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THE ROLE OF E-GOVERNANCE IN STRENGTHENING THE VISION OF "VIKSIT BHARAT -2047

***Dr. Neeraj Kumar**

Assistant Professor, PMCOE, Govt. Model Science College Rewa (M.P)

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**Corresponding author:*
Dr. Neeraj Kumar

ABSTRACT

The "Viksit Bharat - 2047" initiative represents India's ambitious national aspiration to transform into a developed nation by the centenary of its independence. This vision is founded on the pillars of economic prosperity, social empowerment, environmental sustainability, and, fundamentally, good governance. This paper examines the indispensable and catalytic role of E-governance, primarily driven by the Digital India Mission and the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), in achieving these objectives. E-governance is analyzed not merely as the computerization of services, but as a deep, structural reform enabling citizen-centric, transparent, and efficient administration. The paper argues that successful digital transformation—exemplified by initiatives like Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker, and BharatNet—is the single most significant determinant for ensuring inclusive economic participation, eliminating poverty, strengthening democratic accountability, and bridging the urban-rural divide. By fostering a citizen-centric digital ecosystem, e-governance can bridge disparities and propel India toward a \$30-40 trillion economy with per capita income of \$18,000-\$21,000 by 2047. This study underscores the need for sustained policy reforms and inclusive strategies to harness e-governance as a cornerstone of Viksit Bharat. Furthermore, it addresses the critical challenges of cyber security, digital literacy, and data governance, concluding that sustained investment in robust, secure, and linguistically diverse DPI is essential to unlock India's potential and solidify its status as a leading global power by 2047.

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INTRODUCTION

The journey of any nation is defined by its grand narratives and long-term aspirations. For India, the target year 2047—the hundredth anniversary of its independence—has been codified into the monumental national mission known as "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India). The vision transcends mere economic growth, aiming for comprehensive national development encompassing human development, social justice, environmental sustainability, and world-class infrastructure. At its core, Viksit Bharat 2047 seeks to create a self-reliant and prosperous economy, ensuring a high standard of living and equitable growth for every citizen. The four cornerstone pillars identified for this transformation are: *Yuva (Youth)*, *Garib Poor*, *Mahilayen (Women)*, and *Annadata (Farmers)*. The primary objectives are staggering in scale, including achieving a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) target of USD \$30-40 trillion and establishing a system of zero poverty, universal quality education, and accessible, high-quality healthcare. Achieving such scale and inclusivity requires a fundamental shift in the machinery of governance—a shift that moves away from analog, bureaucratic processes toward agile, transparent, and technology-driven systems. E-governance, defined as the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to public administration and service delivery, is not just an enabler but the very bedrock upon

which the entire Viksit Bharat structure must be built. Digital transformation holds the key to translating high-level policy objectives into ground-level, measurable outcomes across all sectors, from financial inclusion and farmer welfare to law enforcement and environmental monitoring. This paper is aimed to analyze how E-governance initiatives are currently strengthening the four strategic pillars of Viksit Bharat, identifying the systemic transformations achieved, and outlining the critical challenges that must be addressed to sustain the momentum towards the 2047 goal.

The Conceptual Framework: E-governance and Digital Public Infrastructure: India's journey in E-governance has evolved through distinct phases, moving from initial computerization to systemic digital transformation. The genesis lies in the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of 2006, which laid the groundwork for digitizing government-to-citizen (G2C) services across 31 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs). This was dramatically scaled up with the launch of the Digital India Mission (2015), which crystallized the objective into three core areas: digital infrastructure as a utility, governance and services on demand, and digital empowerment of citizens.



Figure 1 – An illustrative image on four cornerstone pillars of Developing India (GeminiAI)



Figure 2. illustrative framework image on role of e-gov for developing India (grokAI)

The India Stack and DPI Architecture: The true revolutionary factor in India's E-governance model is the emergence of the India Stack, a set of interoperable software layers collectively known as Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). The DPI model offers foundational digital capabilities that can be utilized by the public and private sectors to build innovative solutions. Its three critical layers are:

- **Identity Layer (Aadhaar):** Providing a unique, biometric-authenticated digital identity to over 1.35 billion citizens, serving as the bedrock for KYC (Know Your Customer) and de-duplication across all services.
- **Payments Layer (Unified Payments Interface - UPI):** A real-time payment system that has democratized digital transactions, driving financial inclusion and significantly reducing the cash-to-GDP ratio.
- **Data Exchange Layer (DigiLocker and Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture - DEPA):** Facilitating the secure sharing and verification of digital documents, eliminating the need for physical paperwork and empowering citizens with control over their data.

