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Yonus Nisar Dar
M.Phil. Scholar, Public
Administration, Apex
University, Jaipur, Rajasthan,
India

Dr. Shakshi Mehta
Professor, Apex University
Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Corresponding Author:
Yonus Nisar Dar
M.Phil. Scholar, Public
Administration, Apex
University, Jaipur, Rajasthan,
India

A study of good governance and e-governance plan for Jammu & Kashmir

Yonus Nisar Dar and Dr. Shakshi Mehta

Abstract

Jammu & Kashmir's government has taken some state-wide e-Governance measures to add transparency, effectiveness, and accountability to the system. While the State lags behind other States in the implementation of large-scale programmes involving a variety of agencies together. But the government has taken a very constructive step with progressive states to get the state ahead. The Strategies & policies are already formulated to realise the e-Governance vision of the State to bring an all-round development to all the Departments. State is also evaluating the initiatives under NeGP for prioritisation and subsequent implementation in the State. Apart from meeting citizen expectations & needs, e-Governance initiatives are also targeted to bring a sea of change in the administrative process of the Government. This kind of initiatives helps in increasing the internal efficiencies of the Departments & administrative setup, bringing more transparency in the process, making the government more responsive to the aspiration of the citizens and in simplifying the process of recording, updating & retrieval of records in the Departments. From the G2B services perspective, the main objectives of e-Governance will be to build a business friendly environment with attractive policies, transparent transaction environment and provision for punctual approval cycle with least possible time. The business community should be able to transact comfortably in a safe and stable environment with clarity in dealings. The e-Governance initiatives are expected to bring a change in the whole process of service delivery & administrative functioning.

Keywords: Good governance, e-governance, administrative functions etc.

Introduction

Governance has become a prominent area of discussion in present times. Governance now not only occupies center- stage in the development discourse but is also considered as the crucial element to be incorporated in the development strategy. Governance as the theoretical construct, separate from the theory of state, is not only in an inchoate stage, but its formulation also differs among scholars depending upon ideological convictions. Public administration as a major constituent of state has always been an instrument to accomplish welfare goals and objectives. Over the past two decades the impact of globalization, raise of market forces, increase in expectations of citizens, have widened the process of governing. Instead of government being the sole agency to discharge the tasks of governance need for participative and consultative modes of governing has become strong. This along with gradual blurring of distinction between public and private sectors has given rise to the concept of governance and over time gained a wider connotation. In practice Good Governance means favorable political framework conditions for social, biological and market oriented development as well as responsible use of political power and public resources by the state. This includes the process in which public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources and guarantee the realization of human rights. Good Governance accomplishes this free of abuse and corruption and with due regard for the rule of law. The really question lies in the possibility of the institutions of Government to guarantee effectively the right of health, adequate housing, sufficient food, quality education, fair justice and personal security. The term good governance was coined several decades ago (around 1980s) and was initially rooted on the historical conditions set by international patron agencies, countries and institutions to connect aid conditional upon reforms on how state affairs are run in the recipient country. Throughout the historical period of the 1980s and the 1990s, donors such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United States, have been insisting upon performance and good governance as a precondition for aid.

Recently the terms "governance" and "good governance" are being increasingly used in development literature. Bad governance is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies. Major donors and international monetary institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure "good governance" are undertaken.

Meaning Concept of Governance

The concept of "governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilization. Simply put "governance" means: the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, country wide governance and local governance. Since governance is the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision-making and implementing the decisions made and

the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision. The concept of governance has been in use at least since the fourteenth century. It was used in France during that period that implied 'seat of government'. It stated with a range of meanings, from the act or manner of governing its office or power, which made its equal with government, it being virtuous or wise in one's general behavior. Governance, in simple terms means "the process of discussion making and the process by which discussions or implemented (or not implemented)". The concise Oxford Dictionary defines it as an "act or manner of governing" and "the office or function of governing". Governance has also become a term used to describe a particular set of changes. It signifies a set of elusive but potentially deep significant shifts in the way in which government seeks to govern. Governance refers to a process of exercise of authority to govern people or regulate public affairs. In the simplest terms, governance relates to the effective management of the affairs of a country at all levels, guaranteeing its protective integrity, and securing the safety and overall welfare of people. Similarly formal government structures are one means by which decisions are arrived at and implemented. At the national level, informal decision-making structures, such as "kitchen cabinets" or in formal advisors may exist. In urban areas, organized crime syndicates such as the "land Mafia" may influence decision-making. In some rural areas locally powerful families may make or influence decision-making. Such, informal decision-making is often the result of corrupt practices or leads to corrupt practices.

