

**E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM: A  
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN  
AIZAWL AND LAWNGTLAI DISTRICT**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
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E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN AIZAWL AND LAWNGTLAI DISTRICT

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In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in Public Administration of Mizoram University, Aizawl



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### **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the thesis titled ‘E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram: A Comparative Study of Common Service Centres in Aizawl and Lawngtlai District’ submitted by R.Lalremthanga, Regn. No.MZU/Ph.D/1813 of 16.08.2021 for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration of the Mizoram University, Aizawl, India embodies the record of original investigations carried out by him under my supervision. He has been duly registered and the thesis presented is worthy of being considered for the award of Ph.D degree. This research work has not been submitted for any Degree of any other university.

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**DECLARATION**  
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October, 2025

I R.Lalremthanga, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

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## CONTENTS

|                                                                               | Page No              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Certificate                                                                   | ii                   |
| Declaration                                                                   | iii                  |
| Acknowledgement                                                               | iv                   |
| Contents                                                                      | v                    |
| List of Tables, Figures and Maps                                              | vi-ix                |
| Abbreviations                                                                 | x-xiii               |
| <br><b>Chapter I : Introduction</b>                                           | <br><b>1-41</b>      |
| <br><b>Chapter II : E-Governance: A Conceptual Framework</b>                  | <br><b>42 - 63</b>   |
| <br><b>Chapter III : E-Governance Initiatives in India</b>                    | <br><b>64 - 138</b>  |
| <br><b>Chapter IV : E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram</b>                   | <br><b>139 - 171</b> |
| <br><b>Chapter V : Common Service Centres (CSCs) in<br/>India and Mizoram</b> | <br><b>172- 194</b>  |
| <br><b>Chapter VI : Results and Discussion</b>                                | <br><b>195 - 258</b> |
| <br><b>Chapter VII : Major Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion</b>           | <br><b>259 – 274</b> |
| <br><i>Appendices</i>                                                         | <br><i>275-286</i>   |
| <br><i>Bibliography</i>                                                       | <br><i>287-294</i>   |
| <br><i>Bio-Data</i>                                                           | <br><i>295</i>       |
| <br><i>Particulars of the Candidate</i>                                       | <br><i>296</i>       |

## LIST OF TABLES

| <b>Table No</b> | <b>Title</b>                                                                                        | <b>Page No.</b> |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 3.1             | Top 5 List of Issued Documents under Digilocker                                                     | 110             |
| 3.2             | E-Government Development Index (EGDI) 2016                                                          | 135             |
| 3.3             | E-Government Development Index (EGDI) 2018                                                          | 135-136         |
| 3.4             | E-Government Development Index (EGDI) 2020                                                          | 136             |
| 3.5             | E-Government Development Index (EGDI) 2022                                                          | 137             |
| 3.6             | E-Government Development Index (EGDI) 2024                                                          | 137             |
| 4.1             | Board of Governors of MSeGS                                                                         | 144             |
| 4.2             | Executive Members of MSeGS                                                                          | 144             |
| 4.3             | Allocation of Budget Expenditure by ICT Department, Government of Mizoram during 2019-20 to 2023-24 | 164             |
| 4.4             | Result of the Mizoram Government Online Awards, 2023-2024                                           | 168-169         |
| 4.5             | Result of the Mizoram Government Online Awards, 2023-2024 continuation..                            | 169-170         |
| 5.1             | List of Services offered through CSCs                                                               | 178-182         |
| 5.2             | Status of CSC Rollout in India (As of January-2025)                                                 | 184-185         |
| 5.3             | State wise CSC Transaction in the North Eastern Region (FY-2020-21 to 2024-25)                      | 186             |
| 5.4             | Number of CSCs transactions in India                                                                | 187             |
| 5.5             | Number of CSCs in Mizoram (as of 14/02/2024 )                                                       | 190             |
| 5.6             | Number of Transactions done at CSCs in terms of Volume and Value in Mizoram                         | 190             |
| 6.1             | Age Group                                                                                           | 201-202         |
| 6.2             | Gender                                                                                              | 203             |
| 6.3             | Educational Qualification                                                                           | 204             |
| 6.4             | CSC operational duration                                                                            | 205             |
| 6.5             | Type of Internet Connection available at CSC                                                        | 206             |

|      |                                                                                                       |         |
|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 6.6  | Number of services offered at CSC                                                                     | 207-208 |
| 6.7  | Types of services provided by CSC                                                                     | 208-209 |
| 6.8  | Actively promote CSC Services                                                                         | 210     |
| 6.9  | Receive any training before becoming a VLE                                                            | 211     |
| 6.10 | Getting any support from the government                                                               | 212     |
| 6.11 | Sufficient resources available to operate effectively                                                 | 213     |
| 6.12 | Customer's frequency to visit CSC                                                                     | 214     |
| 6.13 | Category of services most utilized by customers                                                       | 215     |
| 6.14 | Customers find CSC service charges reasonable                                                         | 216-217 |
| 6.15 | Rate the overall satisfaction of customers                                                            | 218     |
| 6.16 | Handle customer complaints or feedback by VLE                                                         | 219     |
| 6.17 | Any significant operational challenges facing while running CSC                                       | 220     |
| 6.18 | Earning enough as VLE for your livelihood                                                             | 221     |
| 6.19 | VLE Satisfaction towards the Cost of the Service Charges provided by the Customers                    | 222-223 |
| 6.20 | COVID-19 Pandemic affected your Operations                                                            | 223-224 |
| 6.21 | You want to operate CSC in the future                                                                 | 225     |
| 6.22 | You believe your CSC has improved access to services in the locality                                  | 226     |
| 6.23 | You feel that your work as a VLE is valued by the Customers                                           | 229     |
| 6.24 | You would benefit from more training opportunities in technology and service delivery for running CSC | 231     |
| 6.25 | Age Group                                                                                             | 232-233 |
| 6.26 | Gender                                                                                                | 233-234 |
| 6.27 | Educational Qualification                                                                             | 234-235 |
| 6.28 | Occupation                                                                                            | 235-236 |
| 6.29 | You are aware of the Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Mizoram                                         | 237     |
| 6.30 | You learned about the CSCs initially                                                                  | 238     |



|      |                                                                                          |         |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 6.31 | In your opinion, the publicity methods used to promote CSCs are effective                | 239-240 |
| 6.32 | You are aware of the services offered by CSC                                             | 241     |
| 6.33 | You ever used services provided by the CSC in Mizoram                                    | 242     |
| 6.34 | If yes, specific services you utilized (Select whichever is applicable)                  | 243-244 |
| 6.35 | You are satisfied with the services offered by CSCs                                      | 245     |
| 6.36 | Your primary reason for using CSC services                                               | 246-247 |
| 6.37 | You rate the Staff assistance at CSC                                                     | 248     |
| 6.38 | You faced any challenges while using CSC services                                        | 249     |
| 6.39 | You think E-Governance or Online Services improved service delivery to the common people | 250-251 |
| 6.40 | E-Governance or Online Services made government services more transparent                | 251-252 |
| 6.41 | You would recommend the use of CSCs to others                                            | 253-254 |
| 6.42 | Your trust in government services increased due to the availability of CSC               | 255     |
| 6.43 | According to you, necessary improvements for the effective functioning of CSCs           | 256-257 |

## LIST OF FIGURES

| <b>Fig No.</b> | <b>Title</b>                                                                                            | <b>Page No.</b> |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 3.1            | Organizational Structure of MeitY                                                                       | 67              |
| 3.2            | Top 5 State/UT Users Percentage of UMANG                                                                | 108             |
| 4.1            | Organizational Structure of Department of Information & Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram | 140             |
| 4.2            | Organizational Structure of MSeGS                                                                       | 143             |

## LIST OF MAPS

| Map No. | Title                     | Page No. |
|---------|---------------------------|----------|
| 5.1     | Map of Aizawl District    | 198      |
| 5.2     | Map of Lawngtlai District | 200      |

## ***ABBREVIATIONS***

|         |                                                               |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| AD      | : Advocacy Model                                              |
| ADSS    | : All Dielectric Self-Supporting                              |
| AEPS    | : Aadhaar Enabled Payment System                              |
| ANOVA   | : Analysis of Variance                                        |
| ARPANET | : Advanced Research Projects Agency Network                   |
| ATI     | : Administrative Training Institute                           |
| B2C     | : Business to Citizen                                         |
| BBPS    | : Bharat Bill Payment System                                  |
| BNP     | : Bharat Net Project                                          |
| CBEC    | : Central Board of Excise and Customs                         |
| CBRM    | : Capacity Building Roadmap                                   |
| CCTNS   | : Crime and Criminal Tracking and Networking System           |
| CEO     | : Chief Executive Officer                                     |
| CIC     | : Community Information Centre                                |
| CIDM    | : Computational Intelligence and Data Mining                  |
| CMS     | : Content Management System                                   |
| CONCOR  | : Container Corporation of India                              |
| CoWIN   | : Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network                          |
| CPGRAMS | : Centralized Public Grievances Redress and Monitoring System |
| CrPC    | : Criminal Procedure Code                                     |
| CSC     | : Common Service Centre                                       |
| DAC     | : Department of Agriculture and Cooperation                   |
| DARPG   | : Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances    |
| DeitY   | : Department of Electronics and Information Technology        |
| DGFT    | : Directorate General of Foreign Trade                        |
| DGS&D   | : Department of Supplies & Disposals                          |
| DoT     | : Department of Telecommunications                            |
| DPR     | : Detailed Project Reports                                    |
| EDI     | : Electronic Data Interchange                                 |
| EGDI    | : E-Government Development Index                              |

|              |                                                            |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| E-Governance | : Electronic Governance                                    |
| e-Kranti     | : Electronic Kranti                                        |
| EODB         | : Ease of Doing Business                                   |
| eVIN         | : Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network                  |
| FRO          | : Foreigners Registration Office                           |
| FRRO         | : Foreigners Regional Registration Office                  |
| FTP          | : File Transfer Protocol                                   |
| G2B          | : Government to Business                                   |
| G2C          | : Government to Citizen                                    |
| G2E          | : Government to Employee                                   |
| G2G          | : Government to Government                                 |
| GoMIB        | : Government of Mizoram Internet Backbone                  |
| GPR          | : Government Process Re-engineering                        |
| ICP          | : Immigration Check Post                                   |
| ICT          | : Information and Communication Technology                 |
| ILP          | : Inner Line Pass                                          |
| IMPS         | : Immediate Payments Service                               |
| IoT          | : Internet of Things                                       |
| IPR          | : Intellectual Property Rights                             |
| ISM          | : Interactive Service Model                                |
| IT           | : Information Technology                                   |
| IVFRT        | : Immigration Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking |
| MCA          | : Ministry of Corporate Affairs                            |
| MDM          | : Music Domain Mizoram                                     |
| MeitY        | : Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology       |
| MIC          | : Mizoram Information Commission                           |
| MMP          | : Mission Mode Project                                     |
| MoRD         | : Ministry of Rural Development                            |
| MRRS         | : Myanmar Refugee Registration System                      |
| MSeGS        | : Mizoram State e-Governance Society                       |
| NABARD       | : National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development      |
| NEC          | : North Eastern Council                                    |

|             |                                                         |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| NeGP        | : National e-Governance Plan                            |
| NEP         | : New Economic Policy                                   |
| NER         | : North Eastern Region                                  |
| NESIDS-OTRI | : North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme  |
| NIC         | : National Informatics Centre                           |
| NICNET      | : National Informatics Center Network                   |
| NISG        | : National Institute for Smart Government               |
| NLRMP       | : National Land Records Modernization Programme         |
| NPCI        | : National Payments Corporation of India                |
| NPR         | : National Population Register                          |
| NSDG        | : National e-Governance Services Delivery Gateway       |
| OECD        | : Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OFC         | : Optical Fibre Cable                                   |
| OPGW        | : Optical Ground Wire                                   |
| PCO         | : Public Call Office                                    |
| PDS         | : Public Distribution System                            |
| PPP         | : Public Private Partnership                            |
| PRI         | : Panchayati Raj Institution                            |
| PSK         | : Passport Seva Kendra                                  |
| PwC         | : Price Water House Coopers                             |
| RBI         | : Reserve Bank of India                                 |
| RTPS        | : Right to Public Service Portal                        |
| SAARC       | : South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation      |
| SAD         | : Secretariat Administration Department                 |
| SASCI       | : Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment   |
| SCA         | : Service Centre Agency                                 |
| SDA         | : State Designated Agency                               |
| SDC         | : State Data Centre                                     |
| SPV         | : Special Purpose Vehicle                               |
| SSDG        | : State Service Delivery Gateway                        |
| STPI        | : Software Technology Park of India                     |
| SWAN        | : State Wide Area Network                               |

|        |                                                     |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| TCIL   | : Telecommunications Consultants India Limited      |
| TDS    | : Tax-Deducted at Source                            |
| UBL    | : Urban Local Body                                  |
| UIDAI  | : Unique Identification Authority of India          |
| UMANG  | : Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance |
| UNDP   | : United Nations Development Programme              |
| UPI    | : Unified Payments Interface                        |
| VKC    | : Village Knowledge Centre                          |
| VLE    | : Village Level Entrepreneur                        |
| ZENICS | : Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Limited |

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter offers a detailed overview of the research study, highlighting the importance of E-Governance in improving administrative efficiency, providing efficient and effective public services to the citizens. It also encompasses a literature review, addresses the existing research gap, outlines the scope of the study, clarifies the objectives, formulates research questions, describes the methodology and elucidates the significance of the study.

#### **Background of E-Governance:**

Information technology encompasses the tools and systems employed to collect, process, store and disseminate information. The term “Information Technology” has evolved over time, gaining prominence in the late 1970s to encompass both computer and communication technologies all of which are grounded in microelectronics and associated software. Prior to the 1970s, computers and telecommunications were regarded as distinct fields. However, after advancements in microelectronics, software and optics coupled with the convergence of telecommunications and computer technologies and have rendered this distinction increasingly obsolete. Microelectronics has been pivotal in the rapid growth and integration of computers and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). As telecommunications transitioned from analog to digital their systems began to resemble computers, incorporating more software. Numerous communication systems now function similar to computers with specific applications. Since the early 1960s, when online computer systems first emerged networking and communication technologies have significantly expanded. These developments have blurred the boundaries between telecommunications and computer technologies culminating in what is now referred to as Information and Communication Technology. In the 1990s, the ‘Internet’ gained widespread popularity, attracting users globally and

these Internet users primarily communicate via e-mail, thereby utilizing Telenet to access remote hosts and transfer files from remote hosts to local sites. All this initiatives have laid the foundation for global networking and the concept of information superhighways, leading to the establishment of national and global information infrastructures. Therefore, the Internet as a central component of these infrastructures presents substantial opportunities to enhance and transform interactions among governments, citizens and businesses.

Chile, a vibrant nation from Latin America has embarked on its journey into E-Governance during the early 1970s. The seeds were sown with innovative ideas and aspirations for a digital future. However, it was the influential former United States of America (U.S.A) Vice President Al Gore who propelled this concept into the global stage. His introduction of the “Super Highway” initiative ignited a spark of interest in E-Governance worldwide. This ambitious vision aimed to enhance the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, particularly focusing on the expansive development of Internet Fiber Optic networks. As a result, nations began to recognize the importance of robust digital frameworks. These frameworks not only facilitate communication but also empower citizens. Moreover, the “Super Highway” concept delves deeper than mere connectivity. It emphasizes the integration of socio-economic factors within the framework of the Information Society or Knowledge Society. This holistic approach encourages governments across the world to consider how technology can bridge gaps, enhance public services, and foster inclusivity. Also, this has led to the emergence of the E-Governance concept in a well-planned and focused manner.<sup>1</sup> In essence, Chile’s early adoption of E-Governance combined with Al Gore’s visionary ideas which have paved the way for numerous countries to explore and implement similar initiatives. As nations strive towards digital transformation, the lessons learned from these pioneering efforts continue to shape the future of governance and citizen engagement.

In the 1970s the concept of E-Governance began to emerge in India, which initially concentrated on internal government applications particularly in sectors such

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<sup>1</sup>Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012). *E-Governance: Concepts and Case Studies*. PHI Learning Pvt Ltd.



as defence, economic observation and planning. The government also started employing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to manage data-intensive tasks, including elections, census activities and tax administration. In 1970, the Indian government established a Department of Electronics to enhance information and communication access for its citizens and by 1977 a significant progress was achieved with the establishment of the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which aimed to improve administrative efficiency and communication in the public sector. Concurrently, the government initiated the District Information System programme to computerize district offices across the country. A decade later the government introduced the National Informatics Center Network (NICNET), a satellite-based computer network as part of a new IT initiative and this ambitious project was instrumental in advancing E-Governance across the nation. By leveraging technology, India seeks to enhance connectivity and streamline services by ultimately promoting good governance and these foundational efforts laid the groundwork for the digital transformation of public administration. As technology becomes increasingly integrated into governance, the potential for enhanced citizen engagement and efficient service delivery has become more apparent in paving the way for a future in which technology will be central to the country's governance

Cambridge Dictionary defines E-Governance as “the use of the internet by Governments to make it possible for people to use Government services and be involved in decision making”. E-Governance represents the strategic application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance the delivery of government services. It facilitates the efficient exchange of information enables seamless transactions and integrates previously disparate services and information portals. According to Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr.Narendra Modi, E-Governance “*is easy governance, effective governance and economic governance*”. Consequently, E-Governance has emerged as a transformative force adeptly reshaping and reimagining organizations by integrating information science and technology into the core of existing administrative and management systems.<sup>2</sup> In the 1970s the concept of E-Governance began to emerge in India, which initially concentrated on internal

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<sup>2</sup> E-Governance.<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english> accessed on 3rd March 2022.

government applications particularly in sectors such as defense, economic monitoring and planning. The government also started employing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to manage data-intensive tasks including elections, census activities and tax administration.<sup>3</sup>

In 2003, the Government of India introduced the Electronic Governance Strategic Plan, a comprehensive framework intended to guide E-Governance from 2003 to 2007. This plan sought to establish effective governance by developing institutional frameworks and fostering integrated service levels with the objective of creating an environment that is both citizen-centric and business-friendly. The Government of India with determination has initiated the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) on November 6, 2003 under the leadership of the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. After three years of careful consideration, the NeGP was approved on May 18, 2006 comprising 27 Mission Mode Projects and 10 components with an additional four MMPs added subsequently. The primary goal of this initiative is to enhance the accessibility of public services for citizens and the Vision Statement of NeGP articulates this objective clearly: *“Make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets, and ensure efficiency, transparency, and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man”*.<sup>4</sup> This strategic approach not only aims to enhance service delivery but also signifies a commitment to empowering citizens through accessible governance.