This DPI approach aligns perfectly with the goal of Viksit Bharat for "effective governance" by ensuring technology standards promote interoperability, inclusion, and transparency. It allows the government to achieve scale and speed in service delivery, which are prerequisites for achieving macro-level national transformation targets by 2047.

Types of E-governance Interactions

For the purpose of achieving Viksit Bharat goals, E-governance operates across four main channels:

- **Government-to-Citizen (G2C):** Focuses on service delivery, such as issuance of certificates (birth, caste, income), bill

payments, and subsidy distribution via Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

- **Government-to-Business (G2B):** Streamlines regulatory processes, permits, licensing, and tax filings, directly addressing the Viksit Bharat goal of enhancing the "Ease of Doing Business."
- **Government-to-Government (G2G):** Enhances internal efficiency and coordination between departments and different levels of government (Central, State, Local) through systems like e-Office and e-HRMS (Human Resource Management System).
- **Government-to-Employee (G2E):** Manages internal processes like performance appraisals (e.g., SPARROW), ensuring a motivated and digitally skilled workforce, which is crucial for bureaucratic reform.

E-governance as an Accelerator of Economic Prosperity: The Viksit Bharat goal of establishing a USD \$30-40 trillion economy requires sustained, high-level growth (8-10% annually) and transformational shifts in key sectors: manufacturing, services, and agriculture. E-governance acts as the primary lubricant for this economic engine, focusing on efficiency, transparency, and market access.

Enhancing Ease of Doing Business (G2B Transformation): A central tenet of Viksit Bharat is making India a global business hub. E-governance initiatives have fundamentally reformed the Government-to-Business (G2B) interface by simplifying compliance and reducing regulatory friction, a phenomenon often referred to as 'red-tapism'.

- **Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN):** The digital platform for the GST regime has unified the national market, standardizing tax processes and allowing for online filing, assessment, and refunds. This reduction in complexity and paperwork is vital for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which are key drivers of job creation and economic growth.
- **GeM (Government e-Marketplace):** This online procurement portal ensures transparency and efficiency in public purchasing, allowing even small businesses to compete on an equal footing for government contracts, thereby promoting fair competition and reducing corruption in tendering.
- **Single Window Clearances:** Many state-level e-governance systems are moving toward providing single-window platforms for industrial and business clearances, significantly cutting down the time required for establishing and operating a business. This aligns with the goal of improving India's global ranking in the Ease of Doing Business Index.

Financial Inclusion and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT): The goal of lifting every citizen out of poverty (zero poverty) is inextricably linked to financial inclusion, which has been revolutionized by the JAM Trinity—Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile.

- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):** By leveraging Aadhaar and Jan Dhan accounts, DBT ensures that subsidies and welfare payments reach the intended beneficiaries directly, eliminating leakages and corruption caused by middlemen. This massive efficiency gain not only saves public funds but also empowers the Garib (Poor) and Mahilayen (Women) pillars by giving them direct control over their financial resources. The sheer volume of transactions processed through DBT demonstrates its success in ensuring equitable distribution of the fruits of economic growth.
- **UPI:** While a payment infrastructure, UPI's ubiquitous adoption allows even the smallest vendor or farmer to participate in the digital economy. This digital transactional layer enhances the velocity of money, supports financial formalization, and provides a traceable economic footprint necessary for targeted lending and service extension. The model's success is internationally recognized as a global public good.

