

SECTION-B

7. Digital Infrastructure is key for future ready Governance

Kautalya in his book Arthashastra, which was written 2400 years ago, gave the concept of governance as -
"In the happiness of his subject lies the king's happiness; in their welfare his welfare. He shall not consider as good only that which pleases him but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects"

welfare of Subjects i.e. people which is at the heart of good governance. In ancient times, rulers used to keep long records and pages to keep the information which was essential for governance. The concept of governance

with time also got broadened. More and more aspects of people's life now get impacted by the quality of governance. Be it relationship between state and people or various services like education, health, food etc which people avail from government.

With time how governance is done has also evolved and gone a considerable amount of change. From paper records to now digital format, the method of governance has changed.

Now increasingly the governance is achieved through online and digital means which is possible due to digital infrastructure. Digital infrastructure includes both hardware and software aspects. Hardwares are infrastructure which provide internet (mobile towers, fibre cables, modem), mobiles and computers. Softwares are the platforms which helps to give out information

like websites, applications, and software to secure these platforms.

In this essay we will understand first what do we mean by future ready governance in every aspect. How digital infrastructure is key for future ready governance. Also we would discuss the progress that has been made towards this end along with the challenges and way forward.

Future governance should be based on ideals like transparency, accountability, accessibility, simplicity, probity et al. Governance which fulfill the aspirations and needs of people is considered as good governance.

In future, we would like to see this good governance along with ethical governance.

Ethical governance incorporates not just good governance but also upholds

ethics like honesty, integrity, responsiveness, morality etc. When the governance system is based on these ideals and are being internalized by the service provider then only ethical governance is achieved.

At societal level governance should bring welfare for every section of society. Women need safe and secure environment. Online complaint mechanisms like StE-Box greatly solves this purpose.

Schemes like Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna, PMJJY etc are based on digital infrastructure like banking network. The effectiveness of these schemes gets enhanced through digital means.

It is now able to reach every corner of India. Recently Andaman and Nicobar Islands were connected with fibre optical network. It is not just the fast internet but the host of government services which

reached for the first time to these Islands. Therefore digital infrastructure acts as bringing equality among citizens

Tribals by using digital means like e-commerce platforms can sell their minor forest produce directly.

Farmers too are using eNAM platform to increase their market and sell their produce. Digital platforms and infrastructure associated is very essential to economically strengthen the weaker and vulnerable section.

For most people mobility especially intergenerational mobility is of prime importance. Everyone aspire to move up in socio economic ladder. Digital infrastructure helps people to achieve this through providing education, health & skills

through digital means reaching every corner of world. Government schools saw use of internet and video conferencing for online classes during COVID-19 pandemic.

Pandemics like these disrupts the entire governance structure. With lockdowns and restrictions observed worldwide, digital means and infrastructure became the lifeline for the world.

Everything from businesses to hospitals to government all adopted digital means. People started working from their homes including government employees ensured that the services are reaching people even during lockdown.

People through tele-medicine consulted doctors online through apps like Practo in India. Digital platforms were or are being used widely by people to avail different services and buy things as well.

Government all over the world including multilateral institutions like United Nations etc connected and are doing conferences through digital means. This ensured that global governance continue even in these tough times.

The above instances show us that future governance has to be resilient and reliable. To achieve this end, digital infrastructure is key to provide all these digital services.

At economic level, ^{during COVID} government and businesses used digital means to keep the economy running. In future also more and more economic activity would be based on digital platforms. We are now transitioning towards 4th Industrial revolution which ~~sometimes~~ in many ways depend ~~tot~~ upon digital key infrastructure.

Digital infrastructure is also essential to deliver justice on time and in efficient way. Through initiatives like e-courts, e-AR etc the way justice is done is transforming. Future governance should be based on ease of living as also highlighted by recent budget 2020-21.

Ease of living will happen when people can attend court hearings online. Also when people can file complaint and grievances on the tap of their phone. All these require robust digital infrastructure. Initiatives like CPGRAMS is step towards this.