After the 15th Lok Sabha elections in 2014 in India, a new government led by the Bhartiya Janata Party assumed power by bringing forth innovative ideas and philosophies to digitally connect India. As a result, the government introduced a flagship initiative known as ‘Digital India’ in 2015, which aims to transform India into a digitally advanced society and foster a knowledge-based economy. According to former Minister of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Ravi Shankar

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<sup>3</sup>Yadav, Nikita & Singh, V.B. (2012). E-Governance: Past, Present and Future in India, *International Journal of Computer Application*, Vol 53, Issue No. 7, pp. 36.

<sup>4</sup>Gupta, Piyush & Bagga, R.K. (2008). *Compendium of E-Governance Initiatives in India*. Universities Press Pvt Ltd.

Prasad, *“Digital India is a transformational programme of the country, it means strengthening the youth and future of the country”*. The Digital India Programme emphasizes building a robust digital infrastructure accessible to every citizen. This initiative aims to ensure that governance and services are available on demand while empowering individuals digitally. In essence, this mission is a comprehensive initiative designed to equip India for a future dominated by knowledge with technology serving as the central element in its transformative framework.

At its core, the Digital India Programme is structured around nine fundamental pillars:

- i. **Broadband Highways:** Establishing high-speed internet connectivity across the nation.
- ii. **Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity:** Ensuring that everyone can access mobile services.
- iii. **Public Internet Access Programme:** Facilitating internet access in public spaces.
- iv. **E-Governance:** Reforming governmental process through technological advancements.
- v. **e-Kranti:** Delivering services electronically for enhanced efficiency.
- vi. **Information for All:** Promoting transparency and accessibility of information.
- vii. **Electronics Manufacturing:** Boosting domestic manufacturing of electronic goods.
- viii. **IT for Jobs:** Creating job opportunities within the IT sector.
- ix. **Early Harvest Programmes:** Implementing quick-win projects for immediate impact.<sup>5</sup>

This multi-faceted approach not only aims to revolutionize the digital landscape of India but also to foster economic growth and societal advancement.

In Mizoram, the E-Governance initiatives are managed by the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) established in 2005 under the Society Registration

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<sup>5</sup> Special Edition Book on ‘Digital India’. <https://www.meity.gov.in/content/digital-india-book> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.

Act XXI of 1860. This society is dedicated to creating a comprehensive digital infrastructure that serves its citizens. It develops the necessary administrative, financial, legal and technical frameworks as well as the mechanisms and resources required to implement these digital initiatives in Mizoram. The MSeGS is responsible for the development and implementation of key E-Governance projects, including the State Data Centre (SDC), State Wide Area Network (SWAN) and Common Service Centres (CSCs) and other electronic government initiatives that contribute to a digitally empowered future.<sup>6</sup>

The Common Service Centres (CSCs) stand as a crucial component of E-Governance forming a part of the MMPs under the NeGP 2006. It began its operations on July 16, 2009 under the MeitY (Government of India) with the goal of bridging urban and rural India through a nationwide network of CSCs that offer a variety of e-services at the grassroots level.<sup>7</sup> The CSCs have been revamped to CSC 2.0 which is also a part of the Digital India Programme. In Mizoram, numerous CSCs have been set up to deliver various public services, strategically located to ensure easy access for the common people. The significance of CSCs in a state like Mizoram is undeniable due to its difficult geographical terrain and infrastructure challenges. It is crucial to provide various public services directly to the people, ensuring they are readily available nearby. This research study examines the operation of CSCs in Mizoram, where there is currently a lack of sufficient literature on this subject. There is a clear research gap concerning the impact and effectiveness of CSCs in Mizoram

### **Review of Literature:**

To gain a better understanding of the present study, a comprehensive Review of Literature has been done. This review encompasses 15 books, 38 articles, 5 reports

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<sup>6</sup>Lalduhawmi, Tracy. (2018). Developmental Impact of E-Governance, *International Journal of Science and Engineering*, Vol 3, Issue No. 2, pp.1-4.

<sup>7</sup>Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021). An overview of Common Service Centre with Special Reference to Mizoram, *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, Vol 8, Issue No. 1, pp.155-160.

and documents sourced from various organisations including the government relevant to the study.

Doumuanlal et., al. (2025) in their article titled *Digital Divide and Job Search Behaviour: An Empirical Study of Educated Urban Youth in Aizawl, Mizoram* highlights significant disparities in digital access and literacy, particularly in developing regions. Studies emphasize that digital literacy and internet accessibility are critical determinants of employability as online platforms increasingly dominate job markets. Research in Mizoram and other northeastern states of India reveals structural challenges such as poor digital infrastructure, low awareness of online job portals and reliance on intermediaries which hinder effective job searches. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (2020) and Economic Survey of Mizoram (2022) further underscore the need for targeted interventions to bridge these gaps. Moreover, this paper also highlights the socio-economic barriers including gender disparities and sectoral imbalances, which compound the challenges faced by urban youth. This study builds on these findings by examining the specific case of Aizawl, where digital exclusion persists despite government initiatives like the hnainpui.com portal has reinforcing the urgency of digital literacy programmes and infrastructure improvements to enhance labour market participation.<sup>8</sup>

Bholane, P. Kishor. (2025) in his article titled *Digital India: Issues and Concerns* highlight its transformative potential in bridging the digital divide and enhancing service delivery through technology. The articles emphasize the projected benefits by including job creation, widespread internet access, and digital empowerment. However, challenges such as resource constraints, coordination issues and the need for institutional restructuring (e.g., NIC modernization) are noted. Researcher argues that while Digital India can drive socio-economic growth, its success depends on factors like literacy, infrastructure and regulatory support. References from government portals and academic sources underscore the

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<sup>8</sup> Doumuanlal et., al. (2025). Digital Divide and Job Search Behaviour: An Empirical Study of Educated Urban Youth in Aizawl, Mizoram. *International Journal of Research in Social Science & Humanities (IJRRS)*, Vol. 6, Issue No. 5, pp. 52-57.

programme ambitious scope and the necessity for sustained commitment to achieve inclusive development.<sup>9</sup>

Sharma, Anupam. (2024) in his article titled *Protecting Digital Assets: Government Initiatives and NGOs Participation* emphasize the increasing importance of digital files, crypto currencies and personal information as valuable resources that require comprehensive security protocols. The author classifies digital assets into various categories including personal, financial, professional and technical highlighting both their tangible and intangible characteristics. The escalation of cyber threats such as encompassing data breaches, identity theft and financial fraud which prompted both global and national initiatives exemplified by India's IT Act (2000), National Cyber Security Policy and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act (2023). Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are pivotal in conducting awareness initiatives and advocating for policy changes thereby connecting governmental efforts with public execution. The article emphasizes the necessity for international cooperation, digital law enforcement and partnerships between the public and private sectors to effectively address cybercrime.<sup>10</sup>

Sahu, Raja. (2024) in his article titled *Role of Common Service Center in Rural Development* highlights that Common Service Centers (CSCs) are a vital part of India's NeGP, which aimed at delivering government and private services digitally to rural populations, thus bridging the digital divide. He also mentions that CSCs provide essential services like Aadhaar enrollment, utility payments, banking, health and education locally, reducing traditional barriers such as corruption and delays. The article shows that CSCs enhanced access and digital literacy, especially in states like Bihar, but challenges like infrastructure gaps, security concerns and uneven awareness remain. This paper recommends citizen-focused service design,

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<sup>9</sup> Bholane, P. Kishor (2025). Digital India: Issues and Concerns. *International Conference on Recent Trends in Commerce and Management*, pp. 121-125.

<sup>10</sup> Sharma, Anupam (2024). Protecting Digital Assets: Government Initiatives and NGOs Participation. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 70, Issue No. 3, pp. 479 – 490.

public-private partnerships and continuous awareness efforts to improve reach and effectiveness making CSCs a crucial but evolving tool for rural development.<sup>11</sup>

Uthaman,S Vijaya & Vasanthagopal,R. (2023) in their article titled *Key Success Factors for the E-Governance Initiatives Through Common Service Centres in India: An Empirical Study with Special Reference to Akshaya e-Kendras in Kerala* identifies essential success factors for E-Governance projects, referencing both global and Indian perspectives. The article indicates that service quality (including efficiency and reliability), transparency (characterized by clear information disclosure) and convenience (referring to time and cost savings) are crucial for encouraging citizen engagement. Additionally, interoperability (system quality and emphasizing user-friendly interfaces) is recognized as vital for effective service delivery. However trust (encompassing security and privacy) and infrastructure (such as connectivity and equipment) are identified as fundamental, yet lacking in performance within developing areas. The Akshaya e-Kendras in Kerala serve as a successful model through public-private partnerships although challenges in e-participation (specifically feedback mechanisms) and the establishment of uniform standards remain. Thus, the paper highlights the importance of designing citizen-centric approaches and implementing policy measures to address digital disparities.<sup>12</sup>

Sharma,K Sapna. & Sharma,Babita. (2023) in their article titled *People Perception Towards e-Services in Hilly Area: A Case Study of e-Districts in Himachal Pradesh* highlights the growing significance of E-Governance in enhancing service delivery and transparency, particularly in rural and hilly regions. The article touches upon various E-Governance initiatives from the state of Himachal Pradesh like Himbhoomi, Lokmitra Kendras, etc and also include E-Governance initiatives from other states, such as Punjab Suwidha Centers and Odisha. Collectively these studies affirm the transformative potential of E-Governance but highlight persistent issues i.e. digital divides, infrastructural deficits and low

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<sup>11</sup>Sahu, Raja (2024).Role of Common Service Center in Rural Dvelopment.*International Journal of Business Economics and Management Research*, Vol 15, Issue No. 5, pp. 1-7.

<sup>12</sup>Uthaman, S Vijaya &Vasanthagopal,R (2023) .Key Success Factors for the e-Governance Initiatives Through Common Service Centres in India: An Empirical Study with Special Reference to Akshaya e-Kendras in Kerala. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 69, Issue No. 1, pp. 87-101.

awareness that hinder optimal implementation in geographically challenging areas like Himachal Pradesh.<sup>13</sup>

Sadashivam,T et.,al. (2022) in their article titled *Digital India: A Journey Towards People's Empowerment* highlights the transformative role of ICTs in governance has emphasizes their potential to bridge the gap between governments and citizens. The Digital India Programme launched in 2015 is a flagship initiative aimed at creating a digitally empowered society through key components like CSCs and the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (PMGDISHA). The CSCs serve as rural service delivery hubs offering over 400 digital services and significantly expanding access with a four-fold increase in their numbers from 2014 to 2021. The PMGDISHA focuses on digital literacy, targeting rural households to reduce the digital divide with over 5.46 crore candidates registered by 2021. This article also notes India's improvement on E-Government Development Index (EGDI) rankings, reflecting progress in digital governance though challenges remain in sustaining momentum and ensuring equitable access. The programme underscores a shift toward 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance' by leveraging ICTs for transparency, efficiency and citizen empowerment.<sup>14</sup>

Sharma, Anupam. (2022) in his article titled *Promoting Greater Efficiency and Better Governance Through ICT Application* emphasizes the pivotal role of ICT in transforming governance in India thereby improving efficiency, transparency and citizen participation. He outlines the progression from initial projects such as Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) and Public Call Offices (PCOs) to significant legislative frameworks like the Aadhaar Act (2016) and the Digital India initiative (2015) which advocates for SMART governance through essential components such as broadband access and mobile applications like MyGov. The article indicates that ICT has a substantial impact across various sectors including agriculture (eNAM), education (ePathshala) and healthcare (Ayushman Bharat)

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<sup>13</sup>Sharma, K Sapna. &Sharma,Babita (2023) . People Perception Towards e-Services in Hilly Area: A Case Study of e-Districts in Himachal Pradesh. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 69, Issue No. 3, pp 667-676.

<sup>14</sup> Sadashivam,T et.,al. (2022) Digital India: A Journey Towards People's Empowerment. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol LXXXIII, Issue No. 3, September-November, 2022, pp. 473-478.



enhancing service delivery and mitigating corruption. Nonetheless obstacles such as the digital divide, cybersecurity threats and resistance from bureaucratic structures remain prevalent.<sup>15</sup>

Nanda,Samar. (2022) in his article titled *The Journey of E-Governance in India: An Analysis of Common Service Centers* critically examines the role of CSCs in advancing digital governance while addressing persistent challenges. The author situates CSCs within India's National E-Governance Plan has cited their successes such as telemedicine and financial inclusion during COVID-19 but also highlights their infrastructural shortcomings, low adoption in rural areas and financial sustainability issues. Comparative insights from South Korea and Singapore reveal the importance of strong leadership and phased implementation but gaps remain in assessing long-term socio-economic impacts and gender disparities in CSC use. The article concludes that while CSCs have democratized service delivery their future effectiveness depends on infrastructure investments, localized solutions, and participatory governance models to effectively bridge the digital divide.<sup>16</sup>

Rajeev,Meenakshi & Bhandarkar, Supriya.(2022) in their article titled *Women Online: A Study of Common Service Centres in India Using a Capability Approach* has explored how rural women, often marginalized and deprived, leverage digital platforms through the Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE) schemes under the CSCs initiative to generate livelihoods. While CSC-VLE is a groundbreaking part of the Digital India campaign has received limited academic attention. Existing research mostly addresses the scheme's rollout challenges, service quality and financial viability, including its role in promoting financial inclusion. However, there is a notable gap regarding how these initiatives foster digital literacy and entrepreneurship among rural women based on their lived experiences. This study addresses that gap by applying Amartya Sen's capability approach to understand how the CSC-VLE scheme transforms women's capabilities and what factors influence

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<sup>15</sup>Sharma, Anupam (2022).Promoting Greater Efficiency and Better Governance Through ICT Application. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 68, Issue No. 3, pp. 427- 435.

<sup>16</sup>Nanda,Samar (2022).The Journey of E-Governance in India: An Analysis of Common Service Centres. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 68, Issue No 4.

this transformation thereby adding a critical gender perspective to the evaluation of E-Governance in rural India.<sup>17</sup>

Pareek,Urvashi & Sole Ambedkar,Nagendra. (2022) in their article *Quality of Public Services in the Era of Guaranteed Public Service Delivery* discuss how the advent of New Public Management and Public Choice Theory has influenced the development of public service delivery within government frameworks. This initiative aims to enhance government operations by promoting openness, transparency, responsiveness, accountability and a focus on citizens by aligning with the principles of Good Governance. The article examines three categories of public services: the quality of public service, timely delivery of these services and mechanisms for grievance redressal. According to a World Bank report from 2004, the bureaucratic system in India has struggled to adequately serve marginalized communities by revealing inefficiencies in public policy implementation. Additionally, the article highlights various international practices aimed at improving public service quality including the Charter Mark Scheme in the UK, the US Government Performance and Results Act (1993 and its 2010 modernization) and the European Framework for Quality Management.<sup>18</sup>

Heeks, Richard. (2022) in his article titled *Digital Inequality beyond the Digital Divide: Conceptualizing Adverse Digital Incorporation in the Global South* has traditionally focused on the digital divide by emphasizing exclusion from digital technologies as the primary driver of inequality. Early perspectives highlighted disparities in access to devices and internet connectivity while later researchers expanded to include divides in adoption, usage and contextual social inequalities such as gender, income and geography. However, as digital inclusion grows a newer study reveal that inequality persists even among those integrated into digital systems such as gig workers, small businesses on digital platforms and communities subjected to digital surveillance. In the field of development studies, the author

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<sup>17</sup>Rajeev,Meenakshi & Bhandarkar, Supriya(2022).Women online: A Study of Common Service Centres in India Using a Capability Approach. *Asia Pacific Policy Studies*, Special Issue, pp.268-286.

<sup>18</sup>Pareek,Urvashi& Sole Ambedkar,Nagendra (2022). Quality of Public Services in the Era of Guaranteed Public Service Delivery.*Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 68, Issue No. 2, pp. 19-26.

introduces the compelling concept of ‘adverse digital incorporation’. This notion illustrates how digital systems rather than serving as equalizers which can become platforms where the privileged derive disproportionate advantages over the less privileged. Through mechanisms such as exploitation, commodification and legibility and these systems enable the advantaged to accrue significant benefits at the expense of the disadvantaged. This shift from exclusion to inclusion underscores the urgent necessity to address the power imbalances, structural inequalities and systemic injustices inherent in digital landscapes particularly in the Global South to facilitate genuine digital justice.<sup>19</sup>

Sharma, Sujeet Kumar et.,al. (2021) in their article titled *Challenges Common Service Centres (CSCs) Face in Delivering E-Government Services in Rural India* examined the obstacles encountered by CSCs in providing E-Government services in rural India. They emphasized that CSCs are initiatives designed to enhance access to public services and facilitate direct engagement with government entities. The authors noted that E-Government initiatives remain significantly underutilized, particularly in rural regions of developing nations. Their research aimed to identify the primary challenges faced by CSCs and to analyze their hierarchical relationships within the rural Indian context. Through a comprehensive literature review and expert surveys, the study identified 15 distinct challenges. Key findings indicated that extended travel times, high transaction costs, limited digital literacy, and insufficient awareness of E-Government services are major hurdles for CSCs in rural India. The article also offers various recommendations for stakeholders involved in the management of CSCs to enhance the effectiveness of E-Government service delivery in these areas.<sup>20</sup>

Singh, Anubha.(2021) in her article titled *Whose Country is Digital India? Unpacking Dominant Power Relations Mediated by the Digital India Campaign* explores the material and cultural ramifications of the rhetoric surrounding the

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<sup>19</sup> Heeks, Richard. (2022). Digital inequality beyond the digital divide: conceptualizing adverse digital incorporation in the global South. *Information Technology for Development*, Vol 28, Issue No. 4, pp. 688-701.

<sup>20</sup>Sharma, Sujeet Kumar et.,al. (2021). Challenges Common Service Centres (CSCs) Face in Delivering E-Government Services in Rural India. *Government Information Quarterly*, Vol 38, Issue No. 2, pp. 1-27.

