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VIKSIT BHARAT

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GOVERNANCE TRANSFORMED



C.K. MATHEW, SURENDRA NATH TRIPATHI
C. SHEELA REDDY & A.P. SINGH

Viksit Bharat @2047

Governance Transformed

C. K. MATHEW, SURENDRA NATH TRIPATHI, C. SHEELA
REDDY, A. P. SINGH, EDITORS

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Chapter 1. Viksit Bharat: New Paradigms in Governance—Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile¹

V. Srinivas²

Remember the time before independence ... yes, people had different methods of working but the goal was big—the freedom of India. In this Amrit Kaal we have to come together and work towards another big goal of a Viksit Bharat.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi

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² V. Srinivas, IAS, is Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India. He holds the additional charge of Director General of the National Centre for Good Governance. Since 2018 he has been representing India on the Council of Administration of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Brussels. Srinivas is the recipient of the Digital India Award 2020 for implementation of e-Office in the Central Secretariat. He has authored 3 books, published over 250 papers, and delivered over 100 orations. He is a senior administrator, a respected academician, and an institution builder par excellence.

Introduction

In the period 2019–2024, a new paradigm of governance emerged. India's governance model focused on accountability, transparency, responsiveness, and equitable and inclusive governance, which is participatory, consensus-oriented, and follows the rule of law with an emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the governance landscape of India radically changed in scale, scope, and learning paradigms. India succeeded in transforming technologically obsolete institutions into modern-day digital institutions which benefited millions of Indians. Today, India's rural countryside has changed—banking correspondents, e-Mitras, and common service centres have bridged the gap between the Internet-poor and the Internet-rich.

As India celebrates its Amrit Kaal period, Prime Minister Modi has given a clarion call for the adoption of Next Generation Reforms by bridging the gap between the government and citizens. In his address at the Special Session of Parliament, Prime Minister Modi said,

The first rays of the Amrit Kaal (golden era) are illuminating the nation with a new belief, fresh self-confidence, new enthusiasm, new dreams, new resolutions and a renewed strength of the Nation. Achievements of Indians are being discussed everywhere and with a sense of pride. This is the result of a collective effort in our 75-year Parliamentary history. As a result, today, the echo of our accomplishments is being heard world-wide.³

³ Address of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in the Special Session of Parliament, on September 18, 2023 (www.pmindia.gov.in).

This vision of next-generation administrative reforms by the Prime Minister has been diligently translated into reality by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). Secretariat reforms, special campaigns, benchmarking of governance and services, redressal of public grievances and improving service delivery, recognising meritocracy, and replication of good governance practices formed the core of India's good governance model. Technology adoption in the Central Secretariat also gained significant momentum, with ASOs/SOs/Under Secretaries undergoing reskilling in emerging technologies using i-GOT Mission Karmayogi. The digital march of the Central Secretariat has had significant spillover effects on attached, subordinate, and autonomous bodies, all of which adopted e-governance practices.

State Secretariats adopted e-Office, and 16,500 services were operationalised as e-Services. Strong digital platforms formed the bulwark of the Digital Public Infrastructure push of India in the G20 deliberations as a global public good. The impact of technology in governance was most visible in Jammu and Kashmir which provided an all-time high of 1,080 e-Services, adopted e-Office, saving crores of rupees from the abolition of the Darbar movement, developed the JK-IGRAMS, and convened regional and national conferences on e-governance.

Maximum Governance Minimum Government

India's governance model in the years 2019–2024 has undergone radical reforms. E-governance has simplified a citizen's interface with the government, brought the government and citizens closer, and enabled the benchmarking of service quality. The central government's e-governance models have benefited in bringing transparency and openness to

government processes. The widespread adoption of e-Office version 7.0 has created paperless offices in all ministries/departments in the Central Secretariat, with 93% of files being handled as e-files and 94% of receipts being handled as e-receipts. In 2023, the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) helped redress 21 lakh public grievances, and in 2024, until March, 9.58 lakh public grievances were redressed. The organisational reforms, coupled with significant reforms in personnel administration like Mission Karmayogi, lateral recruitment, timely promotion policies, regional conferences for the replication of good governance practices, and recognising excellence in public administration by scaling up the scheme for Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration, represent the new paradigm in India's governance model. New India's strong institutions are best symbolised by the adoption of e-governance practices. The best manifestation of "Maximum Governance Minimum Government" policy is a "digitally empowered citizen" and a "digitally transformed institution."

Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration and Civil Services Day

India observes April 21 every year as "Civil Services Day," the day is marked as an occasion for civil servants to rededicate themselves to citizens and renew their commitment to public service and excellence in work. The theme of the 16th Civil Services Day on April 21, 2023, was "*Viksit Bharat: Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile*." The Hon'ble Vice President of India inaugurated the Civil Services Day events on April 20.

The Conference deliberations were held during the two plenary sessions: "Empowering Citizens: Leveraging Public Digital Platforms" and "Promoting Circular Economy for

Sustainable Development,” as well as four breakaway sessions: “Piped Water for All: Jal Jeevan Mission,” “Holistic Health Care for All: Health and Wellness Centres,” “Improving Quality of Education: Improving Outcomes Through Vidya Samiksha Kendras,” and “Aspirational Blocks Programme: Reaching the Last Mile” on April 20, 2023. The Conference was attended by more than 25,000 delegates, with officials attending physically at Vigyan Bhawan and through the web-casting of the event in virtual mode. This was the highest ever participation in Civil Services Day events. The 16th Civil Services Day 2023 was a landmark event.

The Hon’ble Prime Minister conferred the Prime Minister’s Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2022, instituted to recognise the efforts and exceptional work done by civil servants, to 15 award winners. On this occasion, Prime Minister Modi said,

The Civil Services Day should become an opportunity to infuse new energy within us to make new resolutions. We should handhold the new officers with new enthusiasm. We should infuse them with enthusiasm to be a part of this system. We should take our colleagues forward while living our life to the fullest.

