E-Governance and its Significance

Definition of e-Governance

Electronic governance or e-governance implies government functioning with the application of ICT (Information and Communications Technology). Hence e-Governance is basically a move towards SMART governance implying: simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent governance.

What is SMART Governance?

- **S**imple — implies simplification of rules and regulations of the government and avoiding complex processes with the application of ICTs and therefore, providing a user-friendly government.
- **M**oral — meaning the emergence of a new system in the administrative and political machinery with technology interventions to improve the efficiency of various government agencies.
- **A**ccountable — develop effective information management systems and other performance measurement mechanisms to ensure the accountability of public service functionaries.
- **R**esponsive — Speed up processes by streamlining them, hence making the system more responsive.
- **T**ransparent — providing information in the public domain like websites or various portals hence making functions and processes of the government transparent.

Interactions in e-Governance

There are 4 kinds of interactions in e-governance, namely:

1. G2C (Government to Citizens) — Interaction between the government and the citizens.
   - This enables citizens to benefit from the efficient delivery of a large range of public services.
   - Expands the accessibility and availability of government services and also improves the quality of services
   - The primary aim is to make the government citizen-friendly.
2. G2B (Government to Business):
   - It enables the business community to interact with the government by using e-governance tools.
   - The objective is to cut red-tapism which will save time and reduce operational costs. This will also create a more transparent business environment when dealing with the government.
   - The G2B initiatives help in services such as licensing, procurement, permits and revenue collection.
3. G2G (Government to Government)
   - Enables seamless interaction between various government entities.
   - This kind of interaction can be between various departments and agencies within government or between two governments like the union and state governments or between state governments.
   - The primary aim is to increase efficiency, performance and output.
4. G2E (Government to Employees)
   - This kind of interaction is between the government and its employees.

- ICT tools help in making these interactions fast and efficient and thus increases the satisfaction levels of employees.

Advantages of e-Governance

- Improves delivery and efficiency of government services
- Improved government interactions with business and industry
- Citizen empowerment through access to information
- More efficient government management
- Less corruption in the administration
- Increased transparency in administration
- Greater convenience to citizens and businesses
- Cost reductions and revenue growth
- Increased legitimacy of government
- Flattens organisational structure (less hierarchic)
- Reduces paperwork and red-tapism in the administrative process which results in better planning and coordination between different levels of government
- Improved relations between the public authorities and civil society
- Re-structuring of administrative processes

e-Governance Initiatives

Steps taken to promote e-governance in India are as follows:

- A National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development was set-up in 1998.
- The Ministry of Information Technology was created at the Centre in 1999.
- A 12-point agenda was listed for e-Governance for implementation in all the central ministries and departments.
- The Information Technology Act (2000) was enacted. This Act was amended in 2008.
- The first National Conference of States' IT Ministers was organised in the year 2000, for arriving at a Common Action Plan to promote IT in India.
- Government set-up NISG (National Institute for Smart Government).
- The state governments launched e-Governance projects like e-Seva (Andhra Pradesh), Bhoomi (Karnataka), and so on.
- The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) was launched. It consists of 31 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 support components.
- The National Policy on Information Technology (NPIT) was adopted in 2012.

The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)

- The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), provides a holistic view of e-Governance initiatives across the country.

- Around this idea, a massive countrywide infrastructure reaching down to the remotest of villages is evolving, and large-scale digitization of records is taking place to enable easy, reliable access to the internet.
- The Government has proposed to implement "e-Kranti: National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) 2.0" under the Digital India programme.

e-Kranti – Electronic Delivery of Services

- e-Kranti is an essential pillar of the Digital India initiative.
- Considering the critical need for e-Governance, mobile governance and good governance in the country, the approach and key components of e-Kranti have been approved by the government.
- The e-Kranti framework addresses the electronic delivery of services through a portfolio of mission mode projects that cut across several government departments.

Objectives of e-Kranti

The main aims of the initiative are to:

- Redefine NeGP with transformational and outcome-oriented e-Governance initiatives
- Enhance the portfolio of citizen-centric services
- Ensure optimum usage of core Information & Communication Technology (ICT)
- Promote rapid replication and integration of e-Governance applications
- Leverage emerging technologies
- Make use of more agile implementation models

Mission Mode Project

- A mission mode project (MMP) is an individual project within the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) that focuses on one aspect of electronic governance, such as banking, land records or commercial taxes, etc.
- Within NeGP, "mission mode" means that these projects have clearly defined objectives, scopes and implementation timelines.
- NeGP comprises 31 mission mode projects (MMPs); these are classified as state, central and integrated projects.

National Conference on e-Governance

- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) along with the Department of Information Technology, in association with one of the state governments, has been organising the National Conference on e-Governance every year.
- This Conference provides a platform to the senior officers of the Government including IT Secretaries of state governments to discuss, exchange views and experiences relating to various e-governance initiatives.
- Every year, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances recognises and promotes excellence in e-Governance by awarding government organisations/institutions which have implemented e-Governance initiatives in an exemplary manner.

Important Facts of the 23rd National Conference on e-Governance:

The theme of the 2020 National e-Governance Conference was 'India 2020: Digital Transformation.' There were six sub-themes of this conference:

- Digital Platforms and Digital Economy
- Improving Service Delivery
- Building Digital Trust- Transparency, Security and Privacy
- Digital Payments and Fintech
- National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA) and Digital Service Standards (DSS)
- Skilling and Capacity Building

The conference adopted the 10-fold Mumbai Declaration on e-governance and during the conference, Blockchain Sandbox and Draft Sandbox Policy for Maharashtra was launched. Maharashtra became the first state of India to have a dedicated Fintech policy.

The list of awarded projects with NAeG 2020 is given below:

1. Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana won Gold Award under the category 'Excellence in Government Process Re-engineering for Digital Transformation.'
2. Antyodaya Saral Haryana won Gold Award under the category, 'Excellence in providing Citizen-Centric Delivery.'
3. In the category, 'Excellence in District level initiative in e-Governance':
   - District Adhoc Wireless Surveillance Communication System using Drone Technology from the North Eastern+Hilly States won the Gold Award.
   - SAKOON of Jammu Kashmir won the Gold Award among all the UTs.
   - WeDeserve – Right assistance to the Right Person at the Right Time of Kerala won the Gold Award among all the states.
4. Satellite-Based Agriculture Information System: An Efficient Application of ICT won the Gold Award in the category, 'Outstanding research on Citizen-Centric Services by Academic/ Research Institutions.'
5. Providing farm-scale data from multi-satellite of Karnataka won the Gold Award under the category, 'Innovative Use of ICT in e-Governance solutions by Startups.'
6. T-Chits from Telangana won the Gold Award under the category, 'Excellence in Adopting Emerging Technologies.'

UPSC Questions related to E-governance

What is E-governance?

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What are the types of e-governance?

There are 4 types of e-governance namely:

- G2C (Government to Citizens)
- G2B (Government to Business)

- G2E (Government to employees)
- G2G (Government to Government)