Digital India initiative, particularly focusing on the question of ‘how and who does digital empowerment seek to empower’. She emphasizes that the persistent depoliticization and dehistoricization of social disparities intentionally obscure the identities of the programs intended beneficiaries. Additionally, she notes that by homogenizing structural differences related to caste, class, gender and ethnicity, the techno-politics of Digital India reframes empowerment as an individual concern, thereby legitimizing the fallacies of meritocracy, castelessness and gender neutrality. This article contends that by failing to articulate an empowerment process that acknowledges cultural intricacies and structural inequalities call for the digital empowerment within the Digital India initiative ultimately remains a hollow concept.<sup>21</sup>

Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021) in his article titled *An Overview of Common Service Centres with Special Reference to Mizoram* examines the origins and development of CSCs across the nation by detailing the various services they offer. He further discusses the operational challenges faced by CSCs in Mizoram including insufficient road infrastructure, a lack of skills among Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), poor maintenance of hardware, connectivity issues and unreliable power supply and all of these has hinder the effectiveness of these centres in the state.<sup>22</sup>

Aggarwal, Kartik et.,al.(2021) in their article titled *Moving from Cash to Cashless Economy: Toward Digital India* examine the transition from a cash-based economy to a cashless one in the context of Digital India, assessing the technological advancements that have opened up numerous opportunities for consumers to engage in digital payments. They emphasize that the demonetization process in India has compelled both consumers and businesses to adopt and develop cashless digital payment systems. The successful implementation of a cashless economy hinges on several critical factors, including accessibility, availability and consumer awareness. The authors conduct a comprehensive study that investigates the determinants

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<sup>21</sup>Singh, Anubha. (2021). Whose Country is Digital India?Unpacking Dominant Power Relations Mediated by the Digital India Campaign. *Asiascape: Digital Asia*, Vol 8, Issue No. 3, pp.164–189.

<sup>22</sup>Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021). An overview of Common Service Centre with Special Reference to Mizoram. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, Vol 8, Issue No. 1, pp.155-160.

influencing the adoption of new digital payment technologies across various regions in India, based on data gathered from 250 participants residing in India who experienced digital payments and online transactions.<sup>23</sup>

Kharche, PB.(2020) in his book *Digital India* discusses the Digital India initiative, started in 2015 with an aim to convert India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-based economy. Kharche outlines the vision, objectives and essential components of the initiative, intending to offer a conceptual framework, practical advice and insights drawn from diverse projects both within India and internationally.<sup>24</sup>

Borah, Bidisha. (2020) in her article titled *Digital India: Challenges and Prospects* discuss the Digital India initiative and emphasizing its beneficial effects on digital literacy. She notes that the programme aims to serve citizen's interests by generating employment opportunities, fostering start-ups and enhancing service delivery quality. Furthermore, the author highlights that the primary goal of the initiative is to promote digitization and connectivity as a means to stimulate economic growth.<sup>25</sup>

Sahoo, Amiya Kumar et., al.(2020) in their article titled *Challenges of Common Service Centres of Rayagada District–Findings from a VLE Centred Analysis* discuss the challenges faced by CSCs in the Rayagada District, focusing on a Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE) centered analysis. They note that the CSCs, known as 'Jana Seva Kendra' in Odisha, serve as the official providers of E-Governance services across both rural and urban India. The authors emphasize that VLEs, who manage these centres in rural regions, earn their livelihoods by offering affordable services to local citizens. Furthermore, the article outlines the government's initiatives aimed at enhancing service delivery through CSCs operated by VLEs. The authors conducted a study in the Rayagada district where they

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<sup>23</sup>Aggarwal, Kartik et.al,. (2021). Moving from Cash to Cashless Economy: Toward Digital India. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, Vol 8, Issue No. 4, pp. 43-54.

<sup>24</sup>Kharche, P.B. (2020). *Digital India*. International Publications.

<sup>25</sup>Borah, Bidisha. (2020). Digital India: Challenges and Prospects. *European Journal of Molecular & Clinical Medicine*, Vol 7, Issue No. 3, pp.525-530.

engaged with 55 VLEs across 11 blocks, utilizing questionnaires and direct interactions to gather primary data. Additionally, the article presents recommendations and potential solutions to address the challenges encountered by VLEs in managing CSCs.<sup>26</sup>

Bhuvana, M & Vasantha, S. (2020) in their article titled *Assessment of Rural Citizens Satisfaction on The Service Quality of Common Service Centres (CSCs) of E-Governance* examined the satisfaction levels of rural citizens regarding the service quality of CSCs within the framework of E-Governance. They emphasized that E-Governance serves as a strategic approach to enhance government services through ICT. The authors conducted a research study assessing rural citizen's satisfaction by analyzing the service quality of E-Governance services at these centers are employing structural equation modeling to investigate the causal relationships. Ultimately, the study identified trust, usability and information quality as critical factors influencing the adoption of E-Governance services and the evaluation of service quality at CSCs.<sup>27</sup>

Sapru, Yudhishtira. (2020) in his article titled *Enhancing Public Service Delivery through Digital Feedback Mechanisms* emphasizes that the provision of public services is a vital obligation of the government. He elaborates that these systems are crafted and executed to enhance the welfare of citizens who require assistance. A key aim of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to engage citizens more closely with the governance process. To realize this goal, the Government of India is actively utilizing digital technologies to promote citizen involvement and interaction with public entities. The government has introduced various initiatives to foster this engagement such as the Centralized Public Grievances Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) which offers a consolidated platform for citizens to file complaints against any governmental body across the country by using RTI Online which is a service that allows citizens to

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<sup>26</sup>Sahoo, Amiya Kumar et.al., (2020). Challenges of Common Service Centres of Rayagada District—Findings from a VLE centred analysis. *Test Engineering and Management*, Vol 83, pp. 17126-17134.

<sup>27</sup>Bhuvana, M & Vasantha, S. (2020). Assessment of Rural Citizens Satisfaction on the Service Quality of Common Service Centres (CSCs) of E-Governance. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, Vol 7, Issue No. 5, pp. 302-305.

request information within 30 days and MyGov a crowdsourcing governance platform that encourages citizen participation. Nevertheless, the efficiency of public service delivery is frequently hindered by delays, a lack of accountability and insufficient transparency which along with ineffective feedback mechanisms in public sector organizations can diminish public trust.<sup>28</sup>

Gayatri et., al. (2020) in their article titled *Usability of Urban Local Body Websites and Service Quality of E-Services* explore the transformative impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on the relationship between citizens and their government has heralded a new era of E-Governance that transcends traditional governance models. This digital transformation has propelled by the substantial investments of the Digital India programme initiated in 2015 facilitated the development of innovative E-Government projects. The authors investigate the usability of Municipal or Urban Local Body websites by critically evaluating the quality of services they provide. Employing a meticulously developed framework they have assessed four Indian cities evaluating the user-friendliness of municipal E-Government websites. Citizens who are integral to this digital ecosystem have engaged with services such as lodging complaints by paying property and professional taxes, registering births and deaths with the convenience of digital access.<sup>29</sup>

Dhal, Sangital.(2020) in her article titled *Situating Digital India Mission in Pursuit of Good Governance: A Study of Electronics Governance Initiatives in the Indian Province of Odisha* discusses the origins of the modern internet, tracing its development back to CERN (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire or European Council for Nuclear Research in English) and the pivotal contributions of Tim Berners-Lee, who envisioned a networked internet in 1989. The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of E-Governance in India, highlighting a significant transition from a representative to a participatory democracy. This transformation is facilitated by a series of digital empowerment initiatives including

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<sup>28</sup>Sapru, Yudhishtira (2020). Enhancing Public Service Delivery through Digital Feedback Mechanisms. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 66, Issue No. 3 pp. 15-19.

<sup>29</sup>Gayatri et. al (2020) Usability of Urban Local Body Websites and Service Quality of E-Services. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 66, Issue No. 4, pp. 19-24.

the foundational National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of 2006 and the continuously developing Digital India initiative and various programs such as e-Kranti, Make in India, Startup India and Digital Locker. Collectively, these initiatives have established a new framework for interaction between the state and its citizens by promoting a positive and a dynamic change.<sup>30</sup>

Annual Report (2020-21) of E-Governance Service India Ltd. details that in the fiscal year 2020-21, the Company established 13,004 new CSCs nationwide by resulting in an increase in the total number of operational CSCs from 360,873 in March 2020 to 373,877 by the end of March 2021. Furthermore, the report emphasizes the introduction of new initiatives and services available through the CSCs National Portal including the establishment of one CSC in each village, the Ghar Tak Fibre Project in Bihar, the Grameen E-Store, Aadhaar Seva Kendras at both State and District levels, demographic updates via UCL, the Grameen Job Portal, the PM Street Vendor scheme, AtmanirbharNidhi, Rural E-Mobility, renewable energy setups and AyurSanjeevaniKendras at CSCs. Consistent with its previous efforts the company also mobilized its CSC Network to execute several national flagship programmes for the Government, such as PMGDISHA, the Aspirational Districts Project and the Digital Village Project, etc.<sup>31</sup>

Mondal,Soumitra. (2019) in her article titled *E-Governance in India: Prospects, Status and Challenges* emphasizes that ICT enables users to engage in communication that is faster, more cost-effective, precise and user-friendly. It enhances the quality of services, optimizes storage, streamlines workflows and facilitates data processing and sharing thereby contributing to improved control and increased sales. Furthermore, she identifies that the advantages of ICT extend to individuals, organizations, corporations and governments alike. However, this necessitates governmental improvements in procedures, mindset, legislation, regulations and communication methods with citizens. Additionally, the author

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<sup>30</sup>Dhal,Sangital (2020). Situating Digital India Mission in Pursuit of Good Governance: A Study of Electronics Governance Initiatives in the Indian Province of Odisha.*Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 66, Issue No.1, pp. 30-37.

<sup>31</sup>CSC: E-Governance Service India Ltd Annual Report 2020-2021 (2022). <https://cscspv.in/assets/docs/Annual-Report-3-Mar-22.pdf> accessed on 22nd May 2022.



highlights various Government of India initiatives and policies that support E-Governance, such as e-Seva, smart government, digital India and e-Kranti. Consequently, the article primarily investigates the diverse opportunities, current status and challenges associated with the implementation of E-Governance.<sup>32</sup>

Krishnaprabu, S. (2019) in his article titled *Digital India-Major Initiatives and their Impact: A Critical Analysis* offers a comprehensive examination of the Digital India initiative a prominent project by the Government of India aimed at transforming the nation into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-driven economy. He elucidates the programme ambitious vision of making government services electronically accessible to every citizen which is a mission that entails developing a robust online infrastructure and enhancing Internet connectivity and also the ultimate goal is to advance the nation digitally and economically. However, he also addresses the challenges that impede progress such as digital illiteracy, inadequate infrastructure, slow Internet speeds, lack of interdepartmental coordination and taxation issues must be addressed to fully realize the Digital India Programme potential.<sup>33</sup>

Lalduhawmi, Tracy. (2018) in her article titled *Developmental Impact of E-Governance* highlights the relations between ICT and Development where the absence of the former can cause a drawback in the development process of the government. This article analyzes some of the E-Governance projects in Kolasib District of Mizoram and examines various challenges that are related to the implementation of E-Governance projects in Kolasib District. Lastly, she found out that accessibility and proper functioning of the projects and e-readiness are among the government employees as well as the citizens which have a positive impact on the development process.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Mondal,Soumitra. (2019). E-Governance in India: Prospects, Status and Challenges. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, Vol 6, Issue No. 2, pp. 1262-1270.

<sup>33</sup>Krishnaprabu, S. (2019). Digital India-Major Initiatives and their Impact: A Critical Analysis. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, Volume-8, Issue No. 1C2, pp. 953-957.

<sup>34</sup>Lalduhawmi, Tracy. (2018). Developmental Impact of E-Governance. *International Journal of Science and Engineering*, Vol 3, Issue No. 2, pp.1-4.

Dua, Bindu. (2018) in her article titled *Digital India: Challenges and Suggestions for Implementation* discusses how Digital India represents a culmination of numerous innovations and technological progress. She identifies three fundamental pillars supporting this digital framework namely the establishment of a robust digital infrastructure, the efficient delivery of governance and services through digital means and the empowerment of citizens through digital platforms. Dua emphasizes Digital India's objective of transforming the nation into a knowledge-driven economy and a society characterized by digital empowerment. This ambitious initiative aims to achieve effective governance by enhancing public accountability through improved synchronization and coordination. By digitally bridging gaps and facilitating the delivery of government programmes and services seeks to leverage information technology in various government departments.<sup>35</sup>

Ritu & Khurana, Anil. (2018) in their article titled *Digital India – Empowering Indian Citizens through Technology* assert that the adoption of digital technology in India elevates the nation to new heights. They emphasized the primary objective of the Digital India initiative is to enhance mobile connectivity and internet access which facilitate significant advancements in the digital landscape. This flagship programmes aims to connect rural areas to the internet thereby granting them access to essential online services. Key components of this initiative include Digital Locker, Bharat Net, eSign, e-Health, e-Education, e-Kranti, the National Scholarship Portal, the Swachh Bharat Mission and Wi-Fi Hotspots. Ultimately, the Digital India Programme seeks to transform India into a digitally empowered society and enhance the Information Technology framework to achieve extensive coverage through E-Governance and e-Service initiatives.<sup>36</sup>

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (2018) published a report titled '*Digital North-East Vision 2022*', a strategic document reflecting the Government of India's comprehensive plan to integrate digital advancements across the northeastern region of India. This report outlines a future where digital initiatives

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<sup>35</sup>Dua, Bindu. (2018). Digital India: Challenges and Suggestions for Implementation. *Review of Research*, Vol 8, Issue No. 1, pp. 1-7.

<sup>36</sup>Ritu & Khurana, Anil. (2018). Digital India – Empowering Indian Citizen through Technology. *Global Journal of Commerce and Management Perspective*, Vol 7, Issue No. 2, pp. 14-18.

are systematically implemented to transform and expedite progress within the broader Digital India Programme. The vision serves as a detailed framework guiding each initiative with the ultimate aim of transforming and empowering the daily lives of citizens in the northeastern region. Through the establishment of Digital North-East Vision 2022, the Government of India aspires for the region to play a crucial role in realizing India's trillion-dollar digital economy.<sup>37</sup>

Sharma, Rahul & Sijariya, Rajeev. (2017) in their book *Digital India: A Socio-Economic Transformation* asserts that every nation aspires to achieve full digitalization, which enhances societal empowerment. Thus, the Government of India initiated a flagship initiative known as 'Digital India' which aimed at fostering development across various sectors and facilitating innovative opportunities for future generations. The authors emphasize that Digital India is a governmental digital initiative designed to motivate and integrate the Indian economy with that of more developed countries. They further outline the primary objectives of this programme which include making government services accessible to citizens in a digital format and enabling them to benefit from the latest advancements in ICT. Additionally, they identify several specific schemes, such as e-Health, Digital Locker, e-Signee-Education and a nationwide scholarship portal. Ultimately, Digital India aims to deliver all services electronically while promoting digital literacy.<sup>38</sup>

Nippani, Murthy, B.K ., Sinha & Amitabh.(2017) in their edited book *Digital India: Governance Transformation* emphasize that the initiative of Digital India seeks to not only elucidate the principles and practices of E-Governance but also to share critical insights on the execution of E-Governance initiatives worldwide. They assert that E-Governance facilitates the government in providing citizens with easier access to services while enhancing transparency and accountability within governmental operations. Furthermore, they note that despite significant advancements in digital technology in which the pace of development has

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<sup>37</sup>Ministry of Electronics Information and Technology (2018) Report on: *Digital North-East Vision 2022*.

<sup>38</sup>Sharma,Rahul & Sijariya, Rajeev. (2017).*Digital India: A Socio Economic Transformation*. Bharti Publications.

accelerated rapidly since the launch of Digital India in 2015 which aspires to convert India into a digitally empowered society.<sup>39</sup>

Pardhasaradhi, Y & Kaur,Ravinder. (2017) in their article titled *Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and E-Governance: An Indian Experience* examines the significant transformation in public administration brought about by the integration of ICTs and collaborative governance models particularly in the context of India. The authors note that scholars like Furukawa (2004) emphasize the disruptive impact of ICTs on traditional bureaucratic frameworks by fostering networked governance and enhancing citizen-focused service delivery. The World Bank and the Government of India characterize E-Governance as a mechanism for promoting transparency, efficiency and accountability but its application differs markedly between developed and developing nations with India focusing on automation and the United States on interactive platforms. Collectively, the literature supports the notion that PPPs serve as a driving force for E-Governance while also emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive frameworks to tackle issues of equity, sustainability and adaptive governance in varied contexts such as India.<sup>40</sup>

Uthaman,S.,Vijaya & Vasanthagopal, Ramankutty.(2017) in their article titled *A Comprehensive Multidimensional Conceptual Model to assess the E-Governance Service Quality at Common Service Centres in India* presented a detailed multidimensional conceptual model for evaluating the quality of E-Governance services at CSCs in India. They emphasized the establishment of CSCs as a component of the NeGP 2006 initiative, which aims to facilitate access to government services (G2C) and services from public and private enterprises (G2B) particularly for rural populations in remote areas. Their research findings underscored that the assessment of CSC service quality hinges on critical factors

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<sup>39</sup>Nippani, K.S & Murthy, B.K ., Sinha, Amitabh (Ed). (2017) *Digital India: Governance Transformation*. Vitasta Publishing Pvt Ltd.

<sup>40</sup>Pardhasaradhi, Y &Kaur,Ravinder (2017). Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and e-Governance: An Indian Experience. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 54, Issue No. 3, pp. 550-565.

such as service delivery quality, information quality, user satisfaction, and net benefits.<sup>41</sup>

Vibhuti & Tyagi, Ajay Kumar.(2017) in their article titled *E-Governance in India – Concept, Challenges and Strategies* discuss how advancements in ICT prompted the government to transition from manual services to digital platforms, thereby entering the paperless age. They emphasize the government’s initiative to leverage ICT for delivering various services to citizens. Furthermore, the article addresses the numerous challenges encountered particularly in developing nations like India including issues related to poverty and low literacy rates that hinder the adoption of IT services. It also identifies the obstacles faced during the implementation of E-Governance in India and proposes strategies to enhance its effectiveness.<sup>42</sup>

Anuranjan, Nair, Mc., & Jha, B.K.(2016) in their article titled discuss the *Common Service Centre as a feasible institutional framework for agricultural extension in India*. They emphasize that when the objectives and strategies of ICT are meticulously planned, there exists significant potential for transforming Indian society into a knowledge-driven community. The authors also note the transformative effects of ICT on industries and businesses particularly in rural areas. They outline the advent of E-Governance in India which commenced with the NeGP and introduced in 2006. This plan is designed to be executed through a dual strategy focusing on connectivity and content alongside service delivery via CSCs. However, the authors also highlight several challenges and issues that have hindered the visibility of extension services delivered through CSCs by indicating a need for the development of mechanisms to enhance their effectiveness.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Uthaman,S.,Vijaya &Vasanthagopal, Ramankutty. (2017). A Comprehensive Multidimensional Conceptual Model to assess the e-Governance Service Quality at Common Service Centres in India. *10th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance*, pp. 99-105.