The 2022 PM’s Awards were given for innovations in Central Government, State Governments, and District Level innovations. In the Priority Programmes, district performances were evaluated for Har Ghar Jal Yojana, Health and Wellness Centres, Samagra Shiksha, and Aspirational Districts Programme. Hon’ble Prime Minister personally reviewed the scheme, and the restructuring of the scheme was undertaken as per his directions to ensure maximum participation, with a focus on empowering citizens and reaching the last mile with a saturation approach. In 2022, an all-time high number of nominations were received from States/UTs (Union Territories): 743 District Collectors submitted 2,520 nominations for the PM’s Awards 2022. This was 97% of the total districts in the country

which participated in the PM's Awards 2022 scheme. Committees at various levels—Screening Committees chaired by Additional Secretaries and an Expert Committee chaired by the Secretary—DARPG screened the applications based on the parameters of the scheme, presentations by District Collectors and other Heads of Departments, around 5.5 lakh citizen feedback calls, and “on the spot” studies conducted by two-member teams of the rank of Directors/Deputy Secretaries for all shortlisted initiatives. An empowered committee chaired by the Cabinet Secretary made the final selections from 32 shortlisted nominations. Of these, 15 nominations received the PM's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2022. The award-winning nominations were also presented in the exhibition at Vigyan Bhavan.

Amongst the PM's Awards winners 2022 in the Innovations Category are:

Innovations: Centre

1. Under National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, COVID-19 vaccines were made available free of cost at all government COVID Vaccination Centres (CVCs). The programme was built on four strong pillars that included a structured governance mechanism, ramping up vaccine production, efficient logistics management, implementation strategies for equitable vaccine administration, and an effective communication strategy for managing the infodemic-generated vaccine hesitancy and eagerness.
2. The PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade provides a GIS-enabled platform to facilitate planning and decision-making for the creation of next-generation infrastructure and seamless multimodal connectivity for ease of living and doing business.

Innovations: State

1. Mission Youth is an initiative of Government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to provide a vibrant medium for youth engagement and empowerment in Jammu and Kashmir. The innovation places youth at the centre of the Youth Policy, where local youth provide input for initiatives and become a part of transformative schemes.
2. The State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (SOTTO) of Gujarat has developed a strong ecosystem, with SOTTO Gujarat at its core, to ensure that the most vulnerable and underprivileged have access to prohibitively expensive life-saving treatments.

Innovations: District

1. *Operation Parivartan: Eradication of Illicit liquor of Solapur District, Maharashtra* aims for the complete eradication of illicit liquor through the rehabilitation of people involved in it. This initiative has positively affected the incidence of crime, social tensions, and domestic violence associated with illicit liquor.
2. *Project “SANVARDHAN” (VOCAL FOR LOCAL) of Rampur District, Uttar Pradesh*, aimed to tackle the issue of malnutrition in a mission mode. Deriving inspiration from the vision of Hon’ble PM, “Project Sanvardhan” was started to fight malnutrition by developing a multipronged strategy focusing on the preparation of “Poshan Kits”. Locally produced raw materials, aligned with the Prime Minister’s motto of “Vocal for Local,” are processed at local processing centre for the preparation of “Poshan Kits” which has led to increase in income levels of farmers.
3. *The New Age Learning Centre (NALC) in Changlang District, Arunachal Pradesh*, provides children of various age groups with fun and interactive learning under one roof. It places

special emphasis on providing end-to-end learning solutions at a single delivery point by integrating the features of a library, motivation centre, personality development space, skill training centre, and fun learning unit to make the learning more comprehensive and interesting at the same time.

The winners of the PM's Awards in four District Priority Sector Programmes were as follows:

1. *Har Ghar Jal Yojana*: Under this category, two awards were presented to the districts of Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu, and Burhanpur, Madhya Pradesh.
2. *Promoting quality education with an equitable and inclusive classroom environment through Samagra Shiksha*: Under this category, two awards were presented to the districts of Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh, and Mehsana, Gujarat.
3. *Promoting Swasth Bharat through Health and Wellness Centres*: Under this category, two awards were presented to the districts of Latur, Maharashtra, and Anakapalli, Andhra Pradesh.
4. *Aspirational Districts Programme*: Under this category, two awards were presented to the districts of Baramulla, UT of Jammu and Kashmir, and Gumla, Jharkhand.

The DARPG has made significant efforts for the dissemination and replication of the award-winning nominations. This was in accordance with Prime Minister Modi's vision of organising experience-sharing sessions by the award winners for a larger nation-wide audience. The National Good Governance Webinar Series, conceptualised in 2022–2023, presented 24 nominations in 12 monthly webinars in which 15,000 officials participated. The PM's Awards winners presented in the National Good Governance Webinar Series included Sakala of Government of Karnataka; e-Seva of Government of Andhra Pradesh; Sickle Cell Anaemia Control Programme of Government of Gujarat; Making Medicines Affordable in Chittorgarh district, Rajasthan; Holistic

Development through the One District-One Product Scheme in Siddharth Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh; Promoting Jan Bhagidari in Poshan Abhiyan in Asifabad district, Telangana; Prajavani Janahita of Siricilla district, Telangana; Sarkar AAPKE Dwar of Changlang district, Arunachal Pradesh; Reviving Sasur Khaderi of Government of Uttar Pradesh; Canal Top Solar Power Project of the Government of Gujarat; NDMC for Seamless End-to-End Delivery of Services without Human Intervention of NCT Delhi; Seva Sindhu Portal of Government of Karnataka; River Linking Project of Jalgaon district, Maharashtra; Innovative Participatory Drinking Water Approach in Rural Areas of Gujarat; etc. The themes covered included Improving Public Service Delivery, Initiatives in Health Sector, Aspirational District Programme, Redressal of Public Grievances, Environment, Innovations, Jal/Water Management, and Namami Gange. The response to the National Good Governance Webinars indicated the enthusiasm and interest that the series had generated amongst District Collectors and State Governments in the pursuit of good governance practices.

A compendium of the National Good Governance Webinar Series 2022–2023 was released by the Hon'ble Vice President of India on April 20, 2023, in the inaugural session of Civil Services Day events 2023. In 2023, DARPG curated the weekly Sansad TV television series *Abhinav Pahal*, in which award-winning nominations are presented by the award winners. An innovation portal, <https://darpg-innovation.nic.in>, has been launched to document the award-winning nominations.