Future governance also demands the deepening of democracy and democratic institutions. With digital platforms democracy can be further strengthened. Nearly all government ministries and at state and district level administration use websites and digital platforms to spread awareness

and act as a tool to transparency and making government accountable. Therefore digital infrastructure which provide backbone to these platforms is a key for future governance.

Future governance would also be based on innovations. Administrators rely on innovation to improve governance. Using digital means like fund raising to build people's road in Manipur by an IAS officer (Armstrong Pame) is case in point. Similarly, P. Narhari, as district magistrate of Indore, used mobile application to reach out to people. Thus innovation is based on digital infrastructure which is a vital key to future governance.

Governance also means to provide better environment to people. By using digital infrastructure the

negative impacts on environment can be minimized. When people don't have to travel to government office to apply for PAN card, it saves environment as travelling through vehicles involves use of fossil fuel and air pollution.

Similarly, filling e-KYC, e-forms, e-tax filing saves printed pages as well which prevent or saves trees which are cut to make those pages. Therefore digital infrastructure not only provides ease of receiving services but also enables to protect environment.

Due to climate change, the intensity and frequency of extreme events have increased. Digital infrastructure like satellites, sensors, communication satellites etc helps in every stage of disaster management. From hazard zone mapping to rescue operation to rehabilitation, digital infrastructure provide means to make these processes happen.

It also strengthen the capacity and resilience of government and of community to deal with any disaster.

Government is also using digital means to provide training to its officials like in 'Mission Karmayogi' to improve the governance. Also platform like PROactive Governance And Timely Implemen-
-tation (PRAGATI) enables government to monitor the ongoing practices & projects. Through digital means world over 'best practices of governance' is shared. Thus digital infrastructure which acts as enabler for this, is key to future governance.

Government services like digital banking, Direct Benefit Transfer, e-NIVESH, Invest India, e-Tourist VISA et al are digital services.

These digital services are going to increase manyfold in future. With increase in SMART CITIES, digital infrastructure would become key for future governance.

Although there are so many application of digital infrastructure to bring good governance there are many challenges as well.

There is digital divide which is present world wide. With major economies having access to digital infrastructure while smaller & emerging countries like India are dependent upon them to get equipments which forms part of digital infrastructure.

To make India 5G ready, we need imports of equipments from European countries and also China. Lack of indige-nization of technology would cost government a lot to import these.

5G forms backbone for future digital infrastructure.

Also there exist rural-urban divide with respect to access to digital infrastructure. Internet penetration although has increased due to schemes like Digital India & Bharat Net but more needs to be done to bridge this gap.

Moreover people of all ages including old age people and from everywhere including rural & tribals people, needs to become digitally literate in order to utilize these technology.

With growing use of digital infrastructure, the threat of cyber attacks also becomes real. Future wars, it is said that, will be based on cyber warfare. There cyber security take a central stage if we want our digital infrastructure to be secure.

Moreover with growing use of digital platforms there is also threat of state becoming a surveillance state. As reports many times from China, it seems quite intruding in people's personal life when everywhere there is cameras installed. During COVID 19 also many countries relied on personal data to trace the movement of people.

In this light data security becomes important. India is about to bring a data security law. It should protect personal data and individual liberty & privacy.

Future governance it seems would be based on digital means which will in turn depend upon the digital infrastructure. India need to protect its critical information infrastructure also known as public key infrastructure. Institutions like CERT-In & CERT-Fin should be

Strengthened .

As India is gearing towards 4th Industrial revolution, Aatmanirbhar Bharat & New India, it is important that governance system too become future ready & ethical.

To achieve the goal of good and ethical governance, it is pertinent that digital infrastructure is developed and secured to meet the governance needs of 21st century governance.

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Digital infrastructure is key for future ready governance

Kant

Governance

Historical

(IR) → factory
Assembly line
computer
4IR → Digital

Kantalya → Governance concept
long books were maintained earlier

Social →

Social audit

Eco → Governance at less cost eg DBT, e-nivesh, Invest in India

MGNREGA

Pol → Democracy ↑

Consti/reg → Policy making input
e-gov.