<sup>42</sup>Vibhuti&Tyagi, Ajay Kumar. (2017). E-Governance in India – Concept, Challenges and Strategies. *International Journal of Science Technology and Management*, Vol 6, Issue No. 2, pp. 820-828.

<sup>43</sup>Anuranjan, Nair, Mc. &Jha, B.K. (2016). Common Service Centre –A Viable Institutional Mechanism for Agricultural Extension in India. *Journal of Global Communication*, Special Issue 2016, pp. 171-177.

S.R.B. Chetia.(2016) in her article titled *E-Governance in North-East India*, discusses the significance of information exchange as a fundamental component in shaping the future economic and social development activities of a region particularly emphasizing the necessity for such facilities at the grassroots level of administration. The author points out that the predominantly rural character of Northeast India underscores the imperative for sustainable development in these areas and among their populations to align with the progress of more developed states in India. Nevertheless, despite concerted efforts rural regions struggled to keep pace with their urban counterparts. Chetia also examines the initiatives of prominent E-Governance institutions aimed at fostering rural development in the Northeast specifically in Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura while addressing the overarching challenges and potential solutions related to this issue.<sup>44</sup>

Dwivedi.,K, Yogesh et.,al.(2016) in their article titled *Common Services Centres (CSCs) as an Approach to Bridge the Digital Divide: Reflecting on Challenges and Obstacles* examine the role of CSCs in addressing the digital divide noting that despite advancements in technology and its decreasing costs a substantial segment of the population in developing countries still lacks access to fundamental information and communication technologies such as computers and the internet. The authors underscore a significant issue where numerous individuals in countries such as India remain marginalized and unable to access the expanding domain of E-Government applications and services. This digital divide exacerbates the disparity between urban and rural areas and between economically disadvantaged individuals and their more affluent counterparts. To address this widening gap India has introduced a network of Common Service Centres (CSCs) aimed at delivering electronic public services to rural communities. This study explores the challenges and an obstacle encountered by CSCs and provides potential solutions for their effective implementation and sustainable operation.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>S.R.B, Chetia. (2016).E-Governance in North-East India. *Journal of Political Science & Public Affairs*, Vol 4, Issue No.2, pp. 2-4.

<sup>45</sup>Dwivedi., K, Yogesh et.al., (2016) Common Services Centres (CSCs) as an approach to bridge the digital divide: Reflecting on challenges and obstacles. *Transforming Government: People, Process and Policy*, Vol 10, Issue No. 4, pp. 511-525.

Peggu K.R. Uttam. (2015) in his article titled *E-Governance in North East India: Initiatives and Challenges* discusses various policies and programmes implemented by the government including the Transport Operation (MISTO), the Birth and Death Registration System, the New Land Use Policy Project, the General Provident Fund, Land Computerization, the Commercial Taxes Mission Mode Programme and the Criminal Investigation Department's Records Information Management System. He also identifies the challenges and an obstacle faced by these projects and proposes solutions to address these issues.<sup>46</sup>

Kumar, Puneet et.,al. (2014) in their article titled *E-Governance in India: Definitions, Challenges and Solutions* emphasized the Government of India's transition from traditional governance methods to the integration of technology in its operations. They noted that the government is currently in a transitional phase which has effectively harnessing the potential of ICT in governance. Furthermore, the authors pointed out that the Government of India is investing significantly in both financial resources and infrastructure to implement E-Governance and they have proposed several practical recommendations to facilitate the successful and sustainable establishment of E-Governance in the country.<sup>47</sup>

M.R, Rajagopalan & Vellaipandiyan, Solaimurugan.(2013) in their article titled *Big Data Framework for National E-Governance Plan (NeGP)* asserts that the nation is progressing towards digitization. They note that both the Union and State Governments of India are actively working to digitize all government departments, schemes and services. Furthermore, they emphasize that the rise in public awareness and improved network access led to an increase in the use of E-Governance applications. Additionally, they point out that cyber-attacks have become a significant concern, particularly as terrorists target defense and police services which resulting in a rise in cyber-crime incidents.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Peggu, K.R., Uttam. (2015). E-Governance in North East in India, Initiatives and Challenges. *Administrative Studies*, Vol 1, Issue No.1, pp.1-20.

<sup>47</sup>Kumar,Puneet et.,al.(2014). E-Governance in India: Definitions, Challenges and Solutions. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, Vol 101, Issue No.16 , pp. 6-8.

<sup>48</sup>M.R, Rajagopalan & Vellaipandiyan, Solaimurugan. (2013). Big Data Framework for National e-Governance Plan. *Eleventh International Conference on ICT and Knowledge Engineering*, pp.978-981.

Hussain, Ali.(2013) in his book *Good Governance through E-Governance: Reflections from Andhra Pradesh and Kerala* articulates that E-Governance refers to the utilization of ICT in the realm of governance. The author emphasizes twenty-five E-Governance initiatives from Andhra Pradesh and Kerala which encompass critical components such as Government to Citizen (G2C), Government to Business (G2B), Government to Government (G2G) and Government to Employee (G2E). Furthermore, he asserts that these initiatives under the E-Governance framework contribute significantly to the realization of good governance objectives. Additionally, he identifies challenges associated with Public-Private Partnerships in the execution of these projects and proposes solutions for their enhancement.<sup>49</sup>

Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012) in his book *E-Governance: Concept and Case Studies* discusses the development and progression of E-Governance within governmental administration. He elaborates on its scope, current status and global growth. Furthermore, he outlines various E-Governance models, infrastructure initiatives and strategies essential for the successful execution of these projects while also addressing the challenges and issues associated with E-Governance.<sup>50</sup>

Yadav, Nikita & Singh, V.B.(2012) in their article titled *E-Governance: Past, Present and Future in India* elucidate the concept of E-Governance, describing it as the provision of online services to citizens directly at their homes. They underscore the importance of open-source solutions and cloud computing in response to the growing demand for E-Governance, alongside the rapid expansion of data and emerging technologies. Furthermore, they assert that E-Governance enhances governmental efficiency and transparency for citizens. The authors also compile a comprehensive list of E-Governance initiatives currently implemented in India and globally. Additionally, they highlight the latest technological trends adopted by

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<sup>49</sup>Hussain, Ali. (2013).*Good Governance through E-Governance: Reflection from Andhra Pradesh and Kerala*. V.L Media Solutions.

<sup>50</sup>Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012).*E-Governance: Concepts and Case Studies*. PHI Learning Pvt Ltd.



governments worldwide by proposing a framework for advancing E-Governance through the integration of Open Source and Cloud Computing technologies.<sup>51</sup>

Dass, Rajanish & Bhattacharjee, Atashi. (2011) in their article titled *Status of Common Service Centre Programme in India: Issues, Challenges and Emerging Practices for Rollout* examine the current state of CSCs across India by addressing the various challenges and issues encountered by stakeholders involved in the initiative. The authors conducted field studies in Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Meghalaya to gain insights into the on-the-ground obstacles that impede the effective implementation of these centres. They identified numerous challenges and bottlenecks faced by the CSCs and noted a significant deficiency in the government's planning particularly the absence of a structured rollout framework and a risk mitigation strategy for such a large-scale project. Furthermore, the study indicates a notable evolution in the business model employed by transitioning from an initial PPP framework to a more effective and sustainable model that has emerged over time.<sup>52</sup>

Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary. (2010) 'Mizoram Citizen Services Electronic Governance Rules of 2010' here the rules established under Section 90 in conjunction with Section 6 of the IT Act of 2000, are enacted by the Government of Mizoram to facilitate electronic governance within the state. The regulations specify that Village Level Entrepreneurs are to be selected by the Service Centre Agency (SCA) as part of the CSC schemes initiated by the Government of Mizoram. Furthermore, the rules delineate the establishment of the District E-Governance Society a non-profit entity led by the Deputy Commissioner of the respective district, which is constituted under the Registration of Societies Act. This society is tasked with providing comprehensive guidelines and ensuring the efficient operation of e-district services and CSCs within the district. The rules also define the responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner, who is authorized to inspect any

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<sup>51</sup>Yadav, Nikita & Singh, V.B. (2012). E-Governance: Past, Present and Future in India. *International Journal of Computer Application*, Vol 53, Issue No 7, pp.36.

<sup>52</sup>Dass, Rajanish & Bhattacharjee, Atashi. (2011). Status of Common Service Centre Program in India: Issues, Challenges and Emerging Practices for Rollout. *Indian Institute of Management*, pp. 2-34. .

Authorized Citizens Service Centre and to request relevant records or information. Additionally, the Deputy Commissioner has the authority to direct the suspension of an Authorized Citizens Services Agent's appointment if their performance is deemed unsatisfactory.<sup>53</sup>

Yadav, Surya Narain & Baghel, Indu. (2009) in their book *Good Governance: Issues, Challenges and Prospects* discuss the establishment of the NeGP, a significant initiative launched by the Government of India. They underscore that this plan seeks to address all critical aspects of E-Governance including policy formulation, infrastructure development, financial management, project oversight, government process re-engineering, capacity enhancement, training, evaluations and public awareness initiatives across both Central and State Governments. The authors also point out the role of CSCs as a key component of the NeGP by providing essential access points in a nation where IT and ICT literacy is notably low. They assert that CSCs are instrumental in delivering a wide array of services from various government departments at a single location functioning as a one-stop shop that facilitates prompt service delivery, combats corruption and alleviates challenges faced by vulnerable and marginalized communities.<sup>54</sup>

Chauhan. (2009) in his report discusses the *National E-Governance Plan in India* as outlined in a United Nations report by the International Institute for Software Technology. This report elaborates on the vision, components, implementation strategies, and governance framework of the plan. Additionally, it provides essential information regarding India's political, geographical, social, economic and regulatory contexts. The report further illustrates the current state of the IT sector in India and concludes by addressing significant challenges and issues encountered during the execution of the plan and its associated projects.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>The Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary (2010). 'Mizoram citizen services electronic governance rules 2010', Vol XXXIX, Issue No. 406, Government of India.

<sup>54</sup>Yadav, Surya Narain & Baghel, Indu. (2009). *Good Governance: Issues, Challenges and Prospects*. Global Vision Publishing House.

<sup>55</sup>Chauhan, Radha. (2009). *National E-Governance Plan in India*. United Nations University-International Institute of Software and Technology, Report No. 414.

Gupta, Piyush & Bagga, PK. (2008) in their book *Compendium of E-Governance Initiatives in India* highlighted the emergence of NeGP which includes different Government projects at the Centre, State and other integrated projects. He also highlighted various initiatives taken by the Government of India in terms of Infrastructural Projects and Capacity Building.<sup>56</sup>

Second Administrative Reforms Committee Report. (2008) *Elevent Report on Promoting E-Governance-The Smart Way Forward* mainly focuses on fostering an effective E-Governance here the government must first cultivate a willingness to change internally. It should identify and prioritize projects that address citizen needs, allocating 2-3 percent of the plan budget accordingly. Business processes, forms, and structures need redesigning to fit E-Governance supported by necessary legal and institutional reforms. Capacity building is essential for both organizations and individuals involved, alongside awareness campaigns. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation throughout implementation ensure projects meet their goals, with independent assessments of success. State governments must mandate governance reforms before launching E-Governance initiatives including procedural and structural changes. Finally, a clear legal framework and knowledge management roadmap should guide a phased transformation of citizen-government interactions to fully digital modes by 2020 by ensuring coordination across government levels and adapting to varied local contexts.<sup>57</sup>

Tripathi,Vishwas.(2007) in his book *E-Governance in India* examines the significance of IT in governance by emphasizing the role of Electronic Governance in addressing social and legal challenges, as well as various state-level E-Governance initiatives. He also addresses the challenges associated with E-Governance including technological, political and social, management and funding obstacles. Furthermore, he outlines the development of information technology in Mizoram by detailing the goals of the Mizoram IT policy and the state's IT infrastructure concerning revenue

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<sup>56</sup>Gupta, Piyush & Bagga, R.K. (2008).*Compendium of E-Governance Initiatives in India*. University Press Pvt Ltd.

<sup>57</sup>Second ARC Report (2008), Elevent Report on Promoting e-Governance-The smart way forward, *Department of Administrative Reforms and Personnel and Greivences*, Government of India.

collection, law enforcement services, transportation, education, rural development, and passport services.<sup>58</sup>

Sinha, R.P.(2006) in his book *E-Governance in India: Initiatives and Issues* articulates the definitions of Governance and E-Governance has emphasizing various governance parameters such as accountability, political stability, the rule of law and corruption control. He also examines the legal frameworks surrounding governance and provides an overview of the global landscape of E-Governance. Furthermore, he underscores the initiatives undertaken by the Government to foster the development of the IT sector within the nation while addressing the challenges and issues related to IT and governance which ultimately proposing solutions for enhancement.<sup>59</sup>

Verma, Ram Mohan. (2005) in his book *Democracy and Governance in a Changing World* discusses the rise of the modern Internet in which emerged from the recognition that centralized communication technologies were vulnerable to nuclear attacks and other crises. To address this threat, the United States military funded the creation of the Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), marking the initial phase of the Internet as we know it today. Verma also emphasizes that the advent of new ICTs has transformed governance operations and altered citizen's views on democracy, society and public administration.<sup>60</sup>

Deva, Vasu. (2005) in his book, *E-governance in India: A Reality*, emphasizes the importance of a Citizen-Centric Approach, wherein the Government engages with citizens to understand their needs and encourages their involvement in policymaking, service design, and delivery. He discussed how electronic devices play a crucial role in reducing corruption within Government administration thereby enhancing accountability and transparency. Furthermore, he addresses the issue of Women's Empowerment in the realm of ICT by outlining various initiatives

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<sup>58</sup>Tripathi, Vishwas. (2007).*E-Governance in India*. Anmol Publications Pvt Ltd.

<sup>59</sup>Sinha, R.P. (2006).*E-Governance in India: Initiatives and Issues*. Concept Publishing Company.

<sup>60</sup>Verma, RamMohan. (2005).*Democracy and Governance in a Changing World*. Vista International Publishing House.

undertaken by the Government to facilitate access to information technology for women and economically disadvantaged groups.<sup>61</sup>

Panneervel, P. (2005) in his book *E-Governance: A Change Management Tool* elucidates the concept of E-Governance by defining and examining the transformative processes within governance that alter management practices. He emphasizes the analytical development and execution of the smart card-based driving license system implemented in the State of Gujarat, which was recognized as the first of its kind globally when introduced by the Government of Gujarat in 1999. Furthermore, he discusses how the change management process was effectively achieved through e-application and proposes recommendations for enhancing E-Governance applications.<sup>62</sup>

Bhatnagar, Subhash.(2004) in his book *E-Government: From Vision to Implementation* provides an understanding of E-Government, how it emerged and for what reason it has been used in third-world countries like India. It includes services to citizens such as transactions involving obtaining land deeds, certificates, permits, taxes, different licenses relating to customs and business sections. The methods used in delivering services differ from country to country. He also explores the impact and benefits of E-Governance on good governance, empowerment and eradicating poverty.<sup>63</sup>

Sharma,Pankaj(2004) in his book *E-Governance* explores the domain of E-Governance. He highlights the substantial challenges that governments encounter when initiating E-Government projects such as cultural disparities, the significant digital divide, the slow progression of IT literacy and the diversity of languages. The book also examines various initiatives undertaken by different states in the field of E-Governance and ICT projects while elucidating the legal complexities of Information Technology (IT). Finally, the authors investigate a range of models and

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<sup>61</sup>Deva, Vasu. (2005). *E-Governance in India: A Reality*. Commonwealth Publishers.

<sup>62</sup>Panneervel, P. (2005). *E-Governance, A Change Management Too*. Rawat Publications.

<sup>63</sup>Bhatnagar, Subhash. (2004).*E-Government*. Sage Publications Pvt Ltd.

developments through detailed case studies providing insights into the ongoing evolution of E-Governance projects.<sup>64</sup>

Shefali, Kalia. (2004) in her book *Good Governance and Development* emphasized the significance of E-Governance in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative operations across various governmental departments. She discussed several E-Governance models including the Computational Intelligence and Data Mining (CIDM) which provides citizens with insights into governmental functions via the internet the CIDM which focuses on delivering essential information to specific audiences or the broader public and the Advocacy Model (AD) which facilitates civil society's involvement in governmental decision-making and the Interactive Service Model (ISM) which allows citizens to engage in governmental processes and transactions. Kalia identified four fundamental components of E-Governance: information, technology, processes and people also she also addressed the applications of E-Governance across different sectors.<sup>65</sup>

Pardhasaradhi, Y. (n,d) in his article titled *Improving Citizen – Government Interface through e-Governance: A Study of India* explores the transformative impact of E-Governance on citizen-government interactions in India with a focus on Andhra Pradesh's initiatives like e-Seva, Computer Aided Administration in Registration Department (CARD) and Andhra Pradesh State Wide Area Network (APSWAN). It highlights how digitalization has streamlined administrative processes by reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies and enhanced transparency leading to high citizen satisfaction. The study underscores the role of public-private partnerships in delivering efficient services such as centralized bill payments and online transactions which save time and resources for citizens. The author also discusses the shift from traditional bureaucratic models to "SMART" governance, emphasizing principles like accountability and responsiveness. While the article notes challenges such as the need for expanded service centers and better inter-departmental coordination it

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<sup>64</sup>Sharma, Pankaj. (2004).*E-Governance*. ABH Publishing Corporation.

<sup>65</sup>Shefali,.Kalia, (2004). *Good Governance and Development*. New Century Publications.

concludes that E-Governance has significantly improved service delivery and reinforced public trust in government.<sup>66</sup>

From the above-mentioned literature, it can be found that the research questions to which this study wants to find the answers have not been carried out so far, in other words, there exists a lack of scientific and systematic study on the present research topic. Therefore, this study wants to fill this gap.

### **Research Gap:**

The significance of E-Governance in delivering various public services is undeniable. This is particularly true for states like Mizoram, where geographical challenges and other factors complicate access to essential services. E-Governance acts as a remedy by facilitating the delivery of vital public services to individuals residing in remote and isolated areas. While there have been some studies focusing on E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram, however that one was under the previous programme called NeGP(National e-Governance Plan) and not under the Digital India Programme which is currently going on.