National Conferences on e-Governance and National e-Governance Awards

The government implements the awards scheme for National Awards for e-Governance. This scheme is recognised as one of the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards

schemes in the country. In the year 2023, 425 nominations were received, out of which 16 nominations were conferred the National Awards for e-Governance. The National Annual e-Governance Conferences were held in Mumbai in 2020, in Hyderabad in January 2022, and in Katra in November 2022. This year, the 26th National e-Governance Conference was held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, on August 24–25, 2023.

The key takeaways from the 26th National e-Governance Conference were as follows:

1. The Conference drew inspiration from the words of Prime Minister Modi who stressed the role of technology in making governance and justice delivery systems reach the poorest of the poor, the marginalised, and women living in the hinterland. The vision of the Prime Minister of India's "Techade" can be realised through a vigorous and all-pervasive digital governance push.
2. Closer synergy amongst researchers, academia, industry, and startups in the field of e-governance is the way forward for India to become an Atmanirbhar Nation. The Vision India@2047 on governance is truly e-Vision India@2047, marked by the saturation and benchmarking of high-quality e-Services reaching out to the last man in the queue for service delivery in the true spirit of Antyodaya, with a focus on young policymakers and creating interactive forums between academia and startups.
3. Open digital platforms are tremendous force multipliers and are critical for providing affordable, inter-operable technology to India's citizens. Digital governance can enable massive reach and benefits in the conduct of special campaigns aimed at reducing pendency and institutionalising Swachhata with the objective of providing good governance.

The National e-Governance Conferences have had significant spillover effects on e-governance in States and Union Territories where they were held. The biggest transformation was

witnessed in Jammu and Kashmir, where the number of e-Services was scaled up from 15 in 2019 to 225 in 2022, and to 1,080 in 2023. This represents a remarkable achievement. The dissemination of the award-winning nominations through the National e-Governance Webinar Series is a new initiative of DARPG.

Regional Conferences

DARPG regularly conducts Regional Conferences for the replication of good governance and e-governance practices. In 2022–2024, Regional Conferences were held in Srinagar, Bengaluru, Itanagar, Mumbai, Bhopal, Jaipur, and Guwahati. These Conferences, attended by 500 officers per conference, have helped in presenting the States' best governance practices in addition to the Prime Minister's award-winning nominations. DARPG has also commenced curating the regional e-governance conferences which have facilitated the dissemination of the best e-governance practices. The Regional Conferences have enabled the creation of fully digital public institutions, strengthened linkages between stakeholders, and enhanced state portals and service portals for digital empowerment. The movement for the saturation of e-Services across the nation has been significantly strengthened during this period.

Good Governance Index 2021

DARPG launched the Good Governance Index (GGI) framework to gauge the performance of the States and UTs following the recommendations of the Group of Secretaries on Governance. It published the rankings for States and UTs for 2019 and 2021. The GGI framework assesses the state of governance across the States and UTs and ranks them accordingly. The objective is to create a tool which can be used uniformly across the States and UTs to assess the impact of various interventions undertaken by

the Central and State governments, as well as UTs. The GGI 2019 encompassed 10 sectors and 50 indicators, while the GGI 2021 encompassed 10 sectors and 58 indicators. Each sector carries equal weight and is composed of indicators with different weightings. The sectors of GGI 2020–2021 are: (a) Agriculture and Allied Sectors, (b) Commerce and Industries, (c) Human Resource Development, (d) Public Health, (e) Public Infrastructure and Utilities, (f) Economic Governance, (g) Social Welfare and Development, (h) Judicial and Public Security, (i) Environment, and (j) Citizen-Centric Governance.

The GGI 2020–2021 categorises States and UTs into four categories: (i) Other States—Group A; (ii) Other States—Group B; (iii) North-East and Hill States; and (iv) Union Territories. GGI helps assess the status of governance in States and UTs. Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Goa contribute to the composite score of 10 sectors under the GGI 2021 assessment. Uttar Pradesh has shown an 8.9% increase over the GGI 2019 performance. The GGI 2021 states that 20 States have improved their composite GGI scores over the GGI 2019 scores. This indicates that the overall governance in the States of India is moving in a positive direction. The biannual publication of Good Governance 2023 is under formulation and will be released in the coming months.

District Good Governance Index

As the District is a basic unit in field administration and governance, implementing various programmes and innovative projects for the well-being of citizens, measuring their performance becomes important for proper assessment and planning which will lead to the development of the districts and the region as a whole. The District Good Governance Index (DGGI) represents the next-generation administrative reform in benchmarking governance at the district level. This Index is prepared after extensive stakeholder consultations for benchmarking governance in all the districts of a State on a

number of indicators under different sectors. The ranking fosters healthy competition amongst districts to address existing gaps, plan to bridge these gaps, and aid decision-making tools.

District Good Governance Index of Jammu and Kashmir: The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has conceptualised, formulated, and released the DGGI for Jammu and Kashmir in consultation with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. India's first DGGI was designed and developed for the UT of Jammu and Kashmir by Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad, as a knowledge partner was launched by the Home Minister of India on January 22, 2022. The DGGI is a framework comprising performance under 10 governance sectors, having 58 indicators with 116 data points. The DGGI helps to identify the impact of various government interventions at the district-level and provides a futuristic roadmap for improving district-level governance and service delivery with targeted interventions.

District Good Governance Index of Gujarat: The DGGI for Gujarat provides significant data insights to the State of Gujarat and other stakeholders in their efforts to address existing gaps, plan to bridge these gaps, and serve as a decision-making tool. The ranking is expected to foster healthy competition amongst districts in the quest to provide citizen-centric administration and governance. DGGI Gujarat is the first for any large State of India, as the Index benchmarks governance in all 33 districts of Gujarat on 65 indicators under 10 sectors. The DGGI Gujarat was released by the Chief Minister of Gujarat during the valedictory session of the three-day "10th Chintan Shibir"—a brainstorming session for senior and junior government officials of Gujarat—at Kevadia in Narmada district of Gujarat on May 21, 2023.