Modernizing Agriculture for Annadata Empowerment

The **Annadata (Farmer)** pillar requires modernizing agricultural practices and ensuring better market linkages. Digital services provide the necessary support structure:

- **PM-KISAN:** Utilizes the Aadhaar framework for direct income support transfers to farmers.
- **Digital Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP):** The digitization of land records, as seen in projects like *Bhoomi* in Karnataka, brings clarity to ownership, reduces property disputes, and facilitates access to institutional credit, as verifiable digital records are essential for collateral.
- **e-NAM (National Agriculture Market):** This pan-India electronic trading portal networks existing Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities, ensuring farmers get competitive prices for their produce, regardless of local market distortions.

E-governance for Social Empowerment and Inclusive Development

Viksit Bharat mandates social progress measured by Human Development Index (HDI) factors—health, education, and social justice. E-governance tools are vital in overcoming geographical barriers and systemic inefficiencies to deliver these services equitably, particularly to the marginalized sections (the Poor and Women).

Universal Healthcare Access

The vision of "access to high-quality, affordable, and comprehensive healthcare" relies on digital platforms to achieve scale:

- **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM):** ABDM aims to create a secure, interoperable digital ecosystem where every citizen will have a digital health ID, and health records will be linked to it. This enables telemedicine, facilitates the transfer of records across facilities, and empowers individuals with control over their health data. This is crucial for reaching remote and rural populations, especially in tribal areas, aligning with the goal of inclusive growth.
- **e-Hospital/Online Registration System (ORS):** Digitizing hospital appointment, management, and billing processes reduces long queues and bureaucratic friction, making public healthcare facilities more user-friendly and efficient.

Education and Skill Development

Digitalization is key to democratizing quality education, a core objective of the Viksit Bharat vision for the Yuva (Youth) pillar.

- **DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing):** This platform provides quality e-content for schools, accessible to students and teachers across the country, ensuring the standardization and dissemination of high-quality educational resources, particularly beneficial in areas lacking access to specialized teachers.
- **SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-learning for Young Aspiring Minds):** Offers Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), providing vocational and academic skills training, thereby addressing the projected workforce skill gap and promoting a **100% skilled labor** force.
- **APAAR ID (Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry):** Creating a digital identity for students that facilitates credit recognition and streamlines access to educational opportunities and records.
- **DigiLocker :** DigiLocker's is an online Aadhaar or mobile based authenticated documents reduce verification time for education, employment, and welfare services.

Empowering Women (Mahilayen): E-governance contributes to women's empowerment by increasing their economic participation (targeting 70% of women in economic activities by 2047) and ensuring security.

- **MyScheme and Digital Discovery:** Platforms like myScheme act as a single-stop digital discovery portal, enabling women in rural and urban areas to easily find and apply for relevant government schemes (maternity benefits, vocational training, start-up loans) without requiring intermediary assistance.
- **Digital Literacy Campaigns:** Programs like Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) specifically target rural women, equipping them with the digital skills necessary to access G2C services, participate in the digital economy, and mitigate digital exclusion.

Strengthening Democratic Governance and Public Trust

Perhaps the most defining contribution of E-governance to Viksit Bharat is in realizing the vision of "Honest Government" and "Maximum Governance, Minimum Government." E-governance is an institutional reform that instills the principles of transparency, accountability, and participation.

Transparency and Accountability (Anti-Corruption)

Digitalization fundamentally disrupts traditional avenues of corruption by minimizing human interface and creating an auditable trail for every transaction.

- **End-to-End Digital Workflows (e-Office):** The widespread adoption of e-Office in Central and State Secretariats has led to paperless, time-bound movement of files (with high percentages of e-file handling), significantly reducing discretion and increasing efficiency. This G2G transformation makes internal processes transparent and measurable.
- **Real-time Monitoring (PRAGATI):** The Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) platform allows the highest executive level to monitor and review major projects in real-time. This institutionalizes accountability by ensuring that large infrastructure and welfare projects are implemented on time and without cost overruns, essential for the rapid infrastructural development planned for Viksit Bharat.
- **Open Government Data (OGD):** Providing public access to government datasets promotes open accountability, allowing civil society and media to scrutinize data and track performance, thereby enhancing public trust in the administration.
- **5.2. Citizen Participation (G2C and E-Advocacy)**
- A developed democracy requires active citizen engagement in policymaking, moving beyond simple service consumption to genuine participation.
- **MyGov Portal:** This platform serves as a digital town hall where citizens can share ideas, participate in policy discussions, and contribute to government initiatives, directly aligning with the participatory spirit of Viksit Bharat. The engagement on this platform helps in consensus building and provides direct, actionable feedback loops to policymakers.
- **Grievance Redressal (CPGRAMS):** The Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System provides a structured, digital channel for citizens to lodge complaints and track their resolution, ensuring that the government is responsive and effective—a core tenet of good governance.
- **UMANG :** The entire shift, from physical counters to the **UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance)** platform which provides over 1,700 services in one place, exemplifies the transition to a truly citizen-centric government focused on "Ease of Living."

