Digital India: An Overview

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Abstract: "**Digital India**" is an inaugural of the Central Government of India "plan to shift India into a global digitalize hub" by resuscitate a summation digital sector of India with the help of meliorate digital connectivity and skill sweetening and various other arson to make the country digitally scepter in the field of technology. This paper helps relies the global as well as domestic challenges that might back the successful implementation of the program and suggest some executable remedies total deal with the same. This paper highlights the opportunities that would mount the way for achieving the program's aim of making India the preferred choice for digital activities by both global and domestic investors and also how far the "Digital India" model can turn up to be an attraction for the investors to invest in the sectors which are yet to achieve their full possible in India.

Keywords: Digital India, Digital Empowerment, Job provided, Skill Sweetening, Investment, infrastructure.

Introduction:

Digital India Program is a national wide program to transform India into a globally connected hub. It includes various plane and incentives given to companies, basically the manufacturing companies both domestic and foreign to invest in India and make the country a digital hub. The main objective of Digital India program is to creating jobs and skill enhancement in the Broadband Highways, e-Governance, and Electronic delivery of services, Universal access to Mobile Connectivity, Electronics Manufacturing, and Information for All etc. The campaign's aim is to resolve the problems of connectivity and therefore help us to connect with each other and also to share information on issues and concerns faced by us. This initiative is focused to help India gain a better rural connectivity with a stable governmental policies in the background coupled with benefits and incentives via the campaign. Simultaneously the initiative is designed to create jobs and enhance skill development which will ultimately lead to increase in GDP and revenues from tax.

Research Mythology:

The paper is based on the secondary data and the information is retrieved from the internet via journals, research papers and expert opinions on the same subject matter.

Objective OF the Paper:

1. To study the concept of digital India program.
2. To find out the importance of this program.

Vision Areas of Digital India:

The Digital India program is centered on the three key vision areas:

1. Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen:

This includes providing high speed Internet connectivity as a core utility for delivery of services to citizens. To provide digital identity that is unique, lifelong, online and authenticable to every citizen. Provide mobile phone and bank account enabling citizen participation in digital and financial space.

2. Governance and Services on Demand:

Seamless integration across departments or jurisdictions Ensuring availability of services in real-time from online & mobile platforms To make all citizen entitlements portable and available on the cloud To digitally transformed services for improving ease of doing business Leveraging Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) for decision support systems & development.

3. Digital Empowerment of Citizens:

To empower every citizen through universal digital literacy. To provide universal accessible digital resource. To make available digital resources & services in Indian languages. To provide collaborative digital platforms for participative governance. Citizens not required to physically submit Govt. documents / certificates.

Pillars of Digital India Program:

1. Broadband Highways: The aim is to cover 250000 village Panchayats under National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) by December 2016. Nationwide internet infrastructure (NII) would integrate the network and cloud infrastructure in the country to provide high speed connectivity and cloud platform to various government departments up to the panchayat level.

2. Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity: The aim is to increase network penetration and to provide mobile connectivity to 44000 villages by 2018 with investment of RS 16000.

3. Public Internet Access Program: One Common Service Centre (CSC) would be provided to each gram panchayat and 150,000 Post Offices are proposed to be converted into multi service centers.

4. e.Governance: IT would be used to make the delivery of government services more effectively. There would be integration of services and platform-UIDAI, Payment Gateway, Mobile Sava platform, Public redressed etc., through IT. All information would be available in electronic form.

5. IT for Jobs: The aim is to train 10 million people in towns and villages for IT sector jobs in five years. It also aims to provide training to three laky service delivery agents as part of skill development to run viable businesses delivering IT services. It also focuses on training of five lakh Rural Workforce on Telecom and Telecom related services and setting up of BPOs in each North-eastern state.

6. Early Harvesting Program: Government plans to install Wi-Fi facilities in all universities across the country. All books will be converted into e books. Email will be made the primary mode of communication within government. Biometric Attendance System will be installed in all central government offices where recording of attendance will be made online.

Benefits of Digital India Program: Digital India program is the beginning of digital revolution. It is a big initiative to empower people of the country. Main benefits of this program are-

1. The digital India mission would make all the government services available to people of country through common service delivery outlets. This would lead to inclusive growth by enabling access to education, healthcare and government services to all the citizens of the country. People can get better advice on health services. Those who can't afford school/ colleges can get chance to online education.

2. There would be more transparency as all the data would be made online and would be accessible to citizens of the country.