District Good Governance Index of Arunachal Pradesh: DGGI Arunachal Pradesh is first DGGI for a northeastern State of India. The Index benchmarks governance in all 25 districts of Arunachal Pradesh on 65 indicators under 8 sectors. The ranking fosters healthy competition amongst districts and provides guidance to the State government as well as the District

administration of Arunachal Pradesh in their efforts to address existing gaps, plan to bridge these gaps, and serve as a decision-making tool. The District Good Governance Index of Arunachal Pradesh was released on June 8, 2023.

Good Governance Week

The nation-wide weekly celebrations of good governance were organised by DARPG in 2021, 2022, and 2023. The hallmark event of Good Governance Weeks in 2021 and 2022 was the weeklong nation-wide campaign “Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore 2022,” aimed at addressing public grievances and improving service delivery.

Prime Minister Modi, in his message on the eve of Good Governance Week 2021, said,

In the Amrit Period of Independence, we are marching ahead rapidly to create a transparent system, efficient process and smooth governance to make development all-round and all-inclusive. In this context, the theme of the week—Prashasan Gaon ki Ore—assumes even greater significance.

The second nationwide campaign, “Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore,” was conducted from December 19–24, 2022. Guided by the principle of Citizen-First, the government strived to make the eco-system transparent and faster by simplifying procedures and processes at every level. Various citizen-centric initiatives, including redressal of public grievances, online services, disposal of service delivery applications, sought to expand the outreach of service delivery mechanisms and make them more effective. The emphasis was on projecting the immense potential of technology to bring citizens and government closer, as a powerful tool to empower citizens and as a medium to optimise transparency and accountability in day-to-day functioning. The government’s endeavour was to increase the impact of governance and reduce the interference of

government in every citizen's life, to increase opportunities and remove obstacles from the citizen's path.

The message from Prime Minister Modi was conveyed by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, at an event attended by District Collectors, Chief Secretaries/Additional Chief Secretaries, and Administrative Reforms Secretaries of 36 States and UTs, along with Senior Officials from Central Ministries/Departments. During the "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" campaign, District Collectors organised special camps/events at Tehsil Headquarters/Panchayat Samitis to resolve public grievances and improve service delivery. The campaign was monitored centrally in real time through a dashboard created for this purpose on the "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" Portal. In 2023, the Good Governance Week events included a series of workshops on Good Governance, Secretariat Reforms, Institutionalising Swachhata and Reducing Pendency, Capacity Building Programmes, Innovations in State Governments, and Pensioner-Centric Reforms.

The National e-Services Delivery Assessment 2021

The National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) was undertaken to boost the e-government endeavours and drive digital government excellence. The study report assesses States, UTs, and focuses on Central Ministries regarding the effectiveness of e-governance service delivery. NeSDA helps the respective governments improve their delivery of citizen-centric services and shares best practices across the country for all States, UTs, and Central Ministries to emulate.

The Department has undertaken NeSDA 2019 and 2021. The preparation of NeSDA 2023 is currently in progress. In the assessment of State portals, Kerala remains a front-runner and the progress made by Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir, and

Uttar Pradesh in NeSDA 2021 is commendable. In service portals, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Meghalaya have topped the rankings. All States/UTs have shown improvements in the promotion of integrated service portals and the number of services being offered on their State portals. India's e-governance policies have shown improvements and citizen satisfaction levels have risen. In many ways, technology has succeeded in bringing government and citizens closer. The NeSDA 2021 report assessed 1,400 e-Services across States and UTs and reported that India's e-Services had grown by 60% in the period 2019–2021. Sixty-nine per cent of the mandatory e-Services have been delivered by States/UTs in 2021, up from 48% in NeSDA 2019. Seventy-four per cent of the respondents of the nation-wide citizen survey are satisfied or very satisfied with the e-Services.

DARPG is collaborating with States and UTs to ensure the timely implementation of recommendations of the NeSDA 2021 for the rollout of all mandatory e-Services by States and UTs in a time-bound manner. The DARPG is also coordinating with States and UTs to strengthen the State Portals and Service Portals to enhance the ease of living for citizens. The objectives of the monitoring and collaboration are to adopt the 56 mandatory services and to achieve saturation e-Service delivery by all the States/UTs. DARPG has designed the NeSDA-Way Forward, Status of Implementation Dashboard in line with the focus areas of e-governance. While Central and State Governments are taking utmost care and importance to improve their service delivery through digital channels, this enhanced dashboard aims to create the baseline for online service delivery and build an inclusive digital ecosystem. The monthly reports institutionalise the nation's endeavours for improved delivery of e-Services and prepare States/UTs for NeSDA 2023. The objectives of the monthly progress are the saturation of e-Services, the promotion of faceless and suo-moto entitlement-based delivery of services, the identification of bottlenecks in the implementation of recommendation process, and the

dissemination of best practices. Starting from April 2023, 12 monthly editions have been released until April 2024. In the period from April to December 2023, the nation's e-Services increased from 11,500 to 16,500. It is expected that the number of e-Services will reach saturation by 2025.

Effective Redressal of Public Grievances

Prime Minister Modi has said “effective redressal of public grievances” is one of the most important aspects of Indian democracy, and he has accorded the highest priority to the subject with a focus on citizen engagement. The Prime Minister's commitment to an effective grievance redressal mechanism emanated from his early years in government as Chief Minister of Gujarat when he launched the SWAGAT portal in 2003. The SWAGAT portal of Gujarat celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2023 and was a pioneer in introducing citizen interaction, categorisation of grievances, and effective redressal of public grievances.

The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances is the nodal agency responsible for policy initiatives on public grievance redressal mechanisms and citizen-centric initiatives.

The Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) is an online platform available to citizens 24/7 to lodge their grievances with the public authorities on any subject related to service delivery. It is a single portal connected to all the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India and States. Every Ministry and State has role-based access to this system. CPGRAMS is also accessible to citizens through a standalone mobile application downloadable through Google Play Store and a mobile application integrated with UMANG. Citizens can access the system online through the portal www.pgportal.nic.in. The efficacy of the CPGRAMS portal has

been an important thrust area of the nation's Grievance Redressal Systems.