Essential to Promote Good Governance among Executives

1. Faith and Determinations of the Top Personal in Good Governance

The most important factor for the success of any organization is its Leadership-political and administrative. Leadership is an important means of converting or handing out program me inputs into outputs such as goods and services. That is why, it has been rightly said that "put a good man in a bad situation he will push through, put a bad man in good set up he will make mess of the whole situation." No technique can help those administrators who have no faith in their work and its best performance.

2. Promote Good Governance through Responsiveness and Accountability to people

It is widely agreed that manipulation and lack of integrity produce strong negative side-effects and reduce organizational effectiveness. With this important value commitment the organization may shift their styles and climate from one of direction, control and surveillance to one of providing help, support and instruction. Mutuality and collaboration between the leaders and the led promote self-organization.

3. Promote Good Governance through National Integration

Employees in the public service should refrain from decisions in respect of which they have reason to believe that these are calculated to benefit any particular person, party or group at the cost of public interest. When there is any conflict between public interest and private interest they should disclose this to their superiors. They should not approach politicians and outsiders in respect of service matter or private benefits and bring peer pressure. They must also not abuse their official position to obtain a benefit for themselves or for someone else financial or other form. Such attitude on the part of civil services is found to usher an era of good governance.

4. Good Governance in the Executive Especially Police Personnel to maintain Law and order- for peace and prosperity

There have always been complaints of poor law and the poor image of police governance. People talk openly about the apathy, brutality and corruption of police. There is a need to inject good governance among police administrative system. Swati Mehta in an article, "Reforms the Cop: Tempering autonomy with accountability" in the Sunday Tribune dated 8th Oct. 2006 rightly observes that the police officers have always blamed the political executive for manipulating the police force to serve narrow partisan interests. Whether it were large scale anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, the anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat, or the individual cases like the Jessica Lal murder case, political interference in police functioning resulted in serious violations of the rights of the public.

E-Governance plan for Jammu and Kashmir

Jammu and Kashmir, situated between 32° 17' N and 36° 58' N latitudes and 73° 26' E and 80° 30' E longitudes, constitutes the northern most extremity of India. The state has its border touching Pakistan, Tibet and China. The State shares 221 km international boundary with Pakistan in Jammu region and 365 km with China in Ladakh Sector. Total area of Jammu and Kashmir is 222236 sq. Km of which 78114 sq. Km are under illegal occupation of Pakistan and 37555sq. Km under China. In addition to this, 5180 sq. km of J&K were illegally ceded to China by Pakistan. With the total area figures of 222236 sq.km. J&K is the 6th largest state of India occupying 6.76% of the country's geographical area. The land of the state is highly fertile and water resources are abundant in view of its blessed riverside geography. The state is surrounded by mountains except in the South-West side. A major portion of the state's terrain is hilly and its height from sea level varies from 1000 feet to 28500 feet. The state has road rail and air links with rest of the country through South making it accessible from the South only. The state occupies 19th rank in

population, with 12541302 souls as per 2011 census. The state has three distinct regions, viz. the Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh comprising of districts. Each region has a specific resource base. The state is further divided among 217 Tehsils, 86 towns and 6671 villages as per census, 2011. Administratively, the districts are divided into blocks for development purposes. There are 320 community development blocks as on 31.03.2018 in the state the demographic features of the state as per 2011 census reveal that with 124 persons per sq. km of area the state ranks 8th among states/UTs of the country in thin density of population. Infact, the most marked characteristic feature of the State is the low density of population. The low densities in many districts of the State are attributable to the nature of Terrain. Further sex ratio of 889 female's per thousand males places J&K at 29th rank in the country. Density and sex ratio of the country is 382 persons per sq. km and 943 females per thousand males as per 2011 census. The climate of the state varies from tropical in Jammu plains to semi-arctic cold in Ladakh with Kashmir and Jammu mountainous tracks having clement climatic conditions. The annual rainfall also varies from region to region with 102 mm in Leh, 514.9 mm in Srinagar and 1338.60 mm in Jammu. A large part of the state forms part of the Himalayan Mountains. The state is geologically constituted of rocks varying from the oldest period of the earth's history to the youngest present day river and lake deposits. The state has an area of 20230 sq kms under forests which account for 22.67% of the comparable geographical (101387 sq. kms) area the per capita forest area accounts for 0.15 hectares as against 0.06 hectares at the National level. As per the land utilization statistics for the year 2016-17, the state has a cultivable area of 858 thousand hectares which is only 9% of its geographical area. During the year 2017-18, the net area sown of the state was 752 thousand hectares constituting 7.42% of its geographical area and 31.33% of the reporting area. These figures for the country are 140130 thousand hectares and 45.52% and 4.26% respectively for the year 2018-2019.