In light of the existing literature, it is evident that apart from the studies previously referenced there has been a notable absence of research focusing on CSCs in Mizoram from the dual perspectives of both Customers (who avail the public services) and Village Level Entrepreneurs (who operate these centres). This oversight is particularly significant given the crucial role that CSCs play as part of the Digital India Programme. The CSCs are designed to act as front-end service delivery points by facilitating access to a variety of public services for individuals living in far-flung areas. Their importance cannot be overstated especially in a state like Mizoram where geographical and infrastructural challenges hinder the effective delivery of essential services. The CSCs are intended to bridge the gap between the government and the populace, yet there has been little focus on understanding the

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<sup>66</sup> Pardhasaradhi, Y (n,d). Improving Citizen – Government Interface through e-Governance: A Study of India. *Internet and Information Technology for Greater Mekong Sub region (GMS) Business*, pp. 215-219.

experiences and needs of those who utilize these services, as well as those who provide them. The lack of comprehensive studies on this topic leaves a significant gap in understanding of how CSCs function in Mizoram. It is essential to explore the perspectives of customers to gauge their satisfaction, the challenges they face, and how effectively their needs are being met. Simultaneously, examining the viewpoints of VLEs operating these CSCs is crucial for understanding the operational challenges, economic viability and sustainability of these centers. Therefore, this research aims to fill this existing research gap by conducting a thorough examination of both customers and VLEs perspectives regarding CSCs in Mizoram. By doing so, it seeks to provide valuable insights that can form policy decisions, improve service delivery and enhance the overall effectiveness of the Digital India Programme within the state of Mizoram.

#### **Statement of the Problem:**

Even in this modern age certain aspects of government administration still need focused attention such as public service delivery, reducing corruption, making officials accountable, etc. While India is rapidly advancing in ICTs the challenge lies in effectively utilizing this ever-evolving technology to empower the common masses. Across the nation, enhancing governance is crucial and the common people who are the real rulers of the country are often encounter difficulties accessing even basic public services. So with the help of ICTs the most common issue of the public relating to the delivery of public services can ultimately improve accessibility and efficiency for all.

Among the various policies and programmes adopted by the Government of India in the field of E-Governance CSCs stand out as a significant component of it. These centres started initially in NeGP and later under the Digital India programme have been established nationwide including in Mizoram. Through its network of CSCs it provides a diverse array of online public services at the grassroots level. Mizoram is one of the four tribal-majority states in the North Eastern Region (NER),



with over 47.89 percent (2011 Census) of its population residing in rural areas. Accessing various public services poses a significant challenge due to the regions geographical terrain and inadequate infrastructure, including roads and highways. Additionally, many residents struggle with poor transport and communication connectivity. In this context, CSCs implemented in Mizoram serve as crucial front-end delivery points by facilitating access to various public services for people in convenient locations. The present study holds great importance as it aims to examine the functioning of these CSCs where an area that currently lacks systematic and scientific research. Two key aspects of this study are particularly vital: first, assessing the perspectives of CSC customers (the public) and second by understanding the viewpoints of the entrepreneurs operating these CSCs. Both perspectives will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges faced by the CSCs as an important E-Governance initiative in Mizoram.

This study aims to assess the success or failure of CSCs in Mizoram, identifying what measures can be taken to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. In the 21st century, successful implementation of E-Governance is crucial. It not only facilitates the delivery of various public services to citizens more transparently and effectively but also empowers them to align with the goal of Good Governance. By assessing the strengths and weaknesses of CSCs this research outcome can offer a realistic perspective with practical insights to enhance service delivery and ultimately benefit the community.

### **Scope of the Study:**

This study discusses the concept of E-Governance, its types, various models, and its evolution at the Global, National and Mizoram level. It also highlights the differences between E-Governance and E-Government. The study covers the various E-Governance initiatives taken up at the national and different state levels in India with a special focus on E-Governance initiatives in the state of Mizoram (Past and Present). It deliberates on the main stakeholders for implementing E-Governance and

Common Service Centres in India in the form of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India and the National e-Governance Division at the Central Government Level, whereas at the Mizoram State Level i.e., the Department of Information & Communication Technology and the Mizoram State e-Governance Society. Apart from the above mentioned it focuses on a comprehensive study of CSCs, its objectives, implementation framework and various services offered by them. It also highlights recent initiative by the Government of India through the Digital India Common Service Centres Project by underscoring the dedication to digital transformation in the country.

Additionally, the research aims to elucidate the complexities of public service delivery by examining the challenges that may impede the effective functioning of Common Service Centres. By identifying these obstacles, the study endeavors to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of public service delivery through CSCs in Mizoram. It ultimately offers a series of suggestions and recommendations designed to enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of CSCs. Such enhancements could lead to better service experiences for customers and a more sustainable operational framework for entrepreneurs managing CSCs in Mizoram.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To study the genesis and conceptual aspect of E-Governance.
2. To examine various E-Governance initiatives at the National Level.
3. To study E-Governance initiatives implemented by the Government of Mizoram.
4. To assess the impact of the Common Service Centres in providing E-Governance services to the people in Mizoram.
5. To find out the problems and challenges in the implementation of Common Service Centres and the possible solutions and remedial measures.

**Research Questions:**

1. How E-Governance has evolved and its conceptual framework?
2. What are the various E-Governance initiatives implemented at the National Level?
3. What are the various E-Governance initiatives undertaken by the Government of Mizoram?
4. What is the role of Common Service Centres in providing E-Governance services to the people?
5. What are the problems and challenges in the implementation of Common Service Centres in Mizoram?

**Methodology:**

The present study is descriptive in design. Both primary and secondary sources of data are used for the study. The study area of this research is the comparative study of Aizawl and Lawngtlai districts of the state of Mizoram. The reason behind Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts are selected for the comparative study, as they have the highest number of CSCs, according to the report from the Common Service Centre office in Mizoram. Primary data is collected by employing two important tools: a Questionnaire and Observation. The Semi-Structured Questionnaire and the Simple Random Sampling method (Probability Sampling) used to draw sample respondents for the study from selected CSCs of the mentioned districts (i.e., Aizawl and Lawngtlai). The two separate questionnaires are prepared: one aimed at Village Level Entrepreneurs who manage the CSCs, and another directed towards the Customers who utilize various public services offered at these centres. This dual approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between service providers and service users. In total, this comparative study includes 420 sample respondents, with 175 customers from each district, namely, Aizawl and Lawngtlai. Furthermore, there are 35 VLEs from each district who participated in the research study, providing insight into the operational aspects of the CSCs. In addition to the interviews, the research employs a non-participatory

Observation tool. This tool allows researchers to observe the day-to-day functioning of the CSCs, their infrastructure, etc in both districts without interfering with the operations. Such observations are crucial for understanding the practical challenges, service interactions and overall environment within the CSCs. By integrating both the Questionnaire and Observation tool this study aims to gather rich, multifaceted data that reflects the realities of both Customers and VLEs engaged in the CSCs in Mizoram.

The secondary sources include books, journals, articles, government and non-government documents (policy papers, reports, documents, etc), unpublished works and web sources related to the study (directly or indirectly). For analyzing the data collected from primary sources, the researcher adopts the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for generating data in the form of simple percentages and frequency distributions.

### **Significance of the Study:**

In an incredibly brief period, ICTs revolutionized the lives of individuals across the globe, marking a transformative era in human history. One significant area where the impact is profoundly felt is in the delivery of public services. The advent of ICTs introduced innovative methods for providing these services efficiently and effectively, moving away from traditional manual systems that had long dominated public service delivery. E-Governance has emerged as a pivotal mechanism through which governments and other stakeholders can offer various public services online. This shift allows for greater accessibility, convenience, and speed in service delivery. Citizens no longer have to navigate complex bureaucracies or endure long waiting times associated with manual processes. Instead, they can access services electronically, which not only streamlines operations but also enhances transparency and accountability in government dealings.

This research study on “E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram: A Comparative Study of Common Service Centres in Aizawl and Lawngtlai District”

aims to make a substantial contribution to the field of E-Governance by focusing specifically on the functioning of CSCs. These centres offer the public, to access essential services, making them integral to the overall success of E-Governance initiatives. The significance of this study is underscored by the notable lack of systematic or scientific research on the topic of CSCs within the context of Mizoram. While various studies explored E-Governance, a targeted examination of CSCs from the perspectives of both customers (the general public) and VLEs (the individuals operating these centres) is largely absent. This gap in research is critical, as both groups are fundamental stakeholders in the E-Governance framework. Understanding the experiences and challenges faced by customers accessing services through CSCs is vital for assessing the effectiveness of these centres. Simultaneously, insights from VLEs who run CSCs can shed light on the operational challenges they encounter, the viability of their business models and their perspectives on how to improve service delivery. By addressing this gap, the study not only enriches the academic discourse surrounding E-Governance but also holds practical implications for policymakers and practitioners. The findings help to make strategies to enhance the functionality and reach of CSCs ultimately leads to improved public service delivery for the citizens of Mizoram. Recommendations derived from the study guide the development of more effective E-Governance policies, ensuring that public services are not only accessible but also responsive to the needs of the community. Therefore, this study on the E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram focusing on CSCs is significant for its potential to provide a holistic understanding of the interplay between technology and public service delivery.

### **Chapterization:**

The entire thesis is organized into seven chapters.

The *first chapter* serves as an *Introduction*, outlining the background of the study and emphasizing the significance of E-Governance in enhancing administrative efficiency. Additionally, it includes a review of relevant literature, identification of the research problem, discussion of the research gap, delineation of the study scope,

articulation of the study objectives, formulation of research questions, description of the methodology and an explanation of significance of the study.

The *second* chapter, titled '*E-Governance: A Conceptual Framework*' examines the theoretical aspects of E-Governance, providing definitions, various types and models associated with it. Additionally, it offers a concise overview of the global evolution of e-governance as well as its development specifically within India and the state of Mizoram.

The *third* chapter focuses on '*E-Governance Initiatives in India*' with a particular focus on the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) introduced in 2006 and the Digital India Programme that commenced in 2015. Furthermore, it analyzes the Digital North East Vision 2022 which outlines a digital strategy for the Northeastern states, and highlights key E-Governance initiatives undertaken by different states across the country.

The *fourth* chapter, titled '*E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram*', examines the operations of the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) in relation to the implementation and execution of significant IT programmes and policies. Also, this chapter aims to highlight the various ongoing schemes and initiatives undertaken by the Department of Information and Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram.

The *fifth* chapter on the '*Common Service Centres (CSCs) in India and Mizoram*' aims to explore the initiatives associated with CSCs, their objectives and goals. Also, the chapter emphasizes the various services provided by CSCs and their transactions.

The *sixth* chapter, titled '*Results and Discussion*' presents an analysis of field data obtained through the Semi-Structured Interview Schedule and Observation method from both the Village Level Entrepreneurs and Customers of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts of Mizoram with the help of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for generating data in the form of simple percentages and frequency distributions.

The *seventh* chapter discusses about the major findings of the research study based on the previous chapter results and discussion. Also, the researcher gives some suggestions based on the problems and challenges identified in the field study. At last, the overall conclusion of the study was drawn.

To conclude, E-Governance, particularly through the implementation of CSCs has emerged as a vital strategy for narrowing the digital divide and fostering inclusive governance across India. In the context of Mizoram where geographical challenges and inadequate infrastructure hinder traditional public service delivery methods, CSCs play a critical role in providing accessible and efficient public services to residents. This study explored the functioning, obstacles and impacts of CSCs within Mizoram focusing on both districts namely, Aizawl and Lawngtlai. Overall with the help of CSCs the goals of E-Governance can be realized by ensuring that the advantages of digital governance extend to all citizens, particularly marginalized and underserved communities.

## **Chapter II**

### **E-GOVERNANCE: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter examines the theoretical aspects of E-Governance including definitions, various types and models associated with it and also the difference between E-Governance and E-Government. Furthermore, it offers a concise overview of the global evolution of E-Governance as well as its development specifically within India and the state of Mizoram.

#### **Introduction:**

A government fundamental purpose is to serve its citizens essentially and its main functions revolve around record-keeping and delivering public services. The process of public administration largely centers on handling data and managing public information. Governments gather and process a wide array of data concerning individuals, families, organizations and companies. From this data, they generate new information such as policies, strategies, plans and regulations and then offer various services to the public. Information Technology (IT) plays a crucial role in facilitating these processes, supporting activities like data collection, storage, analysis, distribution and application. It is widely acknowledged that effective governance and high quality public administration are impossible without modern IT support. Consequently the integration of IT has become an indispensable element for the development and efficiency of public administration. At the most fundamental level, IT is changing the governance of the country, through information dissemination on a decentralised basis that is cost-effective and has low levels of demand.<sup>67</sup>

Recognising and tapping the technological changes happening in society is very crucial for the leaders of the governments to formulate their government

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<sup>67</sup> Ahammed, Tabil (2021). *A Review of Technological Advancement in 20<sup>th</sup> Century*.



policies and strategies on the development of E- Government. For example, an integrated revenue information system, improve tax data available to collection employees in the field and revenue officers be able to receive cases more quickly and depose them sooner. A system using distributed computing architecture on the Internet to automate and modernise the tax collection process enables the Treasury to collect tax more efficiently. There are at least three reasons why government information is crucial for any government to reach its objectives of economic and social development.<sup>68</sup>

Firstly, considering the vital role of the public sector in a country's economy by enhancing productivity within this sector can yield substantial benefits for the entire economy. The public sector typically makes up a significant portion of total employment, consumption expenditure and gross domestic fixed capital formation. Secondly, it serves as the largest and most dynamic collector of public data and information. This data encompasses everything from economic and social activities to natural geographic sources. Lastly, in a global economy driven by information a robust and well-functioning government information systems are essential. They enable access to international knowledge and databases thereby opening a new opportunities to harness and utilize local insights and resources effectively.<sup>69</sup>

### **Concept of E-Governance:**

Electronic Governance, commonly known as E-Governance plays a crucial role in transforming and redesigning organizations by integrating information and communication technologies into existing administrative and management frameworks. Over the years, the evolution of governance has shifted how governments interact with their citizens and with these changes occurring in various phases. The nature of the relationship and interactive processes between citizens and governments is rapidly evolving, driven by continuous advancements and

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Balaji, L .E-Governance in India, *Emperor International Journal of Finance and Management Research*, pp. 6-9.

innovations in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Fundamentally, E-Governance aims to grant citizens easier access to government information and services by placing the citizen at the center of service delivery and making government more accessible and responsive.<sup>70</sup>

According to UNESCO, *“E-Governance may be defined as any activity performed in the electronic medium in order to facilitate and efficient, speedy and transparent process of disseminating information to public and other agencies, and for performing government administration activities.”*<sup>71</sup>

According to the Council of Europe, *“E-Governance is about the use of information technology to raise the quality of the services governments deliver to citizens and businesses. It is hoped that it will also reinforce the connection between public officials and communities thereby leading to a stronger, more accountable and inclusive democracy.”*<sup>72</sup>

According to Idea Group Inc.(IGI) Global, *“Electronic Governance is the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for delivering government services through integration of various stand-alone systems between Government-to-Citizens (G2C), Government-to-Business (G2B), and Government-to-Government (G2G) services. It is often linked with back office processes and interactions within the entire government framework. Through e-Governance, the government services are made available to the citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner.”*<sup>73</sup>

Backus (2001), *“E-Governance is defined as the application of electronic means in the interaction between government and citizens and government and*

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<sup>70</sup> Gronlund Ake & Horan A Thomas (2004). Introducing e-Gov: History, Definitions, and Issues, *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*, Vol 15, pp. 713-729.

<sup>71</sup> Lodhi Kaniz Fatma Niyaz Ahmed (2023). E-Governance: Modern Universal Approach of Governmental Administration. *EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)*, Vol 8, Issue No. 9, pp. 54-57.

<sup>72</sup> Grigalashvili ,Vepkhvia (2022). E-government and E-governance: Various or Multifarious Concepts. *International Journal of Scientific and Management Research*, Vol 5, Issue No. 1, pp. 183-193.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid

*businesses, as well as in internal government operations to simplify and improve democratic, government and business aspects of Governance.*”<sup>74</sup>

As per the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2001), *“E-Governance means preparing for greater and faster interactions with citizens and ensures better knowledge management.”*<sup>75</sup>

### **E-Government and E-Governance:**

The concepts of E-Government and E-Governance are often utilized interchangeably to refer to the manner in which government entities employ Information & Communication Technology (ICT) more effectively to provide services, and enhance interactions with citizens, businesses and other governmental branches. In order to comprehend how ICTs can be optimally utilized within the governmental sector to advance development objectives, it is essential to first clarify the definitional scope of the suffixes –‘ment’ and ‘ance’.<sup>76</sup>

The concept of E-Government is commonly used to refer to the provision of services through network technologies to citizens, businesses and governmental entities, including customs clearance, tax payments, and license processing, etc. It includes both the ‘front-office’ and ‘back-office’ applications of ICTs to facilitate the business operations that a government undertakes, primarily the delivery of information and services. According to European Parliament, *“E-Government refers to efforts by public authorities to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve public services and increase democratic participation. E-Government aims to improve government efficiency through the reduced cost of*

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid

<sup>75</sup> Ibid

<sup>76</sup> Grigalashvili, Vepkhvia. (2022). E-government and E-governance: Various or Multifarious Concepts. *International Journal of Scientific and Management Research*, Vol 5, Issue No. 1, pp. 183-196.

*electronic information management and communications, the reorganization of government agencies and the reduction of administrative silos of information.”<sup>77</sup>*

The term E-Governance is utilized to distinguish between two categories of issues. Firstly, E-Governance pertains to the management of technological initiatives within the government sector by addressing the challenges and policies (such as information privacy and standardization) as well as the cultural issues within institutions (for instance, changes in management and the development of human resources) that are essential for the successful implementation of E-Government projects. Secondly, E-Governance also refers to the evolution of the relationship between the government and its citizens in an information society thereby outlining the objectives and potential albeit often elusive of leveraging the transformative capabilities of technology to foster a more transparent, equitable and empowered society that is actively involved in the governance process.<sup>78</sup>

A comparative study carried out by Sheridan and Riley in 2010 on E-Government and E-Governance indicates that the concepts in question should be regarded as two separate abstractions:

(a) E-Government represents an institutional framework for jurisdictional political activities and encompasses a specialized field focused on the creation of online services for citizens. This includes various e-services related to specific government functions, such as e-taxation, e-transportation and e-health. Moreover, it involves the participation of non-profit organizations, NGOs and private-sector corporate entities.