The grievances received by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances are forwarded to the concerned Ministries/Departments/State Governments/UTs which deal with the substantive functions linked with the grievance for redressal, with intimation to the complainant. India's policy for grievance redressal has placed emphasis on timely grievance redressal and quality of grievance redressal. An upper limit of 30 days was introduced, along with staggered redressal of grievances based on priority, with an appeal mechanism in cases where the citizen is not satisfied.

Under CPGRAMS 7.0, grievances are routed to the last-mile grievance officer level. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has issued guidelines to all Ministries/Departments to sensitise grievance officers for effective redressal of public grievances. There exist several digital portals in the Government of India for effective redressal of public grievances—CPGRAMS, Rail Madad, and e-Nivaran—all of which are linked to CPGRAMS. All Ministries/Departments have designated nodal Grievance Redressal Officers for effective redressal of grievances. Periodic reviews by the Hon'ble Prime Minister have enabled the ushering-in of transformational reforms in CPGRAMS, as represented by the 10-step reform programme of CPGRAMS launched in 2022.

The implementation of CPGRAMS 10-step reforms has resulted in a significant increase in the number of public grievances being redressed every month, reaching over 1 lakh cases, and a reduction in timelines for disposal to 16 days in Central Ministries/Departments over the past 22 months. The CPGRAMS portal has mapped 1.01 lakh Grievance Redressal Officers, and 25 lakh citizens have registered to file over 20 lakh grievances per year. The grievance redressal time has decreased from 28 days in 2019 to 10 days in March 2024. Considerable success was achieved in effective redressal of public grievances during the COVID-19 pandemic with the launch of the COVID-19

Grievance Redressal Dashboard and portal on the CPGRAMS portal. During this was a period, 1.25 lakh COVID-19 public grievances were redressed with an average disposal period of 1.45 days.

The status of the grievance filed in CPGRAMS can be tracked with the unique registration ID provided at the time of the complainant's registration. CPGRAMS also provides an appeal facility to citizens if they are not satisfied with the resolution by the Grievance Officer. After the closure of a grievance, if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, he/she can provide feedback. If the rating is "Poor," the option to file an appeal is enabled. The status of the appeal can also be tracked by the petitioner with the grievance registration number. Since July 2022, DARPG has also reached out to citizens filing a grievance through CPGRAMS by contacting them through an outbound call centre and soliciting their feedback on their closed grievance.

Grievance Redressal Machinery in the States

The State governments have developed advanced mechanisms for redressal of public grievances. States have operationalised public grievances cells which receive complaints from citizens, forward them to the concerned departments, and follow them up. Several Chief Ministers hold regular citizen interactions through physical or virtual meetings for hearing and redressal of public grievances. In several States, senior officers visited districts and villages as part of Good Governance Week celebrations in 2021 and 2022, when nation-wide campaigns for the effective redressal of public grievances were conducted. The impact of multiple grievance redressal platforms functioning in unison during Good Governance Week from December 19 to 25, 2022, was quite significant—315 lakh service delivery

applications being disposed of and 6 lakh public grievances being redressed. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances has collaborated closely with States on several initiatives for effective redressal of public grievances.

The areas of collaboration included:

1. Institution of an award category for Improving Service Delivery and Redressal of Public Grievances under the Scheme for the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2020.
2. National Workshop on Technology Platforms in Public Grievance Redressal on February 18, 2021, and the National Workshop on Sevottam in November 2022 and May 2023.
3. One Nation One Portal initiative involves the integration of CPGRAMS with State Grievance Portals and reverse integration.
4. Sevottam Capacity Building Programmes for Grievance Redressal Officers.
5. Publication of monthly reports from 2022.
6. Collaboration with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir for revamping the Awaaz-e-Awam portal and relaunching it as JK-IGRAMS.

In pursuance of the decisions taken by the Prime Minister on April 16, 2022, CPGRAMS reforms were implemented by DARPG to improve the quality of grievance disposal and reduce the disposal time. A comprehensive 10-step CPGRAMS reform programme was adopted after several rounds of consultations with key stakeholders. DARPG established collaborations with Common Service Centre (CSCs), Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT-K), National Institute of Smart Governance (NISG), National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad (NID), Quality Council of India (QIC), Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Centre for Good Governance Hyderabad, and Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) Gurgaon through MOUs and work orders.

The 10-step reforms of CPGRAMS are outlined as follows:

1. Universalisation of CPGRAMS 7.0: Auto-routing of grievances to the last mile
2. Technological Enhancements: Automatic flagging of urgent grievances leveraging artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning (ML)
3. Language Translation: CPGRAMS portal in 22 scheduled languages, along with English
4. Grievance Redressal Index: Ranking of Ministries/Departments based on their performance
5. Feedback Call Centre: A 50-seat call centre to collect feedback directly from every citizen whose grievance is redressed
6. One Nation One Portal: Integration of State portal and other Government of India portals with CPGRAMS
7. Inclusivity and Outreach: Empowering the most remote citizens to file grievances through CSCs
8. Training and Capacity Building: Conducted by ISTM and State Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) under Sevottam scheme to enable effective grievance resolution
9. Monitoring Progress: Monthly reports for both the Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs
10. Data Strategy Unit: Established at DARPG for insightful data analytics

Two project management units (PMUs) were established at DARPG: (a) a PMU with the QCI team for preparation of the CPGRAMS monthly reports for Central Ministries and States and (b) a PMU with Centre for Good Governance Hyderabad team for the preparation of Grievance Redressal Index, in addition to the Data Strategy Unit with Data Analytics specialists in collaboration with the National Institute of Smart Governance. The Public Grievances Division of DARPG was strengthened with comprehensive redeployment, and all vacant posts were filled. DARPG collaborated with 22 State ATIs for

implementation of the Sevottam programme following extensive discussions with HIPA Gurgaon.

In pursuit of the deliberations at the Chintan Shivir, the DARPG has further enhanced the processes for establishing a greater connection with citizens. The steps include improvements in call centre engagement with citizens, speech records being examined in senior-level meetings, training programmes for operators, sharing speech records of appeals filed through the call centre with appellate officers, introduction of chatbot, introduction of an outgoing call centre, and addition of new call centre operators.

