Digital be addressed in order to realize

DIGITAL INDIA : CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIESI dream of a digital India where the world looks to India forthe next big idea- Narendra Modi (2015) Dr.

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AbstractDigital India is the beginning ofdigital revolution. It is a dream which is created by the Government of Indiato ensure that government services are made available to citizens electronically, even in remote areas, by improving online infrastructure and by increasingInternet connectivity.

The main vision of Digital india initiative isto ' transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy'. Theinitiative aims at enabling Indian masses to get engaged in the innovativeprocesses which will help in upliftment of economy and will pave its way tomove forward. But on the implementation front, it is indeed a great challenge.

There are many roadblocks inthe way of its successful implementation like digital illiteracy, low internetspeed, lack of proper coordination among departments, poor infrastructure, issues pertaining to taxation etc. These challenges need to be addressed inorder to realize the full potential of this programme. This paper attemptsto highlight the different challenges faced by the Digital India Programme.

Itdescribes the different opportunities of the programme for the people of India. Key Words-Digital, Implementation, Opportunities, Roadblocks, Revolution   IntroductionAllover the world, technologies

of information and communication proceeds to accelerate at an incredible speed. Digitalization is one of the most fundamental period of transformation we haveever witnessed (Dua, 2017). Digital India, a revolutionary programme, was launched on 1st July 2015by the Prime Minister of India, Sh.

Narendra Modi, with an aim of improvingdigital literacy and connecting ruralareas with high-speed internet networks. The vision of this programme is totransform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. It isone of the biggest step taken by the Governmentof India to motivate the citizens of the country and connect Indian economy toknowledge savvy world (Modi, 2015). LiteratureReview Anumber of research papers and articles provide a detailed insight about therole of digital India and the implications of this project in India. Gupta and Arora (2015)studied the impact of digital India project on India's rural sector. The studyfound that many schemes have been launched in digital India to boostagriculture sector and entrepreneurship development in rural areas. DigitalIndia programme has also set the stage for empowerment of rural Indian women. 1 Pichai, Musk and Nadella(2015) asserted that Digital India initiative is a major initiative towardscreation of job oppurtunities in the information sector.

1 Kunkolienker (2015) concluded that while new investments into electronicsmanufacturing is welcome, government shoud encourage existing IT hardwaremanufacturers. He also added that the present moving pace of India if combinedwith broadband highway today will lead to innovative India

tomorrow. 2Bansal(2015) concludedthat Digital India is a huge step towards building a truly empowered Nation. The initiative aimed at providing accessibility to essential services will leadto a holistic growth of the country, from literacy to employability to GDPgrowth. 2 Valluri(2015) concluded thatthe government will need to deploy scale out architectures which can scale asthe data volumes grow. Digital India's success would also be a function of theunderlying technology infrastructure with data becoming the nucleus of thisthrust. 2Shenoy(2015) said that Makein India is an integral part of Digital India. IESA is proud to be associatedwith the Digital India initiative and will leverage the collective value of itsmembers to realize Digital India and Make in India.

2Midha(2016)concluded that digital India is a great plan to develop India for knowledgefuture, but its improper implementation due to inaccessibility andinflexibility to requisite can lead to its failure. So we Indians should worktogether to shape the knowledge economy. 3Sharma
(2016) commented, " These transforms the livesof people in many ways and will empower the society in a better manner. TheDigital India Programme, an initiative of honourable Prime Minister Mr. NarendraModi, will transpire new development in every sector. The motive behind theconcept is to build participative, transparent and responsive system."
4ResearchMethodologyThe paper isbased on the secondary data and the information is retrieved from the internetvia research papers, articles andgovernment websites. OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER1.

To studythe concept of digital India programme. 2. To studythe opportunities of the programme for the people of the country. 3.

To studythe various challenges faced by the Digital India Programme in itsimplementation. 4. To findout practical solutions and innovative ideas regarding the successful implementation of the programme. NinePillars of Digital India Programme The Government of India hopes to achieve growth on multiplefronts with the Digital India Programme. Specifically, the government aims totarget nine ' Pillars of the Digital India' that they identify as being4:-1. Broadband Highways Theobjective of this pillar is to cover 2, 50, 000 village Panchayats under NationalOptical Fibre Network (NOFN) by December 2016.

Nationwide internet infrastructure(NII) would incorporate the network and cloud infrastructure in the country toprovide high speed internet connectivity and cloud platform to variousgovernment departments up to the panchayat level in the villages.   2. Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity Theobjective of this pillar is to amplify network penetration and to providemobile connectivity to 44000 villages by 2018 with investment of Rs 16000.   Figure 1 : Representationof Nine Pillars of Digital india 3. Public Internet Access ProgrammeTo each andevery gram panchayat, One Common Service Centre (CSC) would be provided and 1, 50, 000Post Offices are put forward to be converted into multi service centers. 4. eGovernance – ReformingGovernment through Technology IneGovernance, IT would be used to deliver the government services moreeffectively.