Challenges and the Future Roadmap for 2047

While the foundation of E-governance is robust, achieving the all-encompassing vision of Viksit Bharat requires confronting structural challenges and anticipating future technological needs.

Bridging the Digital Divide and Literacy Gap: The single largest impediment to inclusive digital transformation remains the urban-rural digital divide. While BharatNet has connected a significant number of Gram Panchayats with high-speed broadband, the last-mile connectivity and affordability of devices in deep rural areas remain challenges. For E-governance benefits to reach the *last mile*, as mandated by Viksit Bharat's inclusive goals, investment in digital infrastructure must be prioritized alongside targeted digital literacy programs. A significant portion of the population is not comfortable using English-based interfaces. The success of E-governance hinges on the widespread adoption of multilingual platforms, supported by initiatives like BHASHINI, which leverages AI to translate digital content into multiple Indian languages; ensuring services are truly accessible to all.

Cyber security and Data Governance: As India accelerates toward a digital-first economy, the vulnerability to cyber threats increases exponentially. Protecting critical digital assets, citizen data, and the DPI itself is paramount.

- **Cyber security Framework:** Robust data protection laws, such as the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, must be rigorously implemented. Furthermore, continuous investment in strengthening institutions like CERT-In and fostering a culture of cyber security awareness across government departments and the public is non-negotiable.
- **Digital Trust:** The success of DPI rests entirely on public trust. Maintaining the privacy and security of citizens' unique digital identities (Aadhaar) and personal data is a constant and evolving requirement to prevent misuse and maintain democratic integrity.

Leveraging Emerging Technologies (AI and Quantum)

- To sustain the technological leadership envisioned for 2047, India must move beyond basic transactional E-governance to incorporate advanced technologies for predictive and proactive governance.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Governance:** AI can play a transformative role in enhancing public services, from AI-driven diagnostics in healthcare to optimizing logistics in public distribution systems and providing data-driven policy insights. Initiatives like the IndiaAI Mission are crucial for building the necessary compute infrastructure and fostering the research ecosystem. AI-driven governance will be essential to manage the complexities of a \$30-40 trillion economy.
- **Quantum Technology:** While futuristic, the foundational research and development in quantum computing and quantum communication must be nurtured to secure India's digital future against potentially disruptive threats.

CONCLUSION

The vision of "Viksit Bharat - 2047" is a profound national commitment, and its success is fundamentally predicated on the efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity delivered by E-governance. Digital Public Infrastructure, anchored by Aadhaar, UPI, and DigiLocker, has already proven its ability to deliver financial inclusion (JAM), reduce corruption (DBT), and dramatically enhance the *Ease of Living* and *Ease of Doing Business* across the nation. E-governance is strengthening every pillar of the Viksit Bharat vision: it empowers the Poor through DBT and targeted schemes, elevates the Annadata through digital market linkages and land records, provides opportunities for the Yuva through digital education, and facilitates the economic participation of Mahilayen through accessible service delivery. However, the journey to 2047 is neither automatic nor assured. It demands a sustained national effort to overcome the remaining systemic challenges: closing the digital access gap, institutionalizing robust cybersecurity, and continuously skilling the bureaucracy and citizenry to fully utilize digital platforms. By treating E-governance as a continuous process of structural reform rather than a mere technological project, and by ensuring that technology remains human-centric, India can realize its destiny as a developed, equitable, and globally influential nation by its centenary. The future of India is, indeed, digital.

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