The CPGRAMS reforms received considerable national and international appreciation. *India Today* featured CPGRAMS reforms as amongst 100 big tech ideas for the revolutions needed in 10 key sectors to make India a developed nation by 2047. In April 2024, *CPGRAMS: A foundation for SMART government* was presented at the 3rd Biennial Meeting of the Pan-Commonwealth Heads of Public Service/Secretaries to the Cabinet on “institutionalisation of SMART government to enhance public service delivery” and was recognised as a state-of-the-art grievance redressal system that has engaged and empowered citizens across India having a transformative impact on the transparency and accountability of government. The evolution of India’s vision to use AI for further policy, process, and people-related changes; to operationalise the CPGRAMS mobile app; and to adopt the CPGRAMS 7.0 version in all States/UTs was also recognised in the Outcome Statement of the Commonwealth Biennial Meeting.

Best Practices in State Grievance Portals

SPANDANA (Andhra Pradesh): The Government of Andhra Pradesh’s grievance redressal portal, operationalised at www.spandana.ap.gov.in, is one of the most comprehensive grievance redressal portals in India. The common platform

through the SPANDANA portal integrates all levels. The process flow of SPANDANA envisages that grievances are received from multiple sources—on the portal; through toll-free numbers; through petitions received via e-mails; and through grievance cells at district, division, and tehsil levels. Village-level volunteers receive door-step SPANDANA applications and deliver them to the GRAMA SACHIVALAYAM for redressal. Mondays are designated as grievance days, and the integration of all offices at District, Sub-Division, and Mandal is through video conferencing on grievance days. A 14-digit unique ID is issued through the SPANDANA website. Citizens can track their grievances using the tracking ID provided in the acknowledgement slip. The Action Taken Report is uploaded on the portal and sent by SMS to the citizen. A dedicated toll-free call centre (18002331077) has been operationalised for feedback, and a 100% quality audit on redressal is undertaken. There is an option for reopening a grievance if the citizen is not satisfied with the quality of disposal.

SWAGAT (Gujarat): The CMO Gujarat has been operating an ICT-based programme since April 2003 for effective, transparent, and speedy redressal of citizens' grievances at various levels of the government throughout the State, including at the highest levels, through direct interaction with the Chief Minister. The SWAGAT portal is a combination of digital and communication technology designed to resolve public grievances effectively. Under SWAGAT, citizens can register their grievances at village, taluka, and district levels. Citizens can view the status of their applications online using their allotted password and login ID at any Internet access point. The software application enables an online review of sub-district, district, and State SWAGAT outcomes, and the disposal of grievances is also monitored by the software. Cases requiring the attention of the Chief Minister are selected based on criteria such as being long-standing, acute humanitarian issues, difficult to resolve at other levels in government, and those that have policy implications. Applications are registered in three

categories: (i) policy matters, where a limitation or gap in the policy requires attention; (ii) long pending grievances, where the application has remained unresolved after the initial application; and (iii) first-time grievances which are sent to lower levels. There are four levels of SWAGAT: on every fourth Thursday of the month, the SWAGAT hearings are held in the state capital Gandhinagar, by the Chief Minister of Gujarat through video conference. The District SWAGAT is held in all 33 districts, and the Sub-District SWAGAT and GRAM SWAGAT are also held as per prescribed schedules. The four levels are well integrated by software. SWAGAT has enhanced the accountability of the government, led to systemic changes as decisions lead to policy reform, increased citizen satisfaction, ensured total transparency and monitoring, and raised awareness at the highest levels of authority regarding public grievances. SWAGAT received the 2010 UN Public Service Award for improving transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in public service.

JK-IGRAMS (Jammu and Kashmir): JK-IGRAMS along with LG's (Lieutenant Governor) monthly *mulaqaat* with citizens and review with officers, provides an institutional framework that is accessible to all in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The JK-IGRAMS portal is www.jkgrievance.in, and key features include the decentralisation of grievance system by mapping subordinate offices up to the block level, setting up of two call centres in Jammu and Srinagar for registering grievances. Collectors have been made epicentre and all Districts/Blocks are linked to CPGRAMS. Grievance analysis teams are deployed to study and share findings for monthly *mulaqaat* with the LG of J&K. The impact increased disposal from 41% to 74% in a 4-month period across all categories. The dedicated call centre provides a unique JK-IGRAMS number which is forwarded to the grievance officer, and the online status is available to the citizen for effective follow-up. Various analytical reports and other MIS (management information system) options on the portal assist the administration in data filtering.

SAMADHAN (Uttar Pradesh): SAMADHAN is an integrated web-based application system which brings all grievance redressal mechanisms onto one platform. It enables instant and easy communication between the government and citizens, resulting in the speedy resolution of grievances from anywhere and at any time. It also provides a facility for the online submission of grievances by aggrieved citizens. The grievance input mechanism includes Janta Darshan by the Chief Minister at State level and District Collector at the District level. The SAMADHAN portal integrates different channels and portals, including the PG-Portal, Anti Bhu Mafia Portal, Anti-Corruption Portal, CM Helpline, etc. The citizen relationship management system includes online registration and tracking of grievances, project management and monitoring, analytical reports, calls/SMS/e-mail, integrated and single platform, send reminders, and giving feedback. Feedback is obtained through the CM Helpline call centre and the complainant can also provide online feedback through the portal. Negative feedback is reviewed by one level higher, through grading opinion, if senior officer finds disposal of the grievance insufficient/not satisfactory then he/she can revive the disposed complaint.

