot by themselves improve results. The benefits could be magnified only through institutional capability. The programmes get implemented efficiently only if the citizens get assured about the action of the government. Therefore, it is imperative to put in place the institutional arrangement.

It goes without saying that it is the political leadership which sets the goals and devises the broad strategic directions. But sound institutional arrangements are needed for translating its vision through effective policy priorities. The rules and norms of the policy making process have to be so designed as curb the political pressures. Evidences across a range of countries amply demonstrate that only an effectively functioning bureaucracy can promote growth and reduce poverty. Only this can provide sound policy inputs and deliver critical public goods and services at least possible costs. But if badly implemented, it is bound to lead to poor quality, high costs, huge waste, a good deal of fraud and large scale corruption which in turn adversely affects the delivery of services. This problem can be traced back to the belief that government ought to be dominant, if not the sole, provider of services. But with the liberalization and globalization of the economy, this concept is undergoing a radical change. The state is supposed to play, the role of facilitator instead of that of a provider.

Good governance further implies that the goals must be set out as clearly as possible. The policies of the government should be laid down in details and the steps toward achieving them should be measured as clearly as possible from time to time.

<sup>3</sup>British Council; Development Priorities and good governance, British Council, London, 1993.



The government agencies ought to follow the most appropriate policies for them to achievement. Necessary modification also ought to be made for this purpose. Only if the goals are clear and performance is regularly monitored and measured, the stakeholders can be made to feel that they have a say in its implementation. The goals are more likely to be achieved only through the above steps.

### **Restructuring Public Services**

It has to be remembered that the public services have been under tremendous pressure after the changed role of the state. Hence, these need restructuring. Building of a more responsive state requires mechanisms that lead to increased openness. The provision of a large number of incentives too is needed to enhance the participation of people in public affairs. It will reduce the distance between government and the citizens. This requires a redefinition of the role and functions of the government. Its real focus ought to be to serve the public effectively by ensuring efficient and cost effective administration by enhancing the capacity and capability of the state for the crisis management.

The governments, therefore, need to demonstrate a clear vision for a future based on the widely shared values of the society. They have to enhance leadership qualities too. This entails political commitment, continuity and team building. These in turn need changed management of government/administration and setting up of new priorities. Tangible and realistic objectives and reforms in public services are also required for this purpose. Therefore, a holistic approach needs to be adopted for integrating the multiple human resources, financial aspects, technical dimensions and structural factors in the changed context changed.

### **New Initiatives in Public Service Reforms**

The Central and State governments have initiated new programmes in public reforms in India after the adoption and New Economic Policy in 1991. They have also deserved a strategy for achieving development goals. This has happened due to the realization of an urgent need for administrative reforms for increasing the capabilities of the administrative system for this purpose. It has also been recognised that the deficiencies in the administrative machinery remain a major obstacle in the effective implementation of development plans. And, hence there is dire due need for bringing about a transformation in the public services to make them more efficient, clean, accountable and citizen friendly.



It has also been realized the focus has to be on evolving a concrete Action Plan for gearing up the government machinery to accord responsive treatment to the people and to provide them a clean administration by addressing the issues of reform and morale in the civil services. The action plan stresses initiatives in the following areas: (i) Making administration accountable and citizen friendly; (ii) Ensuring more transparency through RTI Act and; (iii) Taking measures to motivate civil services.

Such reforms need effective intervention for introducing changes, infusing dynamism and motivation in the bureaucracy. These also require a redefining of authority & redesigning of functional relationships between the people and the bureaucracy. Further, it underscores the need for removing bottlenecks that impede the performance of the government. Such reforms are imperative for realizing the objectives of national development. In the given context, the civil services need structural, behavioral, institutional and attitudinal changes. It must be recognized that these proposed changes in the administrative apparatus are based on the assumption that there can always be a better alternative to the status quo. Therefore, the established administrative system needs to be transformed to achieve maximum efficiency, organizational effectiveness and responsiveness in the delivery of service to the people. All these efforts aim at accelerating the capability of the administrative system for the attainment of development goals.