Env →

Grievance Redressal
easily.
e-Tourist VISA

e-courts

e-FIRs

Online Complaint

Social → Women → She box
Sukanya Samriddhi Yojna

Tribal → TRIFED → sell pro MFP.

Children → COVID → tele-education → govt schools.

Health → tele-medicine → e-Health card, e-pharma
National eHA

A & N islands connected

International → Gov → Summit, Climate Summit
SCO
BRICS

PM.

Env → Digital Infra → no need to travel to get services
PAN card - apply online

Saves on emission

Adm → Mission karmyogi → online module.
 Every dist. has website → information
 regarding who is who → people can directly
 Contact
 ↓
 middle men eliminated
 Information asymmetry remove.
Disaster → DI is very essential.

Challenges

- ① Rural - Urban divide / Digital Divide
- ② 5G → costly | electronic devices - import
- ③ Cyber Security threat
 cyber war / financially
- ④ Accessibility
- ⑤ Old people → not aware
- ⑥ Data security
- ⑦ Country should not become a surveillance state → China - COVID.

Way forward → Protection of Critical Key/Information Infrastructure
 CERT-In, CERT-fin
 People's participation in policy
 Transparency.

Conclⁿ

New India → new resilient Infra →
UIR
 Atmanirbhar Bharat.

SECTION A

3. There are some things you learn best in calm, and some in storm.

A young prince one day decides to come out of his palace and roam around his kingdom. Along the way, he observed sufferings, old age and deaths. He wanted to know the causes of the suffering and find real truth in the world. He left the comfort of the palace and became a wanderer. Finally, under a peepal tree, after meditating for over 40 days, he got the enlightenment. This man became the Buddha as we know today.

Another young man; King Ashoka after fighting a fierce battle in Kalinga war, observed the devastation that the war had brought. He observed the miseries and sufferings of the people. He decided to move away from the path of violence to the path of Dharma.

The above two instances show that human beings learn in different scenario. Buddha learnt the basis the truth and philosophy of life when he was meditating i.e. in calm. In contrast Ashoka learnt his biggest lesson during a war i.e. in storm.

Learning can be understood as the process of acquiring new ideas, processes and examples that add value to our knowledge and thinking. Further learning is a lifelong continuous process. One can learn new things when there is peace of mind and soul. For example, a child learns about new things about life while he studies calmly within the four walls of a classroom. On the other hand, learning can also happen when ~~one~~ there is a tough phase and hostility outside. For instance, a child learns new things and realities

of life once he/she goes outside and play sports. Even a defeat in the ground is in his/her stormy phase, teaches him/her the sportmanship value of tolerance, team spirit and respect for others.

LEARNING IN CALM AND IN STORM : ACROSS SPACE AND TIME

There are some things that we learn in calm and some in storm. It can well be understood from the method of struggle that the Gandhiji followed at during the independence movement. His method is now known as method of Struggle - Truce - Struggle. He launched major struggle like non-cooperation movement, Salt Satyagrah and Quit India movement. All these represents stormy phase, where he learnt about the capacity of masses. While during the calm phase he worked tirelessly for the betterment of society. He learnt about the ills of Indian society like untouchability and he worked towards the elimination

of the same.

Post independence, India enacted many laws like Hindu Succession Act 1956, Prevention of atrocities Act 1989

et al for the welfare of women, poor, vulnerable and weaker sections. It is during the calm phase that government learnt about the basic requirement of citizens. By comparison, RTI Act 2005, Lokpal Act 2013 and Criminal law (Amendment) Act, 2013 came after nationwide massive protests and demonstrations by people.

These storm phase made government realise the need for these legislations.

Similarly in the economic field, India adopted rapid industrialization with mahalanobis model, for developing core industries. This can be referred as learning in calm. Alternatively when India faced the problem of balance of payment

and a dwindling economy in 1991, we adopted the path of p-liberalisation and privatization, away from the license raj that existed before. Both the above instances show how India adopted new model for economy by learning best from the prevailing circumstance - be it a calm phase of 1950s or a stormy 1990s.

