Meity's vision for digital India empowering citizens & businesses with ai, semiconductors, & e-Governance

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India's digital transformation is rapidly progressing, with innovative initiatives improving citizen services and enhancing ease of living. Through programs like Digital Bharat Interface Management (DBIM) and the India AI mission, the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** spearheads efforts to create a unified and seamless e-governance experience. In an insightful conversation, **S. Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY**, speaks with **Dr. Ravi Gupta, Editor-in-Chief of eGov magazine**, about how AI, semiconductors, and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) are driving this revolution and empowering citizens and businesses.

Can you highlight some recent Digital India initiatives focused on improving citizen services and enhancing ease of living through digital platforms?

At the national or state level, several initiatives stand out. A significant number of citizen services are now available digitally, with the pace of digitisation accelerating. However, this isn't a one-time effort — continuous improvement of user experience and interface is essential to remaining effective. Initially, the focus was rightly on citizen-facing services to enhance access and satisfaction. To sustain this progress, upgrading internal government processes is critical. Strengthening back-end systems ensures that front-end services remain efficient. Our current efforts, therefore, prioritise modernising internal workflows to deliver seamless, end-to-end digital governance.

How are platforms like e-Office, DBT, and DigiLocker transforming governance, and what steps is the government taking to support states that need help building digital capacity?

Our internal systems, such as e-Office and official email, are functioning more seamlessly, supported by new initiatives like CollabFiles and eGov Directory to strengthen back-end government processes. These upgrades enhance efficiency and directly improve citizen-facing services. On the front end, platforms like DBT and DigiLocker are making service delivery faster and more transparent, significantly improving the user experience. While many states have developed strong digital capabilities, others still need support. We're now focusing on building capacity in these states — through technical help, infrastructure, and knowledge sharing — to ensure inclusive and uniform access to digital governance across the country.

How does the Digital Bharat Interface Management (DBIM) program aim to bridge service gaps and create a seamless, unified e-governance experience across the country? While significant progress has been made in digitising government services, there are still gaps in certain areas. To address these, we are actively exploring ways to collaborate more effectively—not just with state governments but also with central ministries and other key agencies. The goal is to ensure that these service gaps are bridged in a coordinated manner. Our broader vision is to deliver a uniform, seamless, and consistent digital experience across all government departments and levels. Citizens should not have to navigate varying systems or standards depending on the department or geography. This is precisely the objective behind the Digital Bharat Interface Management (DBIM) program — to create an integrated framework that ensures coherence in service delivery and a truly unified e-governance experience for all.

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You mentioned the evolution from G2C (Government to Citizen) services to now focusing more on G2G (Government to Government) and G2B (Government to Business) interactions. How do you see the role of emerging technologies like AI in enhancing these areas of e-governance?

A key aspect of G2G, G2B, and G2C services is the role played by digital public infrastructure (DPI). The foundation of this infrastructure has been laid through public investment by the government, with innovation and service expansion built on top by private sector partners. We've seen the tremendous impact of this through platforms like Aadhaar, UPI, and other digital services, which have significantly broadened access and reach. This digital public infrastructure has been crucial in advancing government services. Looking ahead, there's immense potential to further leverage AI in DPI applications, particularly in streamlining back-end government processes. AI can play a transformative role in enhancing efficiency, improving productivity, and enabling more effective use of data. Our focus is on utilising these technologies to provide higherquality services and deliver them more efficiently to citizens.

You mentioned DPI. How is the Government of India leveraging it to drive new digital solutions and services?

Digital governance always has room for improvement — a continuous process. Services, user experiences, and delivery mechanisms must evolve. The quality of digital services varies across states, shaped by administrative capacity, infrastructure, and resource allocation. Interestingly, digital tools can serve as powerful enablers. States not traditionally associated with digital leadership, such as Assam or Meghalaya in the Northeast, have emerged as early adopters, showing strong innovation and adaptability. Madhya Pradesh, for instance, has made significant strides in digital service delivery, even outpacing some southern states in areas like e-governance portals.

This shows that no state can rest on its laurels in digital governance. A late adopter can leapfrog ahead by embracing new technologies. It's a dynamic, competitive landscape, where rankings and performance constantly shift — and the opportunity for states to advance is ever-present.

MeitY has promoted AI and IT adoption across sectors like education, healthcare, and water. Are we now seeing this expand further and create a wider impact?

Under the India AI initiative, the first phase focused on identifying real-world challenges across ministries and addressing them through AI-based solutions. Problem statements were collected from sectors like agriculture, healthcare, and special needs education, leading to the development of promising solutions. The second round is now underway, involving a new set of problem statements from various ministries, making this a continuous and evolving effort. On the hardware front, the India Semiconductor Mission has made substantial progress. Five major investments have been approved, with the first set to begin production later this year. A few more projects are in the pipeline, and we expect to commit all resources allocated for the first phase. Additionally, efforts to upgrade the Semiconductor Laboratory in Mohali are also a key part of this mission's advancement.

As the India Semiconductor Mission progresses, how is MeitY supporting deep tech innovation in areas like AI and semiconductors through the MeitY Startup Hub?

We are currently conducting pre-bid consultations as part of the next steps under the India Semiconductor Mission, after which final dates for proposal submissions will be announced. The Design-Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme is also progressing well, with over 17 companies already approved for chip design projects within the country. At the same time, we're evaluating the roadmap for the mission's next phase. In terms of fostering innovation, MeitY is focused on deep tech through the MeitY Startup Hub (MSH), which supports startups working in priority areas such as AI, semiconductors, blockchain, IoT, and cybersecurity. These domains represent the core of our deep tech strategy, and MeitY's initiatives are aligned toward nurturing innovation and capability in these critical technology areas.

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What are MeitY's major goals for the next five years, particularly in areas like Digital Public Infrastructure, semiconductors, and artificial intelligence?

Over the next five years, MeitY's priorities span electronics, semiconductors, and digital governance. In electronics, implementing and completing the PLI schemes for mobile phones and IT hardware is a top priority, while the new electronics component scheme aims to boost domestic value addition and component manufacturing. In semiconductors, we are executing approved projects under the India Semiconductor Mission and planning its next phase to build a robust ecosystem: design-led innovation alongside manufacturing. This will enable India to meet a significant share of its semiconductor demand domestically and position itself as a competitive exporter in the global supply chain.

In digital governance, MeitY is advancing artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and e-governance. For AI, efforts focus on expanding compute infrastructure—with around 14,000 GPUs now available—developing an India-specific AI model for local languages, and creating scalable applications to harness STEM talent. Cybersecurity is critical as digital systems grow, with over 12 companies building domestic capabilities for resilience. E-governance is progressing through Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), supported by technical and financial assistance. Additionally, MeitY is exploring emerging technologies like exascale computing, quantum cryptography, and advanced materials to drive India's digital leadership.

Is MeitY collaborating with various streams under the India AI mission to develop solutions for the English program?

Also, why is Bhashini important, and what information does it provide? Bhashini is a critical AI model because it is designed to reflect India's cultural and linguistic diversity, ensuring that AI systems are true to the Indian experience. Without incorporating Indian languages and cultural context, AI models risk being biased or overly influenced by Western, English-based inputs. Additionally, given that voice-based communication is predominant in India, Bhashini becomes essential for creating inclusive digital interfaces. As India is linguistically diverse, Bhashini serves as a bridging tool, democratizing access to digital services for all citizens, regardless of their language.