Before proceeding further, it would be appropriate to clarify that it is not an end in itself. Reforms in the administration, are a continuous process. These as a matter of fact, have a permanent place in the study and practice of public administration. For the above reasons, administrative reforms have to be institutionalized. As a matter of fact, every public organization is expected to maintain a state of the art condition for promoting innovation. An important aspect in this context is that administrative reform will not be effective unless there is strong political and public support for it. Besides, the inability to make proper diagnosis remains the weakest point in the reform cycle. The follow up of reforms is also needed so that these do not remain a paper exercise. The reforms have been taking place presently in the Central Government at an accelerated pace primarily due Mr. Narendra Modi's political support. A new vision has been sold by him and the public perception is that it is also quite positive. Apart from political support, the processes of monitoring have helped in the percolation of benefits. Hence an attempt is being made to identify the areas where reforms are urgently needed for making the system not



only more accountable but also more responsive and citizen friendly. These are as follows:-

**(a) Transparency and Openness**

The citizen's perception of the state and its functionaries is primarily based on their role as service providers, law enforcers and regulators. Improvement in the quality of governance requires a number of initiatives. Perhaps, the most important among them is greater transparency in it. In other words, the decision making process should be made as open as possible. But the problem is that the system of governance inherited by us does not allow transparency. The rules, regulations and procedures tend to put unnecessary restrictions on the free access of information to public. However, it is more of an attitudinal problem. Everyone agrees with this formulation but one expects only the other person to change her/his attitude. Similar is the case with transparency. It is expected from the others. Besides, the deficit in the spirit of democracy and lack of openness in transaction are mainly responsible for the wide spread corruption in official dealings. That underscores the need for introducing greater transparency in the functioning of government departments and public bodies.

The government must also have the confidence in people to function effectively. This trust could be built up through institutions such as courts and the civil services. Efficient public services and properly designed public policies are also needed for this purpose. The major threat to it is from corruption. When this menace is left unchecked, public resources are diverted for the benefit those who have power. The policies designed to help the poor cannot be successful in such a situation. The conglomeration of power and discretion on the one hand and the lack of accountability & scrutiny on the other remain major obstacles in the path of good governance. Hence, there is an urgent need for redesigning the system for curtailing the potential of public officials to indulge in corrupt practices.

**(b) Access to Information and Redressal of Grievances**

The citizens must have adequate access to information on the conduct of government business. It is one of the ways to enable them to scrutinize the functioning of the government for checking the corruption, abuse and misuse of power. The RTI Act needs to be implemented more effectively at all levels for this purpose.

Besides, accessible and effective grievance redressal mechanism also needs to be put in place. It is necessary for ensuring accountability. The errors of decision makers can be



corrected, oversights highlighted, the abuses & misuses of powers can be rectified and the shortcomings could be avoided to a large extent through the adoption of the above mentioned steps. Public grievances primarily arise from the inaccessibility of the public servants. The failure to acknowledge applications, non enforcement of time limits in their disposal and insensitivity of public servants at various levels remain the major hurdles in this context. A number of grievance redressal cells have been created at various levels but these lack effectiveness. Paradoxically, these have added to the citizen's grievances by remaining unresponsive. „**The display at the hoarding 'May I help you' is a common feature at railway stations and bus stops. But the counters generally remain deserted or occupied by the vendors and beggars'**. It does more harm than good and further erode the faith of the common man in the administrative machinery. **(c) Citizen's Charter and Quality Delivery of Services**

An essential requirement for improving governance is that of a customer or a client focus service initiative. The Citizen's Charter is a much needed step in that direction time. It improves the access of people to public services and helps them in understanding as to what an organization does, how to contact it, what is expected by way of service and how to seek a remedy if something goes wrong. It does not in itself create legal rights. But it certainly by helps the user in claiming the existing rights and in the creation of new rights that are enforceable through non-legal means (like filing a complaint or making an appeal).