Special Campaigns

The Special Campaign 2.0 was implemented in the central government from October 2 to 31, 2022, with the objective of institutionalising Swachhata and minimising pendency in government. Under Special Campaign 2.0, 4.18 lakh public grievances were redressed, cleanliness campaigns were carried out in 99,706 office spaces, 29.10 lakh files were weeded out, 88.25 lakh square feet of space was freed, and scrap disposal earned ₹364.50 crores. The Special Campaign 2.0 brought in a number of success stories in digitisation, efficient management of office spaces, enhancement of office premises, environment-friendly practices, inclusivity, protocols and mechanisms being

put in place, and waste disposal. Departments/Ministries gave special attention to attached/subordinate/filed offices, including in the remotest parts of India, during the month-long campaign period from October 2 to 31, 2022. Special Campaign 2.0 was 17 times larger than the Special Campaign of 2021 in terms of cleanliness campaign sites. The Special Campaign 2.0, holistic in size and scale, witnessed widespread participation from thousands of officials and citizens who came together to create a movement for Swachhata in Government Offices. Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State participated in the Special Campaign 2.0, providing leadership and guidance in its implementation.

The Department of Posts has conducted the cleanliness campaign in 24,000 post offices, the Ministry of Railways has conducted it in 10,716 railway sites, the Department of Defence in 5,922 campaign sites, and the Ministry of Home Affairs in 11,559 campaign sites. Sixteen Ministries/Departments have conducted the Special Campaign 2.0 in over 1,000 campaign sites, and 31 Ministries/Departments have conducted the Special Campaign 2.0 in over 100 campaign sites. The progress of Special Campaign 2.0 was monitored on a dedicated portal (<http://www.pgportal.gov.in/scdpm22>) on a daily basis. About 215 Nodal Officers/Sub-Nodal Officers were appointed in all Ministries/Departments. The Special Campaign 2.0 was reviewed on a weekly basis by Secretaries to the Government of India. The progress of the Special Campaign has been widely reported in social media with over 67,000 social media tweets by Ministries/Departments. About 127 PIB (Press Information Bureau) statements were issued by Ministries/Departments. Over 300 best practices in conducting the Special Campaign 2.0 as a citizen-centric movement, to bring citizens and government closer and create an aesthetically pleasant work environment, were reported by Ministries/Departments.

The Special Campaign 3.0, held from October 2 to 31, 2023, was India's largest campaign for institutionalising Swachhata

and reducing pendency in government offices and witnessed many best practices and milestones. A saturation approach was adopted and the Swachhata campaign covered 2.56 lakh office spaces in the remotest parts of India, freed up 159 lakh square feet of office space for effective use, 48.42 lakh files were reviewed, and ₹547 crore of revenue earned from disposal of office scrap and condemned vehicles. The Special Campaign 3.0 gained significant traction on social media with over 1 lakh social media posts by Ministries/Departments; 900 tweets from the DARPG Twitter (now X) handle; 1,200 infographics on #specialcampaign3; and issue of 282 PIB Statements. In the period 2021–2023, government has conducted three successful Special Campaigns which have helped in institutionalising Swachhata and reducing pendency in government. The cumulative progress achieved in the three Special Campaigns included 4.02 lakh office spaces being covered, 351 lakh square feet of office space being freed, 96.08 lakh files being weeded out, and ₹1,153.50 crores of revenue being earned.

Special Campaigns 1.0–3.0 also had a significant impact in reducing pendency and enhancing digitisation in Central Secretariat. Given the effectiveness of special campaign model, government has decided that all Ministries/Departments will devote 3 hours per week for Swachhata activities. DARPG publishes the monthly Secretariat Reforms covering various aspects of Special Campaign: (a) Swachhata Initiatives and Reducing Pendency, (b) Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making, and (c) Adoption of e-Office in Central Secretariat. The Special Campaign model and Secretariat Reforms were replicated by the Government of Maharashtra as Mantralaya Reforms.

Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in the Central Secretariat

In 2022, the Central Secretariat continued to implement the Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making in government. Under this initiative, a four-pronged approach was adopted by the Central Government, with DARPG as the nodal department:

1. Delaying review of channels of submission for creating flatter organisations—the channel of submission was reduced to not more than four levels from seven to eight levels
2. Delegation of financial/administrative powers to lower functionaries
3. Adoption of Desk Officer system to ensure single points of file disposal
4. Adoption of e-Office version 7.0 and digitalisation of all receipts in the Central Registration Units.

Some of the key highlights are as follows:

- All Ministries/Departments of the Government of India have reviewed their channels of submission and adopted delaying (60 fully delayed; 19 partially delayed). With this, the channel of submission for most subjects has been reduced to up to four levels. Financial delegation for miscellaneous and contingent expenditure was made to Deputy Secretary/Director-level officers. Officers were divided into separate categories. Delaying entailed reducing the number of levels, and level jumping was adopted amongst officers and staff with the guideline that no officer falling in a particular category will submit files to another officer in the same category, which means they work in parallel, horizontal organisational structures. Additional Secretaries/Joint Secretaries were placed in category II, and Deputy Secretary/Under Secretary were placed in category

III across Ministries/Departments. Several areas of financial delegation, which had not been revisited for several years, were reviewed.

- The Initiative for Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making has led to the creation of flatter organisations. In 2020, the average number of distinct levels for active files was 8.01 which decreased to 5.54 levels in December 2023 and further down to 4.11 levels in November 2023. As of March 2024, the average number of distinct levels for active files stands at 4.4.
- All Ministries/Departments have upgraded to e-Office version 7.0. Ninety-five per cent of the new files opened in March 2024 were e-files. A significant reduction in the e-files to p-files ratio has been witnessed. E-Office has also created the option for inter-ministerial e-file movement and monitoring of e-receipts. Ninety-five per cent of receipts were digitised in April 2024. E-Office version 7.0 has facilitated inter-ministerial e-file movement. The use of heavy-duty scanners in central registration units was adopted, and fresh receipts were replied to in digital form. The digitalisation of Central Registration Units, along with e-Office, has resulted in a significant reduction in paper consumption in several Ministries/Departments. Flatter organisations have enabled faster decision-making.
- To enable a work-from-home environment during the pandemic, the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure 2019 provided a Virtual Private Network Facility up to the Deputy Secretary level, and laptops were provided up to Under Secretary level. Desk Officer system is operationalised in 40 Ministries/Departments where it was feasible. The Ministry of External Affairs has operationalised 223 Desk Officers with specific assignments of responsibilities. The adoption of the Desk Officer system has had significant benefits in service-related areas.
- The government's initiative for "Increasing Efficiency in Decision Making" represented one of the most complicated and far-reaching administrative reforms witnessed in the

Central Secretariat. It brought about a silent reform in work culture, reduced hierarchies, and resulted in significant adoption of new technology. It has also enabled responsive communication and enhanced efficiency in processing of receipts. The initiative has been incorporated into the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure 2022 and duly institutionalised. The DARPG has collaborated with the Government of Maharashtra in updating the Manual of Office Procedure and replicating the digital Secretariat model in one of the largest State Secretariats of India. The adoption of e-Office has enabled the creation of permanent digital repositories of file records, enhanced transparency, and increased accountability levels in the government.

