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## Gram Darshan: The cyber face of rural Haryana

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### Abstract

India's enormous growth fragment depends upon citizen centricity which is highly correlated with educating citizen about the Government initiatives for public transformation. Large number of development schemes/programs are implemented by Govt. of India and Govt. of Haryana but most of the schemes are implemented in silos. Here the critical issue arises with the publicity of these schemes in order to establish citizen-centric approach and makes citizen as the strongest stakeholder in development programs. Govt. of Haryana has initiated to leverage the web platform to strengthen the citizen role in the country by providing information of development schemes on one platform titled as 'Gram Darshan' which establishes the accountability, transparency and two-way communication. This chronicle gives brief about Gram Darshan, and the motive to leverage this platform which unites the State as well as Gram Panchayats.

**Keywords:** Gram Darshan, cyber face, rural

### Introduction

India is a country of villages and the development of the country is synonymous with the development of rural communities. It is unfortunate and is regarded as a major impediment within the course of progression of the country that a major part of the population is leading an uncertain economic life. Haryana is one of the 29 states in India, located in the northern part of the country. Haryana has 6 administrative divisions, 22 districts, 142 community development blocks, and 6197 Gram Panchayats. In the National framework, rural development has been receiving attention and special significance for two important reasons. These are, around 70 percent of the population in rural areas still lives in villages and the country would not be able to move towards the path of progress, until there are adequate developments brought about within rural communities. Second reason is, backwardness of the rural communities is regarded as the major barrier towards leading to effective growth and development of the country. The rural areas experience backwardness in terms of methods of production, social organization and lack of awareness. In the present existence, there have been introduction of modern and innovative tools, strategies and methods like websites, social media, mobile platform etc. to spread awareness and disseminate the information in a quick manner.

### Background of Gram Darshan

Gram Darshan gets its foundation from e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project of Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt. of India. The e-Panchayat project holds great promise for the rural masses as it aims to transform the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) into symbols of modernity, transparency and efficiency. Under this project, Panchayat Enterprise Suite (PES) has been conceptualized which comprises 11 core common applications. National Panchayat Portal (NPP) is one of the 11 applications, which facilitates sharing of information in public domain for each panchayat. Under NPP, domain names of State PR Department along with Zila Parishads (ZPs), Panchayat Samitis (PSs) and Gram Panchayats (GPs) were registered on 'Gov.In' domain. Now, the State has decided to leverage the websites of Gram Panchayats as a means of communicating information to the rural citizens of the State.

### About Gram Darshan

'Gram Darshan' refers to the website of Gram Panchayats which will act as a holistic, participatory, transparent and accountable face of Gram Panchayats.

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It aims to provide unique identity to each GP and will act as the cyber face of Panchayats. There will be a dynamic website of all Gram Panchayats. A readymade platform of National Panchayat Portal of MoPR, GoI is initially being used for this purpose. Gram Darshan would be a versatile front-end of Local self-governments, which facilitates seamless access to the information. It is envisaged that this platform will help in information dissemination, introduce greater transparency and promote accountability at various levels.

### Vision of Gram Darshan

The vision of Gram Darshan is to "Make all Government services accessible to the common citizens in their locality, through the Gram Panchayats websites and ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services to realise their basic needs."

### Objectives of Gram Darshan

The key objectives of Gram Darshan are to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to:

- Make the Gram Darshan act as a hub of information for rural citizens.
- Bring in better Transparency, Accountability, Efficiency and RTI compliance of Panchayats.
- Improve Governance of local self-government.
- Provide easier, faster and cheaper access to the information uploaded by the line departments, thereby bridging the gap.
- Contribute towards social empowerment by engaging all sections of the community in the task of village development.
- Create and sustain a culture of cooperative living for inclusive and rapid development.

### Rationale

68.9% of our population lives in rural areas (Census 2011). Though number is expected to fall in the coming years, it is still estimated that more than half of our population would be rural even in 2050. Despite there being several past initiatives by governments at all levels – Central, State and Local – in the past, the level of improvement has not kept pace with the rising aspirations among Indians.

One reason for the failure of rural development schemes has been the lack of information and awareness among rural citizens. Separate flagship schemes targeting different sectors such as health (NRHM), education (SSA) and livelihood (NREGA, NRLM) have been launched in the past, but they had limited success. The "Gram Darshan" concept could address these challenges comprehensively and would provide the required information to the rural citizens with a click of the button. The detailed guidelines and related information of the development schemes of the line Departments would be uploaded at one platform i.e. Gram Darshan, which will be very helpful for the rural citizens. Gram Darshan will assist in enhancing the credibility of Gram Panchayats and acts as a source of information for rural citizens.

Gram Darshan portal would be easily accessible through laptop as well as mobile. It will help in better implementation of the Schemes of rural development and aim to uplift the life of poorest of the poor who live in the remotest and underdeveloped parts of India.