The key features of a Charter are: a statement of the standards of service that users can expect to receive; the arrangements for seeking a remedy if something goes wrong; and a brief information on the service provided. Charters help the staff of the departments by setting out clearly the services that their organization provides. But the main targets are the users. They should not be seen as management tools. The Charter should also clearly spell out the standards of services that users can expect to receive. Good standards are vital for an effective Charter, and these should be expressed in a way that is meaningful to the users. Above all, the standards set out should also be relevant, simple, measurable and monitorable. These should be published and reviewed from time to time. Such initiatives aim at improving the performance of service delivery as well as help in providing service that meets the needs of people. Commitments to provide a certain type, quantity and quality of services must be made and performance ought to be measured against it. Most of the



Central Government departments and undertaking have framed Citizen's Charters. Some of the State Governments too have taken initiatives in this regard but the results have so far not been very encouraging. Perhaps the prevailing work culture and environment have been obstacles in this **context**. The real issue, however, is as to how to bring about basic changes in the attitude of public servants towards redressal of public<sup>4</sup> grievances and have to pinpoint responsibility for action on the grievances of people.<sup>5</sup>

It would also be worthwhile if we could incorporate into our system the following nine principles of public service delivery being followed in the U.K.. 1. Set standards of service; 2. Be open and provide full information; 3. Consult and involve; 4. Encourage access and the promotion of choice; 5. Treat all fairly; 6. Put things right when they go wrong; 7. Use resources effectively; 8. Innovate and improve; 9. Work with other providers.

These measures may help in redressal of the grievances of the citizens relating to delivery of public services to some extent. But the problem is that the citizen is unaware or helpless in front of the service providers. She/he is unable to get a service even if paying for the same. However, with the rising expectations of the people, pressure is bound to be exerted on the system for this purpose. It is better if the manager of the system initiate reforms themselves.

Moreover, we have to develop the culture of quality. In fact the quality management is the logical result of a culture of commitment to identify and to meet customers' requirements within available resources of the organisation. The standards for each area of activity also need to be defined. Performance standards ought to be set for each member of staff and their performance merits regular assessment for comparing it with customer expectations and satisfaction. Though, the idea of quality management had originated in the private sector, it has become increasingly relevant to government as rising expectations of the public cannot be met by low standards of service. This requires change in work culture. The systems too need to be encouraged for achieving excellence at all the levels.

<sup>—4</sup>. The World Bank; Development and Human Rights, World Bank Washington, 1998. <sup>5</sup>. Mohan Kaul, Civil Services Reforms; Learning from Commonwealth experience, Public Administration and Development, vol. 16, no. 2, 1966.



The cultivation of work culture based on quality performance, openness and transparency is a very challenging task. It involves both employees and the public. The new civil service reforms should aim at developing the organizational culture for strengthening employee involvement, to ensure consistency in the change process and for providing rewards and by ensuring consultation with clients and users.<sup>6</sup>

Total Quality Management (TQM) approach must be adopted to mobilize all available resources in public sector agencies for meeting customers' requirements. As a matter of fact, the customer orientation in the delivery of services needs to be transmitted in the employees. The main measure for this is the client satisfaction and hence outcome needs to be measured against operation-plan targets, service standards, service review packages and cost per positive outcome. Evaluation of each initiative must be done through proper studies. Performances also need to be compared against departmental averages. Offices must be monitored on a monthly basis. Service standard measures should also be used to map the changes in client satisfaction.

#### **(d) Access to Justice**

These days, access to justice has emerged a major concern. Besides, the very concept of justice has become more malleable and flexible. Moreover, the perception that judicial system, as it exists today, is incapable of achieving justice has become widely accepted. The emergence of judicial activism is, however, a welcome relief. It has rekindled people's confidence in criminal justice system. But, it is only a short-term measure. Therefore, some long-term initiatives are required to streamline the judicial system. Hence, it has become necessary to have an effective and transparent agency like „Lokpal“ at the earliest. The judicial system also needs to be reshaped in such manner as becomes functional for delivering prompt and complete relief matters pending before it so that it does not lead to the stultification of the justice delivery system. The greatest obstruction between law and justice is the wall of separation between the laity. As a matter of fact, a complicated legal system continues to exist in the exotic procedural law, both civil and criminal. (Originating in Colonial Law Commission)<sup>7</sup>