There would be a better coordination in services andplatforms-UIDAI, Payment Gateway, Mobile Seva platform, Public redressal etc., through IT. All information would be madeavailable in electronic form. 5.

eKranti: Electronicdelivery of servicesE-Krantiincludes technology for education, technology for health, technology forplanning, technology for farmers , technology for security, technology forfinancial inclusion and technology for justice. 6. Information forallInformationfor all includes online hosting of information & document. Governmentpro-actively engages through social media and web based platform to informcitizens about MyGov.

in and 2 way communications between citizens andgovernment and online messaging to citizens on special occasions/programmes. 7. ElectronicsManufacturing Thegovernment is focusing on zero imports of electronics by 2020 through localmanufacturing of items such as smart energy meters, micro ATMs, mobile, consumer and medical electronics. Government is also taking several steps topromote manufacturing and investment in electronics sector by providing clarityon taxation, incentives skill development etc. 8. IT forJobs The mainobjective of this pillar is to train 10 million people in towns and villages forIT sector jobs in five years.

It also aims to provide training to three lakhservice delivery agents as part of skill development to run viable businessesdelivering IT services. It also focuses on training of five lakh RuralWorkforce on Telecom and Telecom related services and setting up of BPOs ineach North-eastern state. 9. EarlyHarvesting ProgrammesIn EarlyHarvesting Programmes, the Indian

goverment plans to install Wi-Fi facilitiesin all universities across the country. All books will be converted into ebooks. Email is the primary mode of communication within the government. Status of DigitalServices Deployed under Digital IndiaThe secondmost important component of Digital India, after Infrastructure, is Digitalservices. By now, the Indian Government has taken various steps forimplementing these services for the Indian masses.

Some services like MyGov andDigiLocker had witnessed high adoption rates by the citizens, but several otherservices are lagging behind as they are less user friendly and difficult touse. Here are some of the services5 :- Table 1 : Status of Services Deployedunder Digital India Services Description Status eSign eSign service allows us to do digital signatures with the help from our Aadhar information – Implemented and deployed – Used for online business documents and tax returns. MyGov App It is an innovative engagement mobile application where citiznes directly engage with the government by channelizing their ideas, comments, etc Service is rolled out with about 5, 00, 000 downloads till date DigiLocker DigiLocker is a platform for issuance and verification of documents & certificates on a public cloud.

Over 1 million downloads till date Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan App This app came after launching the Swachh Bharat campaign. It is used by the people and government organsations – Available on Play store – Over 500 thousand downloads Wifi Hotspots The government plans to install wifi routers in public places 31, 518 hotspots till date UDAAN It is an initaive to address the needs of the educated employed in Jammu & Kashmir 10, 555 J&K youth joined UDAAN tillJUly 2017, out of which 4984 youths are placed.

SARANSH A CBSE initiative, Saransh is a tool for comprehensive self-review and analysis for CBSE affiliated schools and parents Deployed and active eHealth It provides effective, timely medical services – Hospital management system – Customer service using internet eEducation It provides high-tech education in remote places and urban areas using smartphones, apps and internet services. India's online education market is to grow to USD 1. 96 billion and around 9. 6 million users in 2021 from USD 247 million and around 1.

6 million users in 2016 Source : https://www2. deloitte. com, http://www. digitalindia. gov.

in/rural BENEFITS OFDIGITAL INDIA PROGRAMME Figure2 : Representation of the Benefits Digital India Digital India programme is the beginning ofdigital revolution. It is a big initiative to empower people of the country. Themain benefits of this programme are :- 1.

Availibility of Services – The digital India mission wouldmake all the government services available to the Indian masses through commonservice delivery outlets. With this, there will be an inclusive growth by providingaccess to healthcare, education and government services to all the citizens ofthe country. 2.

Transperancy- The transperancy level increase as all thedata would be made online which can be accessed by all the citizens of thecountry. 3. eGovernance – eGovernance will help in reducing corruptionand getting things done quickly. 4. Digital locker – Digital locker facility willhelp citizen to

digitally store their important documents like Pan card, passport, mark sheets, etc, which help in getting things done easily. For example, wheneverwe need to open an account, we will give official details of our digital locker, where the bank can verify our documents. Thus, it will be more convinient forthe citizens as a lot of time will be saved by not standing in long queues.