3. EGovernance will help in reducing corruption and getting things done quickly.

4. Digital locker facility will help citizen to digitally store their important documents like Pan Card, passport, mark sheets etc.

5. It will help in getting things done easily. For example when we need to open an account, we will give official details of our digital locker, where they can verify our documents. By this we can save time and the pain of standing in long queues for getting our documents would be reduced.

6. It will help in decreasing documentation and reducing paper work.

7. It can play a key role in GDP growth. According to analyst the digital India could boost GDP up to $1 trillion by 2025. According to World Bank report a 10% increase in mobile and broadband penetration increases per capita GDP by 0.81% and 1.31% respectively in developing countries.

Challenge: More than a year has been passed since Digital India mission has been announced but it is facing multiple challenges in successful implementation. Few of the challenges are-

1. High level of digital illiteracy is the biggest challenge in the success of digital India program. Low digital literacy is key hindrance in adaptation of technologies. According to ASSOCHAM-Deloitte report on Digital India, November, 2016, around 950million Indians are still not on internet.

2. Making Digital India scheme known and creating awareness among common masses about its benefits is also a great challenge.

3. It is a mammoth task to have connectivity with each and every village, town and city. Connecting 250000 Gram Panchayats through National Optical Fiber is not an easy task. The biggest challenge is ensuring that each panchayat point of broad band is fixed up and functional. It is found that 67% of NOFN points are non functional even at the pilot stage.

4. A key component under this vision is high speed of internet as a core utility to facilitate online delivery of various services. India has low internet speed. According to third quarter 2016 Akamai report on internet speed, India is at the105th position in the world in average internet speed. This rank is the lowest in entire Asia Pacific region.

5. According to ASSOCHOM- Deloitte report, the issue pertaining to taxation and regulatory guidelines has proved to road block in realizing the vision of Digital India. Some of the common policy hurdles include lack of clarity in FDI policies have impacted the growth of ecommerce.

6. The biggest challenge faced by Digital India program is slow and delayed infrastructure development. India's digital infrastructure is comprehensively inadequate to tackle growing increase in digital transactions. India needs over 80 laky hotspots as against the availability of about 31000 hotspot at present to reach global level, according to ASSOCHOM-Deloitte report.

7. The private participation in government projects in India is poor because of long and complex regulatory processes.

8. Many request proposals issued by government are not picked up by competent private sector organizations since they are not commercially viable. Currently over 55000 villages remain deprived of mobile connectivity because providing mobile connectivity in such locations is not commercially viable for service providers, ASSOCHAM-Deloitte report pointed out.

9. There is a wide digital divide between urban and rural India. Till now funds have not been deployed effectively to meet the cost of infrastructure creation in rural areas.

11. Fear of cybercrime and breach of privacy has been deterrent in adoption of digital technologies. Most of the technology including cyber security tools is imported. We do not have requisite skills to inspect these for hidden malwares. We have no top level experts for these high end jobs at present. According to NASSCOM, India needs 1 million trained cyber security professionals by 2025. The current estimated number is 62000.

Suggestion:

1. Digital literacy is first step in empowering citizens. People should know how to secure their online data.

2. To make this program successful, a massive awareness program has to be conducted. There is pressing need to educate and inform the citizens, especially in rural and remote areas, about the benefits of internet services to increase the growth of internet usage.

3. Manufacturing content is not government's strength. This mission needs content and service partnerships with telecom companies and other firms.

4. Private sector should be encouraged for development of last mile infrastructure in rural and remote areas. To encourage private sector, there must be favorable taxation policies, quicker clearance of projects.

5. The success of digital India project depends upon maximum connectivity with minimum cyber security risks. For this we need a strong anti cyber crime team which maintains the database and protects it round the clock.

6. To improve skill in cyber security, we need to introduce cyber security course at graduate level and encourage international certification bodies to introduce various skill based cyber security courses.

7. There is need for effective participation of various departments and demanding commitment and efforts. Various policies in different areas should support this goal.

Conclusion: The vision of digital India is grand. It is a huge step towards building a truly empowered nation. If successful, it transforms citizen access to multimedia information, content and services. However the goal is still far away since most of the nine pillars of digital India mission are facing serious challenges in implementation. It is imperative that focused persistent attention must be given to each and every pillar so that this program does not end up in failure. In fact we all should be mentally prepared for the change and be ready to face the challenges in implementing this policy, only then it would be possible to make this vision a reality.

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