The constitutional vision of social, economic and political justice needs to be actualized. But executive justice often tends to be arbitrary and weighted in favour of

<sup>6</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>. V.K. Krishan Iyer, *Judiciary a Reform Agenda Part I*, The Hindu, 15 August, 2002.





the haves and against the have notes. The legislative instruments at the central state levels likewise make laws favouring the heavy weights of the society. The judicial process too is operated by the classes who do not represent the proletarian masses. Long distance justice, over expensive methodology & unapproachable systemic inhibitions vis-à-vis the poor and the infrastructural deficiencies tend to make the law alien to the laity.<sup>8</sup> This merits urgent rectification of judicial system. The Supreme Court has set up a Five Member Committee headed by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court to ensure that, "the amendments are made effective for quicker dispensation of justice". It has also laid down the ground breaking rule of recording of evidence of witness through audio-visual technology. It has also indicated that tape-recorded evidence too could be treated as an admissible evidence in a court of law. At the top of it, trial court would have the power to decide, whether the entire evidence in a particular case be recorded by the court itself or by the Commissioner. The trial court would have also been given the discretion of allowing recording of part of evidence of witness by itself and the remaining by a Commissioner.

#### **(e) Rule of Law**

Good governance needs the Rule of law. It is this feature that distinguishes a progressive & modern society from a backward and medieval one. It is the Rule of Law that gives dignity to the weak and justice to the powerless. It is this which stands as a guard against the arbitrariness of absolute rule. The Rule of Law also protects individual freedoms and civil liberties. Without its protection, a democracy can quickly descend from the majority rule to the mob rule. Those who wield executive power have the responsibility to uphold the Rule of Law.<sup>9</sup>

An important question that needs to be understood in this context is: "What is the meaning of Rule of Law"? It implies<sup>10</sup>:

1. Law is sovereign over all authority; therefore it is government under the law; 2. Law must be clear and certain in its content and accessible and predictable for the subject;
3. Law must be general in its application;
4. There exists an independent judiciary charged with the interpretation and application of the law to which every aggrieved citizen must have a right to access;

<sup>8</sup>. Ibid. Part II, 21 August 2002.

<sup>9</sup>. I.K. Gujral; Making a difference in the New Millennium, International Sciences Journal, No. 162, Dec. 1999. <sup>10</sup>. James L. Gibson and Amanda Gouws; Support for the Rule of Law in the Emerging South African Democracy, International Social Science Journal, No. 152, July 1997, p. 174.



5. The law must have procedural and ethical context<sup>11</sup>

As Lipset notes, “Where power is arbitrary, personal and unpredictable, the citizen will not know how to behave, will fear that any action may produce an unforeseen risk”. Essentially, the rule of law means at least two things; one that the people be treated equally by the institutions administering the law; the courts, the police and the civil service; second, that they can predict with reasonable certainty the consequences of their actions, at least as far as the state is concerned.<sup>12</sup>

Alongside the Rule of Law, the notion of separation of powers is essential, despite its conceptual ambiguities, for this purpose. It entails functional differentiation in the procedures adopted for legislation, administration and justice so that the political order is subordinated to the legal order and vice versa. The separation of powers and judicial independence are the hallmarks of the states which combine respect for the freedom of individual with that of collective security.<sup>13</sup>

**(f) Exercise of Discretionary Powers**

The variety of tasks which now come within the purview of the modern administration necessarily result in the exercise of large scale discretionary powers by the public servants. A proper and healthy functioning of administration requires that these should be exercised in a reasonable manner and should not smack of arbitrariness. It is pertinent to mention here that a number of cases of abuse of discretionary powers have surfaced and these have also been subjected to judicial scrutiny in the recent past.