Jammu & Kashmir is at the very beginning stage of implementation of e-Governance initiatives across the various departments of the State. The Governance Plan is a landmark in this path of making Jammu & Kashmir a SMART State and making the service delivery system at the doorstep of common man in an efficient and responsive manner. The high level e-Governance plan identifies the broad activities, which need to be taken up by the State. The Plan suggests implementation of the various cores, common & departmental initiatives in the State in a parallel manner. The indicative timelines for implementation of these initiatives has been spelt taking ideal scenarios into considerations. So it is perceived that the actual time lines for implementation of the initiatives may differ depending on the resourcing structure, leadership provided, infrastructure availability and acceptance among the Departmental staff and citizens. The e-Governance Roadmap/Plan will also cover the list of the

prioritized initiatives in respect of Department level and core infrastructure level. All the e-Governance activities mentioned in the above e-govt roadmap are dependent on the creation of the suitable e-governance teams within stipulated time to enable the successful implementation of the projects.

Short term plan

The e-Governance road map for the state of Jammu & Kashmir is in two phases - one short term and long term basis. The short term roadmap spans for the next 2 years i.e. till the end of 2011. The short term plan improvises the development of the core infrastructures which are:

State wide area network

The DPR for the State Wide Area Network (SWAN) has been made by NIC. After the NIC has failed to sign the MOU & SLA for the project the state has switched to the PPP model for the implementation of the project. The Expression of Interest (EOI) has been floated and 8 companies have responded to the same. STPI has been appointed as the consultant for SWAN. By March 2011 SWAN is expected to be operational.

State data centre

DPR prepared by M/s Wipro for the State Data Centre (SDC) builds up model at IT enclave Jammu. IT Enclave has been found to be the best choice for housing the SDC. Wipro has prepared the draft RFP which is currently under review. A joint EOI with SWAN had been floated for which 8 companies responded. Currently they are under review. By September 2010 SDC is expected to be operational.

Common service centre

J&K Bank have been appointed as single service agency for the entire state of J&K with a mandate to establish 1109 Common Service Centers (CSCs). J&K Bank till now has rolled out 300 CSCs out of which 111 are operational on vast connectivity and the remaining CSCs will be made functional by December 2010.

State Service Delivery Gateway/State Portal

The DPR for State Service Delivery gateway (SSDG) through the State Portal (SP) has been prepared & approved. A State Implementation committee has been constituted. M/s ILFS is the consultant for the project. A draft RFP is being prepared. 7 departmental MMPs has been selected for phase-I. The SSDG through the State Portal will provide services for agriculture, CAPD, Health, forest/Fisheries, elections, rural development & social welfare. These initiatives will be acting as the platform for providing the different e-Governance services in the state of J&K. The NEGP has identified 11 MMPs for the state. These are:

Table 1: Analysis of Agriculture & Allied factors on e-Governance policies in J&K

| S. No. | Item/Indicator | Unit | J&K | |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------|---------|---------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| 8 | Agriculture | | | |
| I) Land Utilization Statistics | | | | |
| a) | Reported Area | 000 Hects. | 2017-18 | 2416 |
| b) | Forest Land | -do- | -do- | 659 |
| c) | Reported area per Capita | Hects. | -do- | 0.19 |
| d) | Total cropped area | 000 Hects. | -do- | 1164 |
| e) | Net area sown | 000 Hects. | -do- | 752 |
| f) | Net area sown as % age of reported area | % | -do- | 31.11 |
| g) | Net area sown as % age of geographical area | % | 2017-18 | 74.67 |
| h) | Net area sown per Cultivator | Hects. | -do- | 1.34 |
| i) | Cropping intensity | % age | -do- | 155.87 |
| J) | Current fallows. | 000 Hects. | -do- | 104 |
| k) | Cultivable area | 000 Hects. | -do- | 857 |
| l) | Area sown more than once | 000 Hects. | -do- | 412 |
| II) Agricultural Holdings | | | | |
| a) | Operational holdings. | 000 No | 2015-16 | 1416.51 |
| b) | Area operated. | 000 Hect. | -do- | 842.31 |
| c) | Average size of Operational holdings. | (Hect) | -do- | 0.59 |
| III) Production of food grains | | | | |
| a) | Area sown under food grains | 000 Hects. | 2017-18 | 930 |
| b) | Production of food Grains | 000 Tones | -do- | 1989.64 |
| c) | Yield rate. | Kg/Hect. | 2017-18 | 2137 |
| IV) Principal crops | | | | |
| i) Rice | | | | |
| a) | Area sown. | 000 Hects. | 2017-18 | 274 |
| b) | Production. | 000 Tones | -do- | 513 |
| c) | Yield rate | Kg/Hect. | -do- | 1876 |
| ii) Maize | | | | |
| a) | Area sown | 000 Hect. | 2017-18 | 302.52 |
| b) | Production | 000 Tones | 2017-18 | 546.17 |
| c) | Yield rate | Kg/Hect | 2017-18 | 1805.42 |
| iii) Wheat | | | | |
| a) | Area sown | 000 Hect | 2017-18 | 299 |
| b) | Production | 000 Tones | -do- | 640 |
| c) | Yield rate | Kg/Hect | -do- | 2154.4 |