5. Eco-Friendly – Itwill greatly reduce paper work and documentations. 6.

Cashless economy – With demonitisation in effect inthe country, Digital India will promote cashless transactions and more and morepeople will be aware of it. 7. Online Marketing – It can help small businesses toexpand as people can use online tools. CHALLENGES Figure3 : Representation of Challenges faced by Digital IndiaMore than three years has been passedsince Digital India mission has been announced but it is facing multiplechallenges in successful implementation.

Few of the challenges are :- 1. Digital Illiteracy – Digitalilliteracy is the biggest challenge in the success of Digital India programme. Low digital literacy is a key hindrance in adaptation of latest technologies. The latest report concludes that India had 36.

74 crore (367. 46 million)Internet surcribers in september 2016. 6Making Digital India schemeknown and creating an awareness among common masses about its benefits is alsoa great challenge. 2.

Connectivity – It is a tremendous taskto have connectivity with each and every village, town and city in India. Connecting 2, 50, 000 Gram Panchayats

through National Optical Fibre is not aneasy task. Till now 1, 44, 430 km of optic fibre has been laid. 5 3. Low Internet Speed – A key component under this vision ishigh speed of internet as a core utility to facilitate online delivery ofvarious services. India has low internet speed.

According to first quarter 2017Akamai report on internet speed, the average internet speed in india is 6492 Kbps. 74. StringentTaxation and Regulatory Policies – According to ASSOCHOM-Deloitte report, the issue pertaining to taxation and regulatory guidelines have proved to roadblock in realizing the vision of Digital India.

Some of the common policyhurdles include lack of clarity in FDI policies have impacted the growth of ecommerce. 55. Poor Privatization -The private participation in government projects in India is poor because oflong and complex regulatory processes.

6. Delayed Infrastructural Development – The biggest challenge faced by Digital India programme isslow and delayed infrastructure development. India's digital infrastructure iscomprehensively inadequate to tackle growing increase in digital transactions. India needs over 80 lakh hotspots as against the availability of about 31000hotspot at present to reach global level, according to ASSOCHOM-Deloitte report. 57.

Mobile Connectivity -Many request proposals issued by government are not picked up by competentprivate sector organizations since they are not commercially viable. CurrentlyOver 55000 villages remain deprived of mobile connectivity because providingmobile connectivity in such locations is not

commercially viable for serviceproviders, ASSOCHAMDeloitte report pointed out. 58. Language Barrier – India has 1600 languages and dialects. Non availability of digital services in local languages is a great barrier indigital literacy. 9. Cyber Security Issues -Security issues are one of the most criticalchallenges faced by stakeholders of the digital payment ecosystem. With moreand more users preferring digital payments, the chances of getting exposed tocybersecurity risks like online fraud, information theft, and malware or virusattacks are also increasing.

Lack of awareness and poor digital paymentecosystem are some of the many prime reasons that have led to an increase incyber attacks. SUGGESTIONSDigital India campaign can't besuccessful on its own. Policy changes are needed to make digital India areality. Few of the suggestions are : – 1. To make this programme successful, amassive awareness programme should be conducted. There is pressing need toeducate and inform the citizens, especially in rural and remote areas, aboutthe benefits of internet services to increase the growth of internet usage. 2. Manufacturing content is notgovernment's strength.

This mission needs content and service partnerships withtelecom companies and other firms. 3. PPP models should be analysed forsustainable development of digital infrastructure.

4. Private sector should be encouraged fordevelopment of last mile infrastructure in rural and remote areas. To encourageprivate sector, there must be favorable taxation policies, quicker clearance ofprojects. 5. The success of digital India projectdepends upon maximum connectivity with

minimum cyber security risks. For thiswe need a strong anti cyber crime team which maintains the database andprotects it round the clock. 6. Cyber security courses should be introduced atgraduation level.

7. There is need for effective participationof various departments and demanding commitment and efforts. Various policiesin different areas should support this goal.

CONCLUSIONThe vision of digital India is grand. It is a huge step towards building a truly empowered nation. A digitally connected India can helpin improving social and economic conditions of people through development ofnon-agricultural economic activities apart from providing education, health andfinancial services. If successful, it will transform citizen access tomultimedia information, content and services. However, the goal is still faraway since most of the nine pillars of digital India mission are facing seriouschallenges in implementation.

It is imperative that focused persistentattention must be given to each and every pillar so that this program does notend up in a failure. We all know that overall growth and development can berealized through supporting and enhancing element such as literacy, basicinfrastructure, overall business environment regulatory environment, etc. The government continues its regime ofinternet filtering and the authorities have stepped up surveillance online andput pressure on internet service providers to collude in the filtering andblocking of content which may be perfectly legitimate.   REFERENCES1. Gupta Neeruand Arora Kirandeep (2015) – Digital India: A Roadmap for the development ofRural India. www.

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