The series of scams that have come to surface in the recent past point out the malady that has been set within the system. The investigating agencies have also been affected by the political compulsions in the discharge of their responsibilities. So much so that even Judicial Commissions and Enquiry Commissions have turned out to be eye washes in many cases. The objective behind their constitution is to buy time and this objective is fulfilled because public memory is short. The patronage provided by the political class has become worrisome. The reaction to scams too remains inadequate. The politicians and the bureaucracy, who enjoy discretionary

<sup>11</sup>. Mohammed, I, Preventive Detention and the Rule of Law, South Africa Law Journal No. 106, year 1989, p. 546-52.

<sup>12</sup>. Lipset S.M.; The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited. Presidential Address. American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Miami Beach, Florida, 1993.

<sup>13</sup>. Ram Swamy Sudershan; Law and democracy in India, International Social Science Journal; 152, June 1997; p. 272.



powers, are able to loot and plunder the wealth of the nation. This is, indeed, a dangerous trend which is detrimental to the very survival of democracy.<sup>14</sup> The Supreme Court has addressed this issue in a recent judgment. It has suggested: "It would be a better idea to appoint a Lok Pal to look into corruption in public life." The Bench has further observed, "Once you appoint a Lok Pal, a major headache will be over as it would go into the issue rather than litigants rushing to the courts". But the irony is that the issue of Lok Pal has been hanging for too long. **(g) Managing Change**

Resistance to reform has always been there because status quo is liked by everybody. A society that wants to be open to new ideas, values and cultures, has necessarily to draw up a strategy for managing appropriate changes. Lack of recognition of the importance of involvement and participation of staff in generating commitment to change and for securing its implementation is probably the key factor in this context. Therefore, the strategy for organizational changes will have to rely upon their collaboration and participation. This will not only help in improving the service quality, efficiency and effectiveness but will also enable the staff in setting a clear direction in their work. It will also strengthen the concept of innovation at the local level and consequently increase operational performance and efficiency.

The basic pre-requests in the context is that there should be an inbuilt system of rewards based on performance for motivation. But it must be transparent. Another area, which needs to be recognized, is that of rewards for enhancing knowledge and skills. This will not only benefit the individuals but also the organization as a whole in the long run. The current practice of writing ACRs" has by now practically lost its relevance. Hence, it needs to be replaced by an innovative system for objective assessment.

In the given administrative scenario, the citizen is demanding services. But what she/he gets is inefficiency. She/he has to pay for the inefficiency of various services providing agencies. Therefore, it is necessary that reforms have to be performance oriented. Their impact should not only be visible but also be measurable. The primary concern should be to improve the behaviour of public functionaries, particularly of those at the cutting edge level of administration. There is, a dire need to institutionalize new patterns of behaviour in public administration

<sup>14</sup>. Inder Malhotra; The Licence to Loot, The Hindu, August 21, 2002, New Delhi.



and other public institutions. Changes in the behaviour in an organization must significantly influence three distinct areas: (i) efficiency of work, (ii) relations with public and (iii) sensitivity to environment. All the three are important for the effectiveness of the organization and for enhancing the administrators' capacity to anticipate events for taking timely action.

For this, a radical change in attitude is needed. Good management and good systems cannot transform organizations and change cultures on their own. Effective leadership is needed to promote and sustain cultural change. This is particularly crucial in the case of cross-cutting problems and issues which, by their nature, require different ways of working. If the civil service is to be enabled to adopt a more corporate cross-cutting approach, changes will have to be made in such a way as helps in developing leadership skills and managerial capabilities. More importantly, the civil servants will have to imbibe a culture conducive for a crosscutting working.

#### **(h) Forging Partnerships**

Another important requirement for civil service reforms in our country is the development of the culture of partnership with private service providers. It is the time for civil servants to come out of their organizational shells and to learn across organizational boundaries. They should remember that the external boundaries merely define an organization and help the people in knowing what job they are supposed to do. But the problem begins when these become barriers to the free flow of information, ideas and creative energy. Consequently, these become inefficient organizations. And this is what has happened to most of public organizations in India. It should not be forgotten by us that an organization cannot operate effectively if its internal boundaries become inflexible and sections within it start acting as if they are in competition with each other, or are under threat from other parts of the organization.<sup>15</sup> The answer lies not in removing the boundaries but in making sure that these remain flexible and permeable. This will require fundamental change in the mindset in the organization. It will have switch from a culture of traditional competitiveness to one of partnership. It means looking for shared agenda, and may also sometimes mean doing things that do not seem to be in the immediate interests of the organization, but which indirectly add value by promoty the spirit of

<sup>15</sup>. Cabinet Office, UK; Wiring it up, PIV Report, London, 2002.



partnership. This change in mindset is vital for the successful implementation of any reform process.