(b) E-Governance represents a systematic approach to collaborative administrative interactions which involves the integration of fundamental and standardized procedures within the realm of public administration. This latter aspect serves as the crucial element that guarantees the effective delivery of electronic services. E-Governance encompasses a comprehensive subject that addresses the entire range of relationships and networks within government concerning the

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

utilization and implementation of ICTs. It is a more extensive concept that defines and evaluates the effects that technologies exert on the functioning and management of governments as well as the interactions between public officials and the broader community including engagements with elected representatives or external organizations. E-Governance includes a series of essential actions that government entities must undertake to develop and manage in order to ensure the successful execution of E-Government services for the general public. Therefore, E-Government functions as a system whereas E-Governance serves as functionality.<sup>79</sup>

### **Types of E-Governance:**

E-Governance plays a pivotal role in modern administration by leveraging ICTs to enhance efficiency, transparency and accessibility in government operations. It can be categorized into four different types, each serving a distinct sector: Government to Government (G2G), Government to Citizens (G2C), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Employees (G2E):-

**Government to Government (G2G)** refers to the utilization of ICT to streamline governmental processes and enhance the exchange of information and services among various governmental entities. According to Gregory (2007), G2G encompasses online communication among government organizations, departments and agencies facilitated by a centralized super-government database. This interaction can occur horizontally, involving different government agencies or functional areas within an organization as well as vertically connecting national, provincial and local government agencies, along with various organizational levels. The primary objective of this interaction is to improve efficiency, performance and overall output.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid

<sup>80</sup> Khan, Irshad & Haider, Muzammil (2025). E-governance in India and Its Role in Modern Governance: A Conceptual Overview. *International Journal for Research Trends and Innovation*, Vol 10, Issue No. 3, pp. 698-712.

**Government to Citizens (G2C)** framework fosters the connection between governmental entities and the public. It enables citizens too swiftly and conveniently access governmental information and services from any location through various channels. The G2C model is specifically crafted to enhance citizen engagement with the government. This framework establishes an interface that allows citizens to benefit from the efficient provision of a wide range of public services. Consequently, it not only broadens the reach and accessibility of public services but also elevates the quality of these services. Within the G2C model individuals can enjoy immediate and convenient access to governmental information and services at any time and from any place by utilizing multiple channels. Furthermore, G2C initiatives are designed to address potential temporal and geographical barriers thereby connecting citizens who might otherwise remain isolated from one another by ultimately promoting and increasing civic participation in governmental processes.<sup>81</sup>

**Government to Business (G2B)** refers to the utilization of E-Governance tools that facilitate seamless interactions between government entities and business organizations that supply goods and services. This interaction can lead to considerable efficiencies for both parties. The G2B encompasses a range of services exchanged between the government and the business sector, including the dissemination of policies, memos and regulations. Business services provided under G2B include access to up-to-date business information, new regulatory updates, downloading application forms, tax submissions, license renewals, business registrations and permit acquisitions, among others. The primary objective of this interaction is to minimize bureaucratic obstacles, conserve time, lower operational expenses and foster a more transparent business environment in dealings with the government.<sup>82</sup>

**Government to Employees (G2E)** refers specifically to the interaction between government entities and their workforce. This relationship is designed to support employees by providing various online services including the ability to apply

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<sup>81</sup> Honnon, M. Jules (2023). The Impact of Digitalization on Government Services: A Case Study of Benin. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, Vol 8, Issue No. 10, pp. 1557-1573.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid

for annual leave, monitor leave balances and access salary payment records and other functionalities. In this context, the government acts as a primary employer necessitating regular communication with its employees. This communication is characterized as a reciprocal process between the organization and its staff. The implementation of ICT tools enhances the speed and efficiency of these interactions while simultaneously improving employee satisfaction.<sup>83</sup>

### **Models of E-Governance:**

There are various models of E-Governance and some of the popular models are discussed below:

#### **Gartner Model of E-Governance**

In 2000, Gartner Group Inc. introduced a conceptual framework designed to assess the development of E-Governance within organizations. This framework outlines four key stages of E-Governance evolution: information, interaction, transaction and transformation.

Gartner Model of E-Governance can be classified into four phases:

(a) **First Phase- Information:** In this stage, information related to different aspects of public service delivery is made accessible to all stakeholders such as citizens and businesses, through websites, portals and similar platforms. The information displayed on government websites may include details about the functions of various government agencies, their roles and responsibilities. This enhances transparency and provides greater convenience for citizens and businesses alike. Nearly all government entities across the country have reached this phase.

(b) **Second Phase –Interaction:** In the second phase of interaction, there could either be a limited one-way engagement between government (agencies) and citizens or there could be a vibrant and dynamic two-way exchange between the government

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<sup>83</sup> Krishna, Raghuvir (2024). Role of E-Governance in Modern Administration, *International Journal for Legal Research and Analysis*, Vol 2, Issue No. 7, pp. 5-13.

(agencies) and the citizens using digital interfaces including a website or mobile application. As an example of one-way exchange, citizens and government agencies can exchange emails, download all sorts of forms and applications using a website/app, upload and submit forms using this interface which works essentially on an 'anywhere, anytime' basis consequently saving stakeholders time and making life easy. In the second model, known as the two-way exchange citizens have the opportunity to engage in interactive conversations with the relevant government agency through digital platforms for example to know about the status of the reserved ticket, seat on a particular train etc. Therefore, in this phase a significant part of the government processes are done online, but the citizens still visit the relevant government offices to complete the entire process as it may be payment of fees or submission of supporting documents, required to complete the rest of the transaction(s).

(c) **Third Phase - Transaction:** When money is involved in any public service transaction, the process becomes intricate. In the third act of the 'Transaction' saga, the digital domain assumes prominence thereby eliminating the need for physical visits to government offices. In this context, financial transactions are conducted online by allowing the settlement of utility bills with minimal effort while online banking and financial activities continue seamlessly. Tax returns, whether pertaining to income or property is submitted easily through digital means. Access to visa and passport services is facilitated virtually and licenses are renewed or extended with the simplicity of a keystroke and this era is characterized by effortless transactions within the digital sphere

(d) **Fourth Phase – Transformation:** In the final stage of Gartner's model, 'Transformation', the digital infrastructure of a government department is intricately integrated with innovative technologies by connecting every backend component into a cohesive system. This digital integration enables citizens and businesses to access public services through a unified virtual interface available on websites or applications. Such a comprehensive digital transformation necessitates a fundamental reconfiguration of operational processes within government departments, encouraging the adoption of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence,



Machine Learning, the Internet of Things (IoT) and Augmented Reality. These departments, once operating in isolation have now been reconstituted as an integrated, harmonized and digitized entity. While the implementation of these digital technologies introduces additional complexity it also promises to enhance satisfaction for both citizens and businesses alike. This four-phase Gartner model not only provides a roadmap for organizations but also effectively narrates a nation's progression in E-Government and E-Governance.<sup>84</sup>

### **United Nations (UN) Model of E-Governance**

Through its division for Public Administration, the United Nations produced a study titled "*Benchmarking E-Governance: A Global Perspective, Assessing the Progress of the UN Member States*" in 2001, introducing a five-stage approach for determining the success of E-Governance. Furthermore, the paper illustrates how E-Governance projects might function as metrics for the government's development level by assessing deliverables and services offered on their official online portals. The UN five-stage model of E-Governance is:

- a. **Emerging:** The government's online presence is currently confined to self-sufficient, independent and static websites.
- b. **Enhanced:** Here, efforts are made to create more dynamic and often updated web pages.
- c. **Interactive:** At this level, users can submit feedback, contact officials, obtain forms, apply for services and even schedule appointments.
- d. **Transactional:** In this stage, financial transactions are made visible online, allowing users to pay for the services they receive.
- e. **Seamless:** This stage combines all processes inside a department boundary into an integrated e-service that performs administrative functions.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Saber, ASN Sharif (2006). Information Technology Law and E-government: A Developing Country Perspective, *Journal of Administrative and Governance*, Vol 1, Issue No. 1, pp. 84-101.

<sup>85</sup> Noman, Ahmed Mohammed & Hebbbar, CK (2016). e-Government Development Models: Concepts Overview, *International Journal of Latest Trends in Engineering and Technology*, pp. 115-120.

### **World Bank Model of E-Governance**

The World Bank Centre for Democracy and Technology in 2002 tried to help policymakers with their E-Government strategies and projects by using their own three-stage model. The phases are conceptual and independent thereby creating a difference between E-Governance goals. The three-stage models of E-Governance are:

- a) **Publish:** This is the first stage, where the primary purpose of publishing an online site is for the government to communicate information through broadcast or circulation. It works particularly well if it is only for that purpose.
- b) **Interact:** There should be two-way communication and Government websites allow people to contact officials, submit forms and express their opinions on various topics.
- c) **Transact:** This is the phase in which citizens/businesses access actual government services through their own portals. Transaction allowed sites make E-Governance more effective and less time consuming by offering direct links to specific services at any given moment.<sup>86</sup>

### **Deloitte Maturity Model of E-Governance**

At the onset of the new millennium, the Deloitte Consulting Group introduced a visionary six-stage maturity model for E-Governance. This model representing a continuum of digital evolution by progressing through stages of information publishing, official two-way transactions, multipurpose portals, portal personalization, clustering of common services and ultimately culminates in full integration with enterprise transactions. In 2015, this model was revisited to incorporate new insights highlighting the transformative impact of digital technology on government organizations. The model encompasses five dimensions such as strategy, leadership, workforce development, user focus and culture and also

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid

classifying government entities into three stages of digital transformation: ‘*Early*,’ ‘*Developing*,’ and ‘*Maturing*.’ A comprehensive survey conducted in 2015 which included responses from over 1,200 government officials across more than 70 countries, provided a detailed analysis based on Deloitte’s model. The findings indicate that a substantial portion of government organizations are still in the process of digital development, with 26 percent in the ‘Early’ stage, 60 percent in the ‘Developing’ phase and only 13 percent in the ‘Maturing’ stage.

This model is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it posits that the transformation of government is an ongoing process, suggesting that no government can achieve a final state of being ‘Digitally Mature’ rather they are ‘Digitally Maturing’. Secondly, the model facilitates the evaluation of government transformation across various domains or sectors (such as defense, education, health, environment, energy, and transportation) and types of government organizations (including federal, central, state, provincial, local, city, or quasi-government). This approach aligns with the need to consider both context-specific factors and digital transformation when assessing the maturity of government organizations. As noted by Janowski (2015), fostering sectoral advancement in digital government initiatives is essential. This understanding is vital for discerning the reasons behind the varying performance levels across different domains as the survey indicates that progress is inconsistent not only among countries but also within various sectors of the public domain. Furthermore, the model emphasizes the significant factors that affect maturity and the behavior of government organizations at each maturity level in relation to these factors. Thus, Deloitte highlights that elements such as strategic planning, leadership, workforce development, user-centric approaches, procurement processes and organizational culture are pivotal for facilitating the transformation of digital government.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Alarabiat, Ayman & Hujran, Al Omar (2023). Analyzing E-Government Maturity Models. *Electronic Government (an International Journal)*, Vol. 19, Issue No. 1, pp. 1-18.

## **Howard Maturity Model of E-Governance**

The Howard Maturity Model of E-Governance is a three-stage framework that describes the evolution of government services in the digital space. Below discussed the three-stage of E-Governance:

### **a) Presence (Stage 1)- Information Dissemination**

In this preliminary phase governmental entities create an online presence by providing static information regarding their services, policies and activities. The primary objective is to ensure that information is readily accessible to citizens, businesses and other stakeholders. Key characteristics include one-way communication (from the government to citizens) a basic websites featuring downloadable forms, reports and announcements, a lack of interactive or transactional capabilities and an emphasis on transparency and information availability. Examples include government department websites that display office locations, operating hours and contact information as well as PDF versions of official documents such as budgets, laws and press releases.

### **b) Interact (Stage 2) – Two-Way Communication**

The second stage of the Howard Maturity Model, 'Interact' marks a significant shift from one-way information sharing to two-way communication between governments and citizens. At this stage, governments introduce interactive tools such as email, contact forms, discussion forums and live chat support by enabling users to submit queries, provide feedback and engage in basic online services like appointment scheduling or complaint submission. Enhanced user experience features, including FAQs and chatbots help streamline public inquiries while online surveys facilitate citizen participation in governance processes. However, these stages still has limitations while it improves engagement and most transactions (such as payments or official applications) cannot be completed fully online and often require offline processing. Additionally, many interactions still depend on human intervention rather than full automation indicating room for further advancement toward more sophisticated E-Government capabilities.

### **c) Transact (Stage 3) – Full Service Delivery**

The third and most sophisticated phase of the Howard Maturity Model, termed ‘Transact’, signifies a comprehensive digital governance framework wherein citizens can execute complete government transactions online eliminating the need for in-person visits. This phase facilitates secure end-to-end digital services by encompassing online payments, application submissions and approvals in which all are underpinned by integrated backend systems such as databases and payment gateways. Notable characteristics include robust authentication techniques (such as digital IDs and e-signatures) and automated workflows for various processes, including tax filing, license renewals and permit applications. Illustrative examples comprise online tax systems (for instance, e-filing of Income Tax), digital passport applications and e-voting platforms. Nonetheless, this phase encounters obstacles as it necessitates a resilient IT infrastructure, rigorous cyber security protocols and poses risks of marginalizing citizens impacted by the digital divide due to inadequate internet access or technological proficiency. Despite these challenges, the ‘Transact’ phase represents a substantial advancement towards efficient, accessible and transparent digital government services.<sup>88</sup>

### **Indian Model of E-Governance as per NeGP 2006**

The Indian E-Governance framework, as outlined by the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) aims to deliver public services directly to citizens in a manner that is convenient, efficient and transparent. The NeGP seeks to revolutionize E-Governance by utilizing emerging technologies such as cloud computing and mobile platforms while also integrating various services. It places a strong emphasis on citizen-centric services by interacting businesses and employees and the involvement of civil society. Broadly, the NeGP focuses on the following stages such as **Information:** a comprehensive Digitalization of Records initiative to facilitate easy and reliable access to information, **Transformation:** rather than mere translation aiming to fundamentally change service delivery and access to especially citizen-

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid

centric services rather than simply converting existing paper processes into electronic formats, the **Integration**: here the various services are Integrated to provide a cohesive user experience across various E-Governance applications for the general public including information dissemination, application processes and online transactions.<sup>89</sup>

### **Evolution of E-Governance- World Perspective:**

In the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s, the concept of re-engineering became the cornerstone and most frequently used term in government informatization efforts. Numerous government bodies and businesses swiftly reorganized to become more compatible with computer technology, adopting procedures that aligned with Information Technology and the surrounding environment. Key initiatives involved removing layers of traditional management, consolidating job roles, fostering teamwork, providing multi-level employee training, simplifying, expediting various business processes and streamlining all administrative functions. The outcomes were remarkable as the successful implementation of business process re-engineering effectively transformed organizational structures, revitalized leadership and significantly enhanced both efficiency and effectiveness thereby driving productivity to unprecedented heights. In the United States this success in re-engineering laid the groundwork for the new economy that emerged in the 1990s. To address the needs of the information age, governments leveraged advanced technology to reinvent their existing moral frameworks and organizational structures. In the evolving landscape of governance a novel element emerged intricately woven from the threads of informatization. The objective was explicit: to establish a government adept for the digital era by leveraging the capabilities of contemporary Information Technology. As the 1990s progressed, transformation became the guiding principle by steering the state through uncharted territories with E-Government as its guiding framework. It became evident

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<sup>89</sup> Kumar, Rajendra (2012). National e-Governance Plan: Vision, Challenges and the Way Forward. *Yojana*, pp. 51-55.

that the government was not merely a passive recipient of ICTs rather it assumed the role of an architect, formulating policies and strategies to harness the potential of its informational assets. By constructing a robust information infrastructure and advocating for the utilization of information systems the government sought to create an environment conducive to the enhancement of public services. However, the stakes were significant as any delay or error could impede the government's capacity to foster social and economic development and to shape an Information Society.<sup>90</sup>

Chile, a South American country was the first to launch genuine E-Governance initiatives. In 1972, Chilean President Salvador Guillermo Allende Gossens (the first Marxist elected President in South America) implemented the first E-Governance software which helped the government survive several crises including a severe inflationary crisis caused by an economic blockade caused by the suspension of copper exports (which accounted for 80% of Chile's foreign exchange earnings). The software they created assisted in restoring normal prices by allowing the government to survive. In the early 1990s a global interest in E-Governance applications was significantly boosted by then U.S. President Bill Clinton and his Vice President Al Gore and in the year 1992 where they launched a new E-Governance initiative known as the Information Superhighway which emphasized infrastructure development including the Optic Fibre Network across the nation. After four years of dedicated efforts by January 1996, the initiative had achieved notable results: the federal workforce was reduced by 240,000 employees, over 2,000 federal offices were closed, federal government expenses decreased by \$118 billion, and more than 3,000 new public service standards were introduced by 200 federal departments and agencies alongside the simplification of government regulations. The successful implementation of E-Governance in the United States had a significant influence on the global development of E-Government.<sup>91</sup>

The rise of e-commerce and the new economy is significantly pressuring governments to adopt E-Governance. Both individuals and businesses anticipate that

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<sup>90</sup> Bhaskar, Lal Hari & Singh, RP (2014). Business Process Reengineering: A Recent Review, *Global Journal of Business Management*, Vol 8, Issue No. 2, pp. 24-51.

<sup>91</sup> Basu, Subhajit (2004). E-Government and Developing Countries: An Overview, *International Review of Law Computers & Technology*, Vol 18, Issue No. 1, pp. 109-132.