In health and education sectors, India over the years came up with institutions like IITs, AIIMS, IIMs and built 3 tier health infrastructure. However it is ongoing COVID 19 pandemic that is making us realize the importance of digital education (tele-education) and tele-medicine. Also a need for more robust health and education infrastructure. The above cases, confirms that some things we learn best in calm and some in storm.

At institution level too, there is always a chance of learning. The very first satellite launch mission of ISRO had failed. ISRO learnt from failures which set the tone for it's future achievements. By learning some things during success (calm phase) and some things during failures (storm phase), ISRO showed that there are ~~no~~ only lessons to be learnt in the field of science.

Further at international level, we learn many good things by way of collaboration, co-operation and knowledge sharing between people, institutions and nations. These calm phases of time leads to overall progress of humanity. On the contrary, world has also gone through turbulent phases of world wars, conflicts and cold war. These stormy phases have resulted in many peace deals, formation of world

bank and IMF (Bretton's wood agreement) and setting up of United Nations. This proves that ~~as a~~ humanity as a whole has learnt few things best in calm and few things in storm.

lastly, learning in different scenario can be best seen the way we are handling environment. Calm phases of history saw passing of many environmental legislations while many environmental movements forced government around the world to gather together at Rio Summit in 1992.

LEARNING AT ALL TIMES : TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE

As rightly said 'life itself is the greatest teacher of all'. It throws at us different situations, challenges and opportunities. A person with a open mind and learning zeal can learn from the successes and the failures.

what makes us different as an intelligent species it is the ability of homo sapiens to learn from daily life and internalise these learnings. This makes us adaptive to change, thus ensuring our survival. Learning during calm as well as during storm, helps to develop one's personality and attitude.

By developing these values and personality, a person can engage constructively in society. Success in personal as well as professional career depends upon the fact that how much one learns from his life and tries to improve upon it. Values like tolerance, sympathy, integrity and emotional intelligence develop over time within an individual. Few values are learnt through simple activities while few are learnt while facing a difficult situation.

in life.

As an administrator also, one is required to consistently evolve based upon one's learnings during calm as well as storm phases. By doing one's duty like ensuring proper distribution of governmental benefits to people, an administrator learns. ~~while~~ At the same time while managing a disaster, rescue and rehabilitation processes, an administrator improves upon his understanding and mental fortitude.

Having discussed the prospects of learning in calm as well as storm times, let us discuss why certain people or nation are not able to learn.

People with close and parochial mindset are not able to see others' perspective. Also excessive pride in oneself closes the door for further learning. Such people do repeated

mistakes. They are often bad in relation-ship management and performs poorly at workplace too.

At society and national level too, the situation can arise. A nation which doesn't learn from its history is bound to fail. For example fall of U.S.S.R and breaking up of Pakistan are testimony to this fact.

In the past, when a society stopped learning from its calm and storm phases perished in the sands of time with fall of great civilizations.

For progressive development of oneself or civilization it is important that some things should always be learnt from different phases of life. This can only happen when children are trained and socialized in a way which promotes open and critical

thinking. There is a need to build right attitude and mental framework ~~or~~ among children. This can be done through activity based learnings, moral education and right atmosphere at home and at school.

Moreover there is need to lessen the psychological stress which hinders our ability to learn. To this end, yoga and meditation can help. At the same time focus must be laid on self-examination and development of conscience. As rightly said by Socrates, 'An Unexamined life is not worth living'.

To sum up, it is clear that few things can be learnt best in calm and few in storm. This can only happen when a person, society and nation is open to learning and other's views. To ensure this, it is important

that right attitude is incultated among children. Also strong institutions with democratic principles should be nurtured.

Life is a cycle of ups and down. A persons like Gautum Buddha, The Great Ashoka, Gandhiji became Immortal and great due to their ability to learn from their life. They not only learnt from their own experiences but also from other's life.

Every individual & nation have a message to deliver, a mission to fulfill and a destiny to reason. So achieve these, it is thus essential that one learns from the best times; calm phases, worst times: storm phases.