Table 2: 11MMPs identified by NEGP for J&K UT

| Mission Mode Projects | Departments |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 5Agriculture | Agriculture |
| Commercial Tax | Finance |
| e-District | Directorate of Commerce (Revenue) |
| Employment Exchange | Labour & Employment |
| Land Records | Revenue |
| Municipalities | Housing and Urban Development |
| Panchayat | Rural Development |
| Police | Home |
| Property Registration | Law |
| Road Transport | Transport |
| Treasuries | Finance |

Table 3: The state of J&K has added 5 more MMPs which are:

| Mission Mode Projects | Departments |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| e-Marketing | Handicrafts |
| Selective Delivery Schemes | Social Welfare |
| e-Tourism | Tourism |
| Telemedicine and HIMS | Health |
| e-Learning | Education |

Long Term Plan

The competition of the first phase will pave the way for the long term e-gov initiatives. The long term plan is devised with a more holistic view which will run from 2012 for a span

of around 8 years. The long term initiatives will take on the remaining MMPs which will again have a pilot phase, maturation phase and at last a state wide roll out segment. This phase will also initiate the various Common projects which will act as a bridge connecting all the departments thereby creating an internetwork of various departmental applications. The various common projects conceived are:

1. Human Resource Management System (HRMS)
2. Spatial Data Infrastructure Management
3. Audit monitoring
4. Court case monitoring

These projects will be utilized by all the departments across the state which will internally automate various departmental processes thereby achieving higher levels of productivity. The long term phase will also see various departmental applications coming up and adding in the departmental application stack. The departmental applications will focus exclusively on those respective departments where in automation of various processes & resource management. With the completion of short term initiatives of the e-Governance roadmap for the state of J&K the various departmental initiatives will evolve and curve out their own niche segment in the departmental application stack. The long term vision envisages the evolution of the next level of e-

Governance initiatives which will have a clearer objective with the short term objective nearing its completion.

Conclusion

Though the State of Jammu & Kashmir has taken few e-Governance initiatives, but the State is yet to arrive the status of e-Governance enabled State. After detailed socio economic analysis of the State, discussions with various Department heads and after evaluation of the existing initiatives in the State, the list of Group initiatives and Departmental initiatives has been arrived which need to be carried out by the State in next three years' time to achieve the State's e-Governance vision.

The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has taken couple of e-Governance initiatives in the State to bring transparency, efficiency and accountability in the system. Though the State is lagging behind most of the States in terms of execution of large scale initiatives effecting couple of Departments together. But the Government has taken a very proactive step to take the State forward with the progressive States. The Strategies & policies are already formulated to realize the e-Governance vision of the State to bring an all-round development to all the Departments. State is also evaluating the initiatives under NeGP for prioritization and subsequent implementation in the State. Apart from meeting citizen expectations & needs, e-Governance initiatives are also targeted to bring a sea of change in the administrative process of the Government. This kind of initiatives helps in increasing the internal efficiencies of the Departments & administrative setup, bringing more transparency in the process, making the government more responsive to the aspiration of the citizens and in simplifying the process of recording, updating & retrieval of records in the Departments. From the G2B services perspective, the main objectives of e-Governance will be to build a business friendly environment with attractive policies, transparent transaction environment and provision for punctual approval cycle with least possible time. The business community should be able to transact conveniently in a secured and reliable environment with transparency in dealings. The e-Governance initiatives are expected to bring a change in the whole process of service delivery & administrative functioning. The expected outcomes are listed below:

1. Quality Service Delivery
2. Decreased turnaround time for services
3. Efficient & transparent business process
4. Efficient Disaster Management Framework
5. Established institutional framework for e-Governance
6. Infrastructure availability for e-Governance applications
7. Connectivity between Departments & Offices

At the same time the outcomes of the e-Governance initiatives can be evaluated in tangible terms in scales of the following critical parameters which will give us an idea whether the initiatives are on the right track or not.

1. Extent and reach of the e governance solutions
2. Infrastructure available for future enhancements of e governance applications.
3. Robustness of application to take increased transaction load
4. Connectivity status and bandwidth available.
5. Kind of delivery mechanism/interface available for citizen services,
6. Efficiency of the Delivery Mechanism

7. Extent of equivalence and backend integration of applications achieved.
8. Arrangement made for data security and disaster management.
9. Arrangement for data consolidation and State Decision Support System.
10. Security Infrastructure for the applications.
11. Efficiency levels of the government.

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