Public-Private-Partnership will mature and the overall environment of governance will certainly improve as a result of these. We cannot ignore the fact that presently it is the red tape rather than the limits over Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) that has been bothering multinational companies in India. Labour laws too need to be simplified. A credible regulatory authority also needs to be set up particularly in the sectors like bank, telecom and power. Further, there is a need for some sort of stability in the policy making framework. This should not change too frequently. Whatever is indicated in prevailing conditions should continue as a matter of course. Introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) is a positive step. This will specifically remove some of the cobwebs and help in clearing the path.

#### **(i) Local Governance and Decentralization**

We must also take cognizance of the fact that these days people around the world are demanding greater influence in the decisions of their government. Decentralization in itself is neither good nor bad. It is, as a matter of fact, a means to an end which is often imposed by political reality. Successful decentralization, undoubtedly, improves efficiency and responsiveness in the public sector. It helps in accommodating potentially explosive forces. Unsuccessful decentralization tends to threaten economic and political stability. It could also disrupt the delivery of public services. How decentralization affects access to and quality of public services depends on the way it is designed and implemented. What local governments can achieve depends on the resources and responsibility they are granted. Improving local services requires an effective local service administration. It must however, be remembered that even a well-meaning political team cannot overcome incompetent administration. This is the rationale behind decentralization.

Moreover, it is necessary to strengthen local government because it provides political education to the citizens. It is the training ground for the democracy. Local government also provides a better quality of participation because it is community based and has familiarity with society and its members. Moreover, it ensures meaningful participation. Local democracy will not flourish if local government is administratively incapacitated. Many case studies testify maladies such as excessive state control, inadequate financial resources, the poor quality of public officials, the use of local governments for party political clientelism and shortages of management skills even after the implementation of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup>



Constitution Amendment. Such incapacity is making a destructive effect on the standing of local governments in the mind of the public. It has also cast doubts about its ability to take up new roles. Therefore, efforts should be made to improve the effectiveness of local administration. Apart from the strengthening of local institutions, lot more can be achieved through people's participation.

### **(i) Use of Information Technology**

The Information Technology has been widely recognized as an enabling tool for the delivery of services in the public and the private sectors. It has the potential to change the institutions as well as the mechanisms of delivery of services. It is in this context that the issue of Electronic Governance (EG) needs to be analyzed. The objective of achieving EG, as a matter of fact, goes far beyond mere computerization of stand alone back office operations. It is a fundamental change in the operation of government. It also implies a new set of responsibility for the executive, legislature and the citizenry. The efforts should, therefore, aim at bringing about a social catharsis orchestrated in a comprehensive, concerted and planned fashion.

The process of public service reforms needs to achieve an appropriate match of the existing and the new information and communication technologies with appropriate managerial and labour skills and organizational and decision making structures. It should be remembered that the needs of the IT industry are changing rapidly. This has added to the complexity in adoption of new solutions that could take full advantage of new IT developments for improving efficiency and enhancing the level of services to the citizens e-Governance is the new buzzword.

Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka have already developed excellent IT infrastructures. The introduction of the new IT Act will give enhanced legitimacy to various procedures that are being followed in government. Hence, the government has set up an excellent institution of IT to cater to the growing demands of manpower in this area. In a large country like India, Information Technology, indeed, has a great potential which should be harnessed to bridge the gap between the government, various sectors and the citizens.