Vision India@2047

The DARPG is amongst the Ministries/Departments of government that is formulating its Vision India@2047. The DARPG constituted an Advisory Group under the chairmanship of the Minister of State for PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions with 15 Sector Specialists including National Experts from Senior Civil Servants, IITs, IIMs, central and state universities, and public policy research organizations. A working group under the chairmanship of the Secretary of DARPG was constituted for the formulation of the Vision India@2047 under the overall supervision of the Advisory Group. The Indian Institute of Public Administration served as the Knowledge Partner of DARPG in formulating its Vision India@2047. The Advisory Group held three rounds of meetings, and the Working Group held seven rounds of meetings. Based on the deliberations of the Working Group and the Advisory Group, DARPG prepared a Vision India@2047 document with the theme of Bringing Citizens and Government Together.

National Centre for Good Governance

The National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) has the mandate to promote good governance by conducting training and capacity-building programmes at the national/international levels on public policy and governance. It serves as a think tank for governance and policy reform initiatives, carrying out studies on issues relating to governance, and organising consultations, workshops, and seminars to promote improved governance.

In the period 2019–2024, the NCGG has emerged as one of India's largest capacity-building institutions for International Civil Servants. The NCGG has scaled up its international capacity-building programmes from 5 programmes a year in 2018–2019 for 1 country to 47 programmes a year in 2024–2025 for 17 countries. The NCGG has successfully created a global outreach and interest in India's governance model, with webinars covering 54 countries and a national outreach through the National Good Governance Webinars. Furthermore, the NCGG has successfully established collaborations with a number of apex public policy institutions in India, and capacity-building programmes for State Civil Servants have also been held. The NCGG has received several requests for collaboration from ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) countries (Maldives, Gambia, Tanzania, Iran) and Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI)/IIMs for setting up Centres of Excellence for scaling up State capacity.

Since 2014, 2,660 civil servants from Bangladesh, 1,000 civil servants from the Maldives, 118 civil servants from the Gambia, 97 civil servants from Myanmar, 95 civil servants from Sri Lanka, and 150 civil servants from Cambodia have undergone capacity-building programmes at NCGG. Seventy-one capacity-building programmes were conducted for Bangladesh, 33 capacity-building programmes were conducted for Maldivian civil servants during this period. The NCGG has developed and conducted one-week programmes for Permanent Secretaries

and two-week programmes for Secretary Generals, District Collectors, and Deputy Secretaries. The focus areas for capacity-building programmes included administrative reforms and effective redressal of public grievances, digital public infrastructure as a global good, open network for digital commerce, bringing transparency to government procurement, making of Aadhaar: A Tool for Governance, Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, India's Fiscal Policy Reforms, Poverty Alleviation Initiatives in India, NITI Aayog—Vision India@2047, Mission Karmayogi, Capacity Building of Officials—Indian initiatives, Anti-Corruption strategies, Lok Pal in India, Pricing of Goods in India, PM Gati Shakti, India's COVID-19 vaccine journey, etc. Country-specific subjects included bilateral relations with India, leadership and motivation, ethics in administration, group discussions, and presentations. The Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions interacted with the delegates and exchanged views on the government's "Maximum Governance Minimum Government" policies.

The High Commission of the Republic of Gambia acknowledged the NCGG after the successful completion of the programme for Permanent Secretaries on May 27, 2022, stating that "the Special Training Program will be of immense help to the Senior Government Officials as they work on the implementation of the National Development Plan of the new Government."

The Civil Services Commission of Maldives following the India–Maldives workshop on good governance on February 24, 2023, said that "We have received very good feedback from the participants of the workshop. They found the workshop to be very informative and speakers to be very inspirational and shared valuable guidance pertinent to current times."

During the capacity-building programmes a lot of emphasis has been placed on group work and the creation of horizontal linkages in organisations, in line with the Chintan Shivar model of the Government of India. The focus has been on adopting

technology in governance to reduce the interface between citizens and government.

The NCGG has also conducted domestic capacity-building programmes for State Civil Service officers for the States of Gujarat, Arunachal Pradesh, and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Seventy-five officers of the Gujarat Administrative Service, 310 officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service, and 150 officers of the Arunachal Pradesh Administrative Service have attended capacity-building programmes at the NCGG.

For further dissemination of India's Good Governance practices, the NCGG conducts a number of international webinars called the "ITEC-NCGG" webinars on a range of subjects. The 2020 webinar series, titled "Good Governance Practices in a Pandemic," witnessed the participation of over 400 officials from more than 50 ITEC member countries.

Conclusion

I have tried to collate the vast gamut of work undertaken to usher in the technology revolution in governance from 2019 to 2024 which has enabled millions of Indians to reap the benefits of transparency in governance, faster timelines for disposal, and quality decision-making. It can be said that the imposing 182-metre Statue of Unity of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel provides inspiration for the nation's relentless commitment to excellence in the Amrit Kaal period.

To conclude, I quote the words of Hon'ble Prime Minister Modi from his address to the US Congress in June 2023:

When I first visited the US as Prime Minister, India was the tenth largest economy in the world. Today, India is the fifth largest economy. And, India will be the third largest economy

very soon. We are not only growing bigger but we are also growing faster. When India grows, the whole world grows. After all, we are one sixth of the world's population. In the last century, when India won its freedom, it inspired many other countries to free themselves from colonial rule. In this century when India sets benchmarks in growth, it will inspire many other countries to do the same. Our vision is Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas.

Jai Hind.