E-Governance will eliminate bureaucratic delays, streamline and unify business processes by making interactions with the government more straightforward and enhancing government transparency, integrity and cleanliness. In the contemporary era characterized by an abundance of information, both businesses and citizens aspire to transform the current complex, control-focused government into a more agile, service-oriented entity that responds effectively to the needs of its constituents. Concurrently, governments are keen to leverage the potential of E-Government aligning themselves with the dynamics of the new economy. Their objective is to attract future enterprises to establish themselves locally, mitigate the decline of traditional industries and revitalize communities through the strategic implementation of E-Governance and other advanced ICT systems.<sup>92</sup>

#### **Evolution of E-Governance in India:**

In the dynamic landscape of India's Public Administration, the early 1990s marked a significant period of transformation with the advent of E-Governance. This digital revolution was driven by the global success of financial capital by prompting a strong demand for governments to become more streamlined, agile and responsive to citizens' needs. Policymakers have embarked on an ambitious endeavor to create a government that is not only efficient but also transparent and responsive. This initiative involved reimagining service systems, integrating performance management into the governance framework and ensuring that transparency was not merely a rhetorical term but a practical reality in the public sector. The government workforce was carefully restructured and the delivery of public services was refined to be as dependable and swift as a well-functioning mechanism, with citizen satisfaction as the ultimate guiding principle. Nevertheless, despite the progress made by many nations in leveraging ICT for E-Governance the full realization of its potential remains elusive. The future path involves either adopting existing

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<sup>92</sup>Ibid



commercial technologies or developing customized solutions to meet the evolving demands of governance and stakeholders.<sup>93</sup>

The evolution of E-Governance in India has represented a significant period in 1970s with the establishment of the National Informatics Centre (NIC). By 1975, efforts toward computerization began to permeate various ministries and departments under the auspices of the Government of India. The NIC, conceived by the Electronics Commission was financially supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It has since played a crucial role in integrating numerous government offices each holding essential information for planning and implementing development programs. Charged with the task of computerizing operations at both the union and state levels the NIC has developed substantial expertise in digital transformation. With over two decades of experience in intricate networking, the NIC now focuses on providing a comprehensive perspective on E-Governance for those undertaking this complex journey. In 1987, the NIC introduced a new satellite network system, the National Informatics Center Network (NICNET) which connects all Central Government ministries, departments, States/UTs and district administrations offering extensive information decision support. The NICNET gateway nodes are strategically positioned with 55 in Government Departments, 35 in States/UTs and 550 in each district headquarters. India is among the pioneering nations to utilize KU-Band VSAT technology for these ambitious projects. The Information Technology Act of 2000 serves as a guiding framework facilitating the integration of ICT across political, economic and social domains. E-Governance has significantly transformed the landscape thereby enabling the computerization and networking of various departments and the efficient delivery of public services. This digital transformation has ushered in an era of automation, enhancing recordkeeping and file management with precision.<sup>94</sup>

E-Governance has transformed administrative operations throughout India, with numerous states adopting innovative digital strategies to improve transparency,

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<sup>93</sup> op., cit Yadav, Nikita & Singh, VB (2012). E-Governance: Past, Present and Future in India, *International Journal of Computer Applications*, Vol 53, Issue No. 7, pp 36.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid

efficiency and convenience for citizens. These efforts utilize technology to close the divide between government services and the public, facilitating quicker, corruption-free and more accessible governance. The state of Andhra Pradesh 'E-Seva' project was an early initiative that created multi-functional kiosks for utility payments, certificates and transportation services significantly minimizing bureaucratic delays. The Madhya Pradesh 'Gyandoot' E-Governance project aimed at empowering rural communities by offering land records, grievance resolution and market pricing through affordable kiosks although infrastructure challenges limited its effectiveness. In the southern state of Kerala, the 'Akshaya' E-Governance project emerged as a revolutionary literacy-focused initiative equipping at least one individual per household with digital skills and providing services such as birth and death certificates, electronic payments and health mapping via an extensive network of community centers. Karnataka's 'Bhoomi' E-Governance project set a national standard by digitizing land records by removing intermediaries and allows farmers to quickly access records for loans and subsidies. In urban governance, Chandigarh's 'e-Jan Sampark' and Haryana's 'e-DISHA' both E-Governance projects optimized services like licenses, certificates and bill payments through single-window kiosks thereby reducing processing times and corruption. Despite the significant advancements in governance challenges such as gaps in digital literacy, inconsistent internet access and resistance to change remain. Nevertheless, the success of these initiatives illustrates how technology can democratize service access by rendering administration more accountable and user-friendly. As India progresses towards a fully digital ecosystem these models offer critical insights for expanding E-Governance across the nation.<sup>95</sup>

### **E-Governance in Mizoram:**

Mizoram, a landlocked state covering approximately 21,081 square kilometers, is distinguished by its rugged terrain of rivers, hills, and plateaus, bordered by Bangladesh to the west and Myanmar to the east. It shares interstate

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<sup>95</sup> op.,cit Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012). *E-Governance: Concepts and Case Studies*, PHI Learning Pvt Ltd.

boundaries with Tripura, Assam and Manipur to the north. The state is primarily populated by indigenous tribes each possessing unique cultural practices including distinct forms of dance, music and lifestyle. The Mizo people who inhabit this region exhibit significant ethnic and linguistic diversity. Historically, Mizoram was part of Assam known as the Mizo District before it was designated as a Union Territory in 1972 following its separation from Assam. Subsequently on February 20, 1987, Mizoram attained full statehood through the 53rd Constitutional Amendment of 1986. According to the 2011 Census, the population of Mizoram stands at 1,091,014, comprising 552,339 males and 538,675 females resulting in a sex ratio of 976 females for every 1,000 males which surpasses the national average of 940 females. The population density is recorded at 52 individuals per square kilometer. Mizoram boasts a literacy rate of 91.33 percent significantly higher than the national average of 74 percent by making it the second most literate state in India after Kerala. Approximately 52 percent of the population resides in urban areas with over one-third living in Aizawl District. For many years, the people of Mizoram grappled with challenges such as insurgency, unemployment and inadequate infrastructure and communication systems. The predominantly rural character of the state underscores the necessity for sustainable development initiatives to enhance the living standards of its residents and align them with more developed regions of India. Consequently, advancing E-Governance in Mizoram presents a significant challenge for the government.<sup>96</sup>

Knowing the importance of Information Technology and the National e-Governance Plan which was implemented at the union government level in a faster mode. However, the Mizoram government could not take much initiative in modernizing its administration due to the paucity of resources. So with the financial aid coming from the Central Government, the State Government was headed towards implementing E-Governance. The first step was to establish an Electronic Cell/Wing under the Directorate of Industry, Government of Mizoram primarily focused on the Computer Training Centre on Hardware Maintenance in the year 1999. The projects

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<sup>96</sup> Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India. Hydrocarbon Vision 2020 for Northeast India.

and programmes on IT cannot be bigger as it only functioned as a Cell under the Directorate of Industry, so there is a notion of a bifurcating from a Directorate to a full-fledged Department in July 2000. To pursue the idea a technical expert was deputed from the MeitY, Government of India on 19th July 2000. In the spring of April 2001 under the supervision of a technical expert Mizoram's inaugural Information Technology Policy was meticulously developed. By the fiscal year 2002-03 a Detailed Project Report (DPR) was presented to the central government outlining ambitious IT projects and seeking approval. In response, the central government allocated a substantial sum of Rupees 380 lakhs for the procurement of 360 computers and 400 internet access points (IP notes) from the North Eastern Council (NEC). Until the establishment of the Department of ICT in 2008 it remained the sole entity responsible for implementation. During this transformative period the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) was established in 2005 under the Societies Registration Act (Act no. XXI of 1860) positioning itself as a leader in E-Governance solutions for government departments and public sector undertakings in Mizoram.<sup>97</sup>

On July 10, 2008, the Mizoram Government, exercising the authority granted by Rule 3 of the Government of Mizoram (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1987, announced the establishment of the Department of Information and Communication Technology, effective immediately. This Department is tasked with overseeing a variety of areas, including ICT-related policy issues, IT legislation and regulations, matters concerning Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) and the Internet, the development of IT infrastructure such as the Software Technology Park of India (STPI), State Wide Area Network (SWAN), Common Service Centre (CSC), State Data Centre (SDC), Community Information Centre (CIC), among others, the promotion and standardization of IT education issues related to E-Governance, e-commerce, e-medicine and associated infrastructure, cyber security and cyber law matters, and the coordination of IT affairs with both national and international bodies as well as telecommunications and related issues. The Department aims to utilize ICT to deliver accessible information and government

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid

services that address the essential needs of citizens in their communities with minimal procedural obstacles thereby promoting economic growth.<sup>98</sup>

In conclusion, the basic objectives of E-Governance are to improve administrative efficiency, free from bureaucratic hassles, dissemination of information, help to build trust between governments and citizens, better and more reliable services, more convenience, cost effectiveness, greater participation by citizens in government, radical improvement in the quality of services to customers and remote rural areas being empowered with not only IT infrastructure but also access to various e-services. Across the world various governments implement several E-Governance projects for the welfare of their people which leads to achieving the goals of Good Governance in the form of 'Accountability, Transparency, Responsiveness, Rule of Law' etc in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid

## CHAPTER III

### E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN INDIA

The third chapter examines E-Governance initiatives in India, with a particular focus on the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) introduced in 2006 and the Digital India Programme that commenced in 2015. Furthermore, it analyzes the Digital North East Vision 2022 which outlines a digital strategy for the Northeastern states and highlights key E-Governance initiatives undertaken by different states across the country.

#### **Stakeholders at the National Level:**

Below discussed some important stakeholders at the national level:

#### **a)Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India**

Before MeitY it was initially designated as the Department of Information Technology and later underwent a significant transformation in 2012 by re-emerging as the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY). And on 19th July 2016, DeitY was further elevated to the status of a full-fledged ministry now recognized as the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). As an integral component of the Government of India, MeitY plays a pivotal role in innovation, tasked with formulating, implementing and evaluating national policies related to Information Technology, Electronics and the Internet while deliberately excluding the domain of Internet Service Provider licensing. MeitY vision includes developing an e-Development framework aimed at advancing the nation towards the status of a developed country and fostering a society characterized by empowerment.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>MeitY, Government of India, Annual Report 2021-22.

<https://www.meity.gov.in/static/uploads/2024/02/31-1.pdf> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

***Mission:***

The mission of MeitY is to advance E-Governance to empower citizens, foster inclusive and sustainable development within the Electronics, Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology Enabled Services (ITeS) sectors, strengthen India's position in Internet Governance, and implement a multifaceted strategy that encompasses human resource development, the promotion of research and development and innovation, the improvement of efficiency via digital services and the assurance of secure cyberspace.<sup>100</sup>

***Objectives of MeitY:***

- Developing a comprehensive digital infrastructure to facilitate seamless digital services.
- Promoting the growth of electronics hardware production and the expansion of the IT-ITeS industry.
- Establishing a Research and Development (R&D) framework to guide the creation of Innovation and R&D centers in emerging ICT domains.
- Fostering a dynamic ecosystem of e-Skills and creating a Knowledge network that connects individuals.
- Strengthening the security and resilience of Indian cyberspace.
- Advocating for the transformative potential of ICT to support inclusive growth
- Enhancing participation of India in international Internet Governance forums.<sup>101</sup>

***Functions of MeitY:***

- Navigating the complex landscape of policies related to information technology, electronics and the internet while avoiding the complexities of licensing for Internet Service Providers.

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

- Promoting innovation in the domains of the internet, IT and IT-enabled services while advocating for digital transactions and payments.
- Assisting other departments in their digital initiatives including E-Governance, e-commerce, e-medicine and e-infrastructure.
- Fostering an environment conducive to IT education and advancing technology-based learning.
- Examining the intricacies of cyber laws and managing the implementation of the Information Technology Act of 2000 and its related legislation.
- Encouraging the promotion and production of semiconductor devices within the nation, while bypassing the complexities of Semiconductor Complex Limited in Mohali.
- Establishing collaborations with international entities on IT-related matters.
- Addressing the digital divide with a particular emphasis on the initiatives of the Digital India Corporation.
- Advocating for standardization, testing, and quality in IT while developing standardized procedures for IT applications and tasks.
- Supporting the efforts of the Electronics Export and Computer Software Promotion Council.
- Overseeing the digital infrastructure managed by the National Informatics Centre.
- Supporting the growth of the hardware and software industry including the development of knowledge-based enterprises and formulating strategies to enhance IT exports and industry competitiveness.
- Managing personnel under the Ministry supervision.

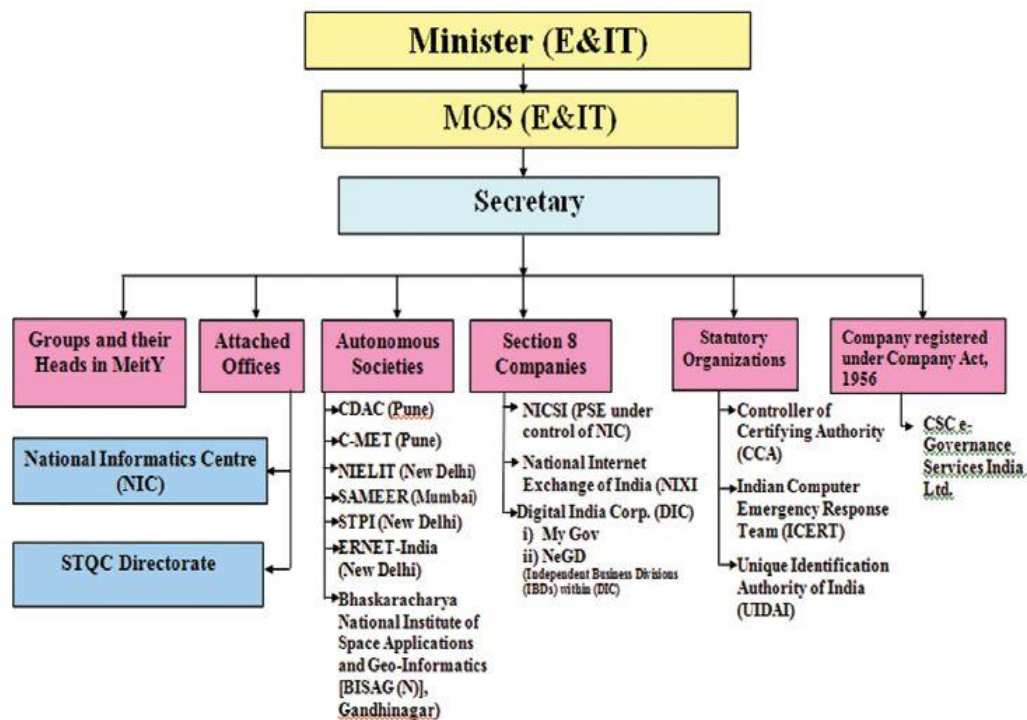


- Addressing issues related to the Unique Identification Authority of India.<sup>102</sup>

### Organizational Structure of MeitY:

The organizational framework of the MeitY is led by the Secretary, who is supported by the Financial Advisor (FA), along with Group Coordinators and Heads of various organizations that fall under MeitY's administrative jurisdiction. The structure is illustrated in the accompanying organizational chart.<sup>103</sup>

**Figure 3.1: Organizational Structure of MeitY**



Source: Ministry of Information & Communication Technology (MeitY), <https://www.meity.gov.in/static/uploads/2024/02/31-1.pdf> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025

Within the comprehensive framework of objectives of MeitY a series of programs is systematically developed and implemented either directly or through its network of affiliated organizations and institutions. To ensure the technological

<sup>102</sup> Ibid

<sup>103</sup> Ibid

infrastructure remains at the forefront of innovation MeitY actively engages in partnerships with academic institutions and both private and public sectors, thereby fostering a collaborative environment for innovation. MeitY oversees two key offices: the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the Standardisation Testing and Quality Certificate (STQC) in addition to six Autonomous Societies. These societies include the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Centre for Materials for Electronics Technology (C-MET), National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT), Society for Applied Microwave Electronics Engineering & Research (SAMEER), Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) and Education and Research Network of India (ERNET). Furthermore, MeitY supervises three Section 8 companies: National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI), National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) and Digital India Corporation. Additionally, it oversees three statutory organizations: the Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA), International Council for Education, Research and Training (ICERT) and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) along with one company registered under the Companies Act of 1956 namely CSC E-Governance Services India Ltd. all working collaboratively to fulfill the Ministry designated responsibilities.<sup>104</sup>

#### **b) National e-Governance Division (NeGD):**

In 2009, a significant development in digital governance occurred with the establishment of the National e-Governance Division (NeGD) by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. This autonomous entity situated within the Digital India Corporation previously known as Media Lab Asia which functions as a not-for-profit organization under Section 8. Since its inception the NeGD served as a pivotal entity for MeitY coordinating E-Governance initiatives. It provides a combination of technical expertise and strategic guidance to Ministries and Departments both at the Central and State levels as well as other governmental bodies. The scope of NeGD is influence by encompasses program management, project development, technology oversight, capacity building and communication all

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid

are under the auspices of the Digital India Programme. Furthermore, NeGD has developed and currently manages several National Public Digital Platforms such as DigiLocker, Entity Locker, the Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG), OpenForge, Application Programming Interface (API) Setu, myScheme, India Stack Global and MeriPehchaan etc.<sup>105</sup>

The role and responsibilities of the NeGD encompass the following:

- As leaders in innovation the NeGD navigate the development of policies and strategies within the expansive framework of the Digital India Programme and its diverse E-Governance initiatives.
- Offering technical and advisory assistance to both central and state governments for ‘Mission Mode Projects and other E-Governance endeavors.
- The NeGD conduct a comprehensive technical evaluation of E-Governance projects which examined the complexities of technology, architecture, frameworks, standards, security policies, service delivery methods and the use of shared infrastructure.
- Facilitating the creation of specific frameworks and guidelines, including the India Enterprise Architecture Framework and Digital Service Standards.
- The NeGD objective is to enhance government capabilities in E-Governance and emerging technologies with a particular emphasis on artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, drones and geospatial technologies.
- Promoting effective citizen engagement and communication with stakeholders through both offline and social media platforms.
- Assessing the impact and measuring the e-readiness of E-Governance projects.
- Managing the recruitment, deployment, and human resources of specialized personnel within the State E-Governance Mission Teams across all states and Union Territories.