Its proper use can, transform India. It can benefit the poorest of the poor not just at the district level but also at the block and village levels and bring about transformation in rural society. Case studies amply demonstrate that a big improvement was brought in health care. The monitoring of patients scattered over a wide area was made possible through the



IT structure in Ajmer. The Grassroots level health worker-the rural nurse midwife were able to have a direct contact with 5000 persons spread over several villages with the help of hand held computers. This enabled them to monitor immunization, birth and emergencies. There is a wide scope for using IT in handling land records as the Computer Aided Administration of Regional Development (CAARD) project. Andhra Pradesh has shown. The software has also been developed and used there for issuing certificate pertaining to land holdings, caste, nativity and income in less than one hour. Earlier it used to take 15- 20 days. But the real problems in introducing computers and internet in the villages are the low level of literacy and the inability to understand English. For a more extensive use of IT in rural India, programming will have to be made vernacular. But the extent to which rural people gain from these would depend on technology choices and state and local priorities.

On the whole, the government's stance on IT has been very positive. In the forward looking states. Some IT Savvy officials have taken some enterprising initiatives. This has helped them to attract large investments as well. But the pace of IT adoption needs to swifter. Given the fact that India has missed some key technology cycles in the evolution of IT, leapfrog steps are needed. Let us straight way opt for the latest. This would go a long way in realizing the dream of easy IT accessibility for the common man.

### **e-Governance in Services Delivery**

e-Governance has emerged as an excellent tool for the government to respond to the increasing demands of citizens and to accelerate the pace of development. The Information Revolution has changed the world like never before. The use of IT for providing information speedily to all citizens, improving Public Services and improving administrative efficiency has become an accepted method. It implies a new set of responsibilities for the executive, legislature and the citizenry. For this, the Government of India and the World Bank signed an agreement of us \$150 million for "e-delivery of public services development policy loan" on May 10, 2011 under the national e-governance plan (NeGP). This flagship e-governance initiative of the Government of India aimed at transforming the service delivery system across the country. The vision of the agreement is to make all government services accessible to the common man in her/his locality through common service delivery outlets and to ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs for realizing the basic needs of the common man, In other words, the NeGP has identified various key components including common core and support infrastructure and several mission mode



projects for implementation at the central, state and local government levels. Last but not the least, the RTI regime will have to be galvanized and the Rights based approach have to translated into a reality for good governance.

### **Conclusion**

The above discussion highlights the fact that there is a dire need to focus on good governance because the reforms of the public services and the delivery process have become inevitable with the change role of the state. From a provider of services to a facilitator is the new trend. We have also to give a boost to our economy. A new set of values and a new set of administrative and work culture are needed for this purpose. The strong commitment on the part of public services is need to fine time itself. We will have to come out of the shackles of inefficiency and ineffectiveness and which are a legacy from colonial era. The changes will have to be made visible. The public scrutiny over the functioning of the public services will have to be ensured. Despite the fact that the role of the governments is changing from a service provider to a facilitator as a service provider is shrinking in this era of LPG. However, the government will have continue to be the major player and trend setter is our country in social sector.

We have to customize the concept of e-governance and m-governance as per the specificities. The penetration of internet, telecommunication services in India has undoubtedly 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 disparities and unemployment. But slow pace of project completion, red-tape and resistance from the side of government employees and citizens continue to be barriers in overcoming these challenges.

However, once, the Core ICT infrastructure projects are implemented, government services will be delivered at the door step of citizens on anywhere, anytime basis. It will not only remove the need for the long travel by citizens to District Headquarters but also reduce costs, save time, improve efficiency, raise comfort levels and increase the confidence of citizens.

But this can happen only by changing the psychi of both service providers and service receivers. It needs behavioral changes in both of them. We will have to create the required infrastructure for e-governance at all the levels for linking the centre with periphery. It also requires capacity building of both of them through sustained and systematic efforts. It is a





difficult but not an impossible task. Be that as it may, we have certainly made perceptible strides in this direction. Good governance through e-governance has been achieved to a small but significant extent. But it is a race against time. We have to realize the goal of becoming not only a fastly developing economy, but also achieve the ideal of development with a human face. We are almost on the threshold of success. But much more needs to be done in this context. We have the potential to do so. We, however, need the will to do so. The presence of a strong leadership without of box thinking can prove successful in this context.



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