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### Salient Features of Gram Darshan



### Information Repository under Gram Darshan

Each of the Gram Panchayat website would display following information:-

- **Message Board:** It includes message from Hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and other Dignitaries.
- **Details of Elected Representatives:** It includes details of Sarpanch, Panches and Gram Sachiv of Gram Panchayat.
- **List of Public Assets:** Details of assets already created/ being created by D&P Department or by any Other Line Department of the State.
- **Details of Financial Assets:** Gram Panchayats would upload details of financial assets like Fixed Deposits and Committed Expenses like salaries etc.
- **Gram Sabha Meeting Details & Recordings:** Due to the ongoing pandemic covid-19, Gram Panchayats are unable to hold the Gram Sabha meetings. Hence, the concept of e-Gram Sabha has been launched by the State of Haryana. The proceedings of these e-Gram Sabhas would be uploaded on GP website.
- **Gram Panchayat Development Plan:** Gram Panchayats have been mandated for the preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) for economic development and social justice utilizing the resources available to them. The Gram Panchayats would upload their GPDP plan for current financial year along with their Budget.
- **Social Media Platforms:** There will be a provision to share the content with social media platforms like Facebook, twitter etc.
- Link to e-Gram Swaraj Portal launched by MoPR, GoI

and other key portals of Govt. of Haryana and Govt. of India.

- Option to upload Videos & Photographs of key events.
- Details of key Schemes implemented by various Departments.
- Option to upload Latest News / Sanction orders / Tenders.
- Link to fund flow of State funds through the proposed IT Solution.

### Citizen Suggestions, Demands and Complaints

In addition to the information repository, each Gram Panchayat website under Gram Darshan would be linked to a webpage to collect Citizen Suggestions, Demands and Complaints. The webpage will capture the following important fields like, Citizen's details, relates to which Department, Description of the work, Expected Benefits and Uploading of documents (in pdf format). Citizens suggestions and demands would be addressed by the State Govt./ Department or District Administration or by Gram Sabha during their planning phase. However, the complaints would be redirected to CM Window portal.

### Outcomes

#### Gram Darshan project would help the Gram Panchayats in following ways

**Larger Audience Coverage:** Going public enables connect with larger audience. Millions of online users can reach social profile. This does not happen overnight, but the potential is higher than spreading the word offline. This one factor alone is usually enough for creating an online presence for your portfolio.

**Information exchange/ Educating Stakeholders:** At its simplest, a website provides a quick and easy way of communicating information between GP and its Stakeholders. Gram Panchayat websites can offer advice/recommendations on various social aspects. Using digital presence, the information can be delivered in a well thought out and consistent way any time of the day or night.

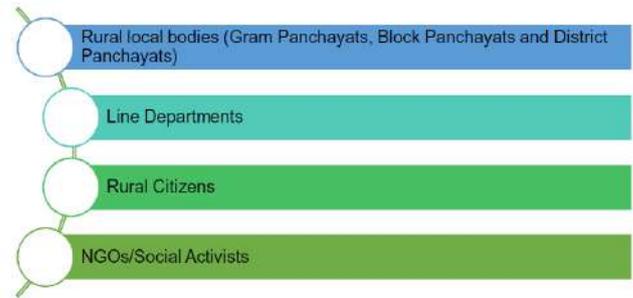
**Accessibility:** It is important for stakeholders to know that they can reach GPs easily. Having one click away information pertaining to relevant GPs goes long way in building the confidence of Stakeholders.

**Trust Building:** In today's modern world, there is an increased citizen's expectations from GPs. Having a commanding online presence makes people feel more comfortable about dealing with relevant GPs. The time spent writing GP profile is never wasted.

**Image Building:** Image building of GP is vital to success and GP profile building is one aspect of Image building. Become or remain the expert by demonstrating knowledge and expertise in your area of work. Writing/posting relevant information on the site that educate visitors and help them understand GP. Delivering on the promises contained in your GPs is where image building comes into play.

#### Technical Layout of Gram Darshan Portal

- Each of the GP website will comprise of one or more Portal Pages, of which one will be designated as a Home Page for the site.
- Each Portal Page will consist of one or more Portlets.
- Each portlet will contain one or more content items.



### Involvements of Line Departments

Gram Darshan would be a versatile front-end of Local self-governments. It is not only meant for Panchayats and Rural Development Department but for Line Departments (like School Education, Health, Animal Husbandry, Agriculture etc.) as well. It will act as an interface between the Line Departments, Gram Panchayats and inhabitants of that area. The line Departments would be able to publish/upload their information on the Gram Panchayats website so that it can be easily accessible to the rural Citizens. There would also be a provision to capture suggestions/demands of the rural citizens which would be shared with the concerned Departments for their consideration.

Moreover, as per the Constitutional Provision (243 G. Powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats), the Gram Panchayats are enabled to function as institutions of self-government w.r.t. the implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to the subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule. The 29 subjects listed in the XIth schedule of the Constitution are the following:-

- Agriculture
- Land Improvement
- Minor Irrigation
- Animal Husbandry
- Fisheries
- Social Forestry
- Minor Forest Produce
- Small scale industries
- Khadi, village and cottage industries
- Rural Housing
- Drinking Water
- Fuel and fodder
- Roads
- Rural Electrification
- Non-conventional energy
- Poverty alleviation programme
- Education
- Vocational education
- Adult and non-formal education
- Libraries
- Cultural activities
- Markets and fairs
- Health and sanitation
- Family welfare
- Women and child development
- Social welfare
- Welfare of the weaker sections
- Public distribution system
- Maintenance of community assets

Thus, there is a need of Convergence by the Line Departments for addressing 29 subjects of Eleventh schedule, which can be met through Gram Darshan. The Line Departments would be able to share village/GP wise details of their schemes and its achievements, beneficiaries etc. on the website of Gram Panchayats through Gram Darshan.

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