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<sup>105</sup> National e-Governance Division (NeGD). <https://negd.gov.in/about-negd/> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

- Fostering knowledge management and the dissemination of best practices through workshops, case study development, and the establishment of knowledge repositories.<sup>106</sup>

### **E-Governance Initiatives in India:**

In the context of India technological advancement, the inception of E-Governance can be traced back to the 1970s. During this period government departments initiated the development of complex internal applications for defense utilizing the emerging capabilities of information technology to manage the intricate processes of tax administration and elections. The 1980s marked a significant milestone with the establishment of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) which aimed to connect every district headquarters through computer technology. Since then a series of E-Governance projects and programs have been implemented by both the Central and State Governments each contributing to the overarching goal of digital transformation. Some of the major initiatives are outlined below

#### **(a) National e-Governance Plan (NeGP):**

In 2002, the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee embodying the gravitas of an experienced statesman delivered a significant address on India's Independence Day. He articulated a vision for the future in which the Government would establish a comprehensive framework of effective governance and institutional structures nationwide. This vision was to be achieved through the development of a robust IT infrastructure and the initiation of a series of Mission Mode Projects systematically coordinated at the central, state and integrated levels. The original vision of NeGP was to *"Make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man."* In the comprehensive framework of governance, the Plan was initially structured with 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) systematically

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid

categorized into Central, State and Integrated MMPs along with eight distinct Components. This ambitious blueprint received formal approval in May 2006 under the leadership of the late Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the tenure of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA-I) government. However by 2011, the Plan expanded its scope to include Health, Education, Public Distribution System (PDS) and Post MMPs thereby adding new dimensions to its intricate design.<sup>107</sup>

Within the complex framework of eight essential components three serve as the foundational elements of advancement: State Wide Area Networks (SWANs), State Data Centres (SDCs) and Common Service Centres (CSCs) each meticulously coordinated by MeitY. The remaining five components are standards, awareness and communication, capacity building, assessment and research and development are also under the stewardship of MeitY which adeptly oversees these initiatives

#### **Central Mission Mode Projects under NeGP:**

The below mentioned are Central MMPs:

##### **1. Banking:**

The evolution of core banking technology in India has empowered consumers with the convenience of ‘anytime, anywhere banking’. A significant shift is underway toward the integration of diverse banks and core banking solutions, which is anticipated to enhance operational efficiency and reduce the time and effort required for transaction handling and settlement. This, in turn, improves customer support and aid in regulatory compliance.

The Banking MMP encompasses several key services, including:

- (a) Electronic Central Registry under the Sarfaesi Act, 2002
- (b) One India One Account for Public Sector Banks
- (c) Electronic Mass Payment System

The Department of Economic Affairs, Banking & Insurance Division is developing a detailed concept note on this matter. This initiative has been

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<sup>107</sup> Sumathy,M (2021). *A Handbook of E-Governance in India*. Abhijeet Publications

spearheaded by the banking industry, aiming to unify core banking solutions across various banks throughout the country.<sup>108</sup>

## **2. Insurance:**

This MMP aims to improve services for general insurance sector customers by enhancing customer service through awareness, details, and online policy issuance. It also provides electronic dispute filing and arbitration services, builds business markets, builds a user-insurance portal, and integrates insurance databases with other government databases to analyze social security and facilitate service delivery. The project is implemented through the four Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) Insurance companies.<sup>109</sup>

## **3. MCA 21 :**

MCA21 represents the inaugural Mission Mode E-Governance initiative under the NeGP. Since its inception in 2006, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs managed this platform comprehensively providing registry and incorporation services for Companies and Limited Liability Partnership (LLPs) with Corporates utilizing this portal for their filings. In the recent timeframe from (April 1, 2024, to January 27, 2025), a total of 80.26 lakh Forms submitted via the MCA21 portal by marking an increase from the 73.29 lakh Forms filed during the same period of the previous year. Furthermore, on the newly launched MCA21 V3 platform, 53.08 lakh Forms filed in the same timeframe compared to 47.72 lakh Forms in the prior year thereby reflecting a significant rise in filings which improved stakeholder interaction with the system and the overall robustness and reliability of the MCA21 platform.

The MCA21 V3 platform improves the Ease of Doing Business by providing web-based Forms that enable stakeholders to perform real-time data validation. Additionally, a user registration process has been introduced to enhance user identification and authentication by allowing users to track the status of their submitted Forms and directly download challans and certificates from their personalized dashboards. To further support stakeholders a live chat feature has been

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<sup>108</sup>Ibid

<sup>109</sup>Ibid

integrated into the helpdesk which offered an immediate assistance and enhancing the overall user experience. The platform ensures the security and confidentiality of all submitted information by adhering to established data security standards including MeitY guidelines, Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) regulations, International Standard on Requirements for Information Security Management i.e., ISO 27001 and specific data security protocols. Multi-factor authentication has been implemented to verify user identities while measures like masking private data from public access help maintain data confidentiality and integrity. Shri Harsh Malhotra, the Minister of State for Corporate Affairs and Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways, Government of India has conveyed these details in a written response to the Lok Sabha on February 3, 2025.<sup>110</sup>

#### **4. Income Tax:**

India's Income Tax Department launched a comprehensive service plan to enable citizens to transact businesses anytime and anywhere. The MMP Income Tax includes programmes such as Permanent Account Number allocation, tax accounting, grievance redressal, correspondence, tax compliance, online return submission, tax return processing and Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) return processing.<sup>111</sup>

The prompt compliance by taxpayers and tax professionals has led to a notable surge in Income Tax Returns (ITRs) submissions by culminating in a record-breaking number of filings by July 31, 2024. The total number of ITRs for Assessment Year (AY) 2024-25 submitted by this date has surpassed 7.28 crore, marking a 7.5 percent increase compared to the 6.77 crore ITRs filed by the same date for AY 2023-24. This year (2025), an increasing number of taxpayers opted for the New Tax Regime. Out of the total 7.28 crore ITRs filed for AY 2024-25, 5.27 crore were submitted under the New Tax Regime while 2.01 crore were filed under

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<sup>110</sup> MCA 21 has Strengthened Security, Improved Accessibility, and Increased Stakeholder Engagement (3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2025). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2099226> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

<sup>111</sup> op.,cit Sumathy,M (2021). *A Handbook of E-Governance in India*. Abhijeet Publications.

the Old Tax Regime. As a result approximately 72 percent of taxpayers have chosen the New Tax Regime with the remaining 28 percent adhering to the Old Regime.<sup>112</sup>

## **5. Central Excise and Custom Duty:**

The Automation of Central Excise and Service Tax (ACES) is an E-Governance initiative led by the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBIC) under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. The ACES is a software platform created to improve taxpayer services, increase transparency, promote accountability and boost efficiency in managing indirect taxes across India. This web-based and workflow driven system has automated all major processes related to Central Excise and Service Tax by streamlining operations and enhancing overall administration. In the context of post-independence indirect tax administration in India, ACES stands out as the most pivotal IT-driven initiative that revolutionized the interactions of approximately 1.82 million indirect taxpayers with the Central Excise and Service Tax department. As a groundbreaking reform in the indirect tax sector ACES has provided substantial benefits to stakeholders in trade, industry and commerce. The ACES application first launched in December 2008 at the Large Tax Payer Unit (LTU) Commissionerate in Bengaluru and subsequently rolled out nationwide in phases encompassing all 104 Central Excise, Service Tax and LTU Commissionerates along with all associated modules.

The implementation of the ACES application has significantly altered the operational dynamics of Central Excise and Service Tax field formations in their dealings with trade and industry with e-filing and e-processing of documents gradually replacing traditional manual filing and paper document management. The primary aim of this initiative was to re-engineer business processes and modernize the existing tax administration by fostering a system that is efficient and transparent. Its goal was to achieve a harmonious balance between facilitating trade and enforcing compliance while also encouraging a culture of voluntary adherence to tax regulations. The objective is to minimize direct interactions between the business

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<sup>112</sup>Record 7.28 crore ITRs filed for AY 2024-25 till 31st July, 2024 (2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2024). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2040669> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.



community and departmental officials while fostering a transparent, paperless business environment that enhances taxpayer services through an automated system.<sup>113</sup>

## **6. National ID/Unique Identification (UID):**

Within the broader context of digital transformation in India, the unique identification initiative represents a significant element thereby establishing a distinct identity for each citizen. This ambitious project which was designed to enhance the efficiency of welfare services and optimize government program management was initially conceptualized in 2006. At that time, the Department of Information Technology under the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology has initiated the ‘Unique ID for BPL families’ project. As discussions progressed with stakeholders and the Empowered Group of Ministers the Planning Commission now known as NITI Aayog established the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on January 28, 2009. The UIDAI was tasked with the substantial responsibility of implementing the UID scheme and maintaining the UID database. The Department of Information Technology formally approved the project on March 3, 2006. A central to UIDAI mission is Aadhaar authentication which by May 2025 had facilitated over 150 billion (15,011.82 Crore) transactions, demonstrating the initiative profound impact on both UIDAI and the broader Aadhaar ecosystem. This significant milestone highlights the extensive influence and importance of Aadhaar reflecting the nation in growing digital economy. Aadhaar based authentication has become a pivotal mechanism, simplifying lives, ensuring the efficient delivery of welfare and enabling individuals to voluntarily access a wide range of services provided by various entities.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup>Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Goods and Service Tax. <https://cbic-gst.gov.in/aces/aboutaces.html> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

<sup>114</sup>Aadhaar Authentication crosses 150 Billion Transactions (16<sup>th</sup> May, 2025). [https://uidai.gov.in/images/Press\\_Release-10.pdf](https://uidai.gov.in/images/Press_Release-10.pdf) accessed on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

### ***National Population Register (NPR)***

The National Population Register (NPR) served as a registry for the inhabitants of India, established at various administrative levels including local (village/sub-town), sub-district, district, state and national in accordance with the Citizenship Act of 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules of 2003. The primary aim of the NPR was to develop a detailed identity database encompassing every individual residing in the nation. Additionally, the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India resolved to distribute microprocessor-based national identity cards as part of the NPR initiative, being developed by the Census Office. To facilitate this initiative a pilot project was launched to issue these cards in coastal villages and towns. The Resident Identity Card (RIC) utilized a smart card with a capacity of 64 KB, embedding demographic information and some select biometric data of the resident within the chip. This embedded information enabled offline verification of residents in remote areas lacking internet access thereby addressing inefficiencies in the delivery of various social inclusion programmes overseen by the Government of India. Furthermore, the RIC card includes the holder's Aadhaar number with over 700,000 cards (as of 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025) being issued under this initiative.<sup>115</sup>

### **7. Passport:**

In contemporary India, the government is actively fostering a digital transformation establishing a framework for E-Governance aimed at enhancing public service delivery. A significant aspect of this digital initiative is the transformation of Passport services. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is responsible for this crucial travel document, manages the issuance of Passports to Indian citizens through an extensive network of 36 Passport offices and 190 Indian Missions and Posts worldwide. A Passport serves as a vital document for individuals pursuing education, tourism, pilgrimage, medical treatment, business and family reunions. As India economy is expanding and a global connectivity increases, the demand for Passports has risen significantly, necessitating improved accessibility

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<sup>115</sup>National Population Register(NPR)/Multipurpose National Identity Card(MNIC). <https://scosta.gov.in/ministry-of-home-affairs-npr-mnic> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

and availability. In response, the MEA launched the Passport Seva Project (PSP) in May 2010, a strategic initiative developed through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with Tata Consultancy Services selected via a competitive public procurement process. In this initiative, the MEA maintains its sovereign responsibilities, including the verification, granting and issuance of Passports while retaining control over core assets such as data and information. The Passport Seva Project exemplifies simplicity, efficiency and transparency in delivering passport and related services. It also establishes a nationwide networked environment for government personnel, collaborating with State Police for the physical verification of applicants' credentials and with India Post for the delivery of Passports ensuring a streamlined process from application to acquisition.<sup>116</sup>

In the year 2023, India distributed a total of 13.7 million passports, averaging 37,700 passports per day. This figure encompasses both newly issued passports and those that renewed. As (of February 2024), the cumulative number of passports that have been issued and are still valid stands at 9.26 crore with approximately 4.93 crore passports issued since the year 2019.<sup>117</sup>

## **8. Immigration, Visa and Foreigners's Registration & Tracking (IVFRT):**

The 'Immigration, Visa and Foreigners Registration & Tracking' (IVFRT) initiative represents a significant advancement in contemporary governance which operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs and integrated into the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) Mission Mode Projects (MMPs). This initiative aims to establish an efficient and secure service delivery system that facilitates the entry of legitimate travellers while enhancing security measures. It encompasses 169 Missions, 77 Immigration Check Posts (ICPs) and 5 Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) in addition to Foreigners Registration Offices (FROs)

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<sup>116</sup> Passport Seva, Ministry of External Affairs, GoI. <https://passportindia.gov.in/> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

<sup>117</sup> India Issued Record-Breaking 37,700 Passports Per Day in 2023 (24<sup>th</sup> February, 2024). <https://www.news18.com/india/numberspeak-flying-high-india-issued-record-breaking-37700-passports-per-day-in-2023-kerala-maharashtra-top-contributors-8791227.html> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

located at State and District Headquarters. The initiative employs advanced document scanners and biometric technology to verify traveller identities at Missions, ICPs and FROs. It systematically updates foreigner information at points of entry and exit and improves the tracking of foreigners through the integration of data collected during visa issuance at Missions, immigration checks at ICPs and registration at FRROs and FROs.

- a) Foreigner's Registration - Foreigners must visit FRO for registration and other visa-related services by scheduling an appointment through online registration at <http://indianfro.gov.in/fro>.
- b) Hotels - Hoteliers are required to create an account to submit Form C data for foreign guests residing at their establishments via the <http://indianfro.gov.in/fro/FormC>.
- c) Institutions - Educational institutions must register for an account to report data on foreign students enrolled using the <https://indianfro.gov.in/sform>.<sup>118</sup>

## **9. Pensions:**

The Pension MMP, established under the NeGP, aims to protect the interests of pensioners and facilitate their access to E-Governance benefits. The main goal of this MMP is to address their grievances, while also providing essential information and guidance regarding pension and retirement issues. The Anubhav (<http://pensionersportal.gov.in/anubhav>) represents another important initiative by the government within the framework of Pension MMP, allowing retirees to share their professional experiences and offer suggestions for improvements across various sectors. This initiative fosters a sense of satisfaction and belonging among retirees, contributing to the creation of a comprehensive database of suggestions and experiences that can enhance the current system and motivate active employees. Anubhav collects detailed accounts of employees' experiences, including their specific skills and recommendations, alongside personal information. These submissions are evaluated by the Head of Office and subsequently sent to the Head of Department, Central Government Retiring Employees & Pensioners for further

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<sup>118</sup> Immigration Visa Foreigners' Registration & Tracking. <https://shillongpolice.gov.in/ivftr.html> accessed on 21st May 2025.

review. Recommendations from retirees are then directed to the relevant organization. Additionally, retiring employees have the option to update their submissions using their Permanent Account Number (PAN) and One Time Password (OTP) prior to the evaluation process.<sup>119</sup>

Also for the Anubhav Pensioners, an Annual Awards Scheme was established to motivate and encourage retiring or retired employees to share their experiences through written submissions. As (of May 2025) 59 Anubhav Awards and 19 Jury Certificates have been awarded. The National Anubhav Awards Scheme for 2025 was announced, marking a significant development as it included, for the first time, not only employees of the Central Government but also those from Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) and Public Sector Banks (PSBs), recognizing their contributions to national development.<sup>120</sup>

#### **10. e-Office:**

e-Office serves as a crucial component of the NeGP initiative facilitating a streamlined, responsive, efficient, and transparent paperless environment within government offices. This initiative marks a significant advancement towards a fully paperless administration, aiming to enhance governance through improved and transparent inter- and intra-governmental processes. It represents a comprehensive digital workplace solution tailored for government offices, adhering to the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure (CSMOP) established by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DAR&PG) of the Government of India. The open architecture underpinning e-Office renders it a standardized reusable product that can be replicated across various governmental tiers, including Central, State, District levels and it is gaining acceptance on an international scale.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Anubhav Portal, [https://informatics.nic.in/uploads/pdfs/838a32cc\\_3536.pdf](https://informatics.nic.in/uploads/pdfs/838a32cc_3536.pdf) accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

<sup>120</sup> Anubhav Awards, 2025 to be conferred by the Union Minister of State, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Dr. Jitendra Singh on 18.08.2025 under National Anubhav Awards Scheme, 2025 (28<sup>th</sup> May, 2025). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=2132094> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

<sup>121</sup> e-office, Digital India, MeitY, GoI. <https://www.digitalindia.gov.in/initiative/eoffice/> accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

## 11. Posts:

Posts a Mission Mode Project (MMP) was set to enhance postal services across the nation, offering a variety of services such as postal savings accounts and postal insurance. The Apex Committee for the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), led by the Cabinet Secretary, has officially approved the integration of Posts into the NeGP framework.<sup>122</sup> As of June 2025 there are 1,49,164 Rural Post offices, 15,823 Urban Post Offices, 25,096 Departmental Post Offices, 1,39,891 Branch Post Offices, 2,67,836 Gramin Dak Sevas, 1,90,161 Departmental Employees and a total of 1,64,987 Post offices available across the entire country. On average, a Post Office serves 8,490 people in the country, 6,068 people in the rural areas and 31,327 people in the urban areas. Also, the Post Office serves an average area of 19.92sq km. The Department of Posts offers customers *e-Banking facility* since December 14, 2018. This service has now been extended to holders of Branch Post Office Savings Accounts and as per the Annual Report of Department of Posts (2024-25) over 1.138 million customers are utilizing this facility. Also, the Post office provides various services to customers: Post Office Savings Account (SB), National Savings Recurring Deposit Account (RD), National Savings Time Deposit Account (TD), National Savings Monthly Income Account (MIS), Senior Citizens Savings Scheme Account (SCSS).<sup>123</sup>

Within the extensive framework of India Post, the e-Post Office offers a comprehensive array of online postal services characterized by convenience and efficiency. Among these digital services users can effortlessly send an Electronic Money Order (EMO), dispatch an Instant Money Order (IMO) with remarkable speed and utilize the Electronic Clearance Service (ECS) to facilitate seamless transactions, among other offerings.

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<sup>122</sup> op.,cit Sumathy,M (2021). *A Handbook of E-Governance in India*. Abhijeet Publications.

<sup>123</sup>India Post Annual Report2024-2025.

[https://www.indiapost.gov.in/VAS/DOP\\_PDFFiles/AnnualReport2024-2025English.pdf](https://www.indiapost.gov.in/VAS/DOP_PDFFiles/AnnualReport2024-2025English.pdf) accessed on 29th May 2025.

**(a) *Electronic Money Order (EMO)***

A money order can be conceptualized as a reliable financial instrument issued by the Post Office which facilitates the transfer of a specified amount of money to the designated recipient. In this transaction, the Post Office functions as an intermediary ensuring the secure transfer of funds from the sender to the recipient.<sup>124</sup>

**(b) *Instant Money Order (iMO)***

India Post has introduced the Instant Money Order (iMO) an efficient and user-friendly online service that significantly enhances the process of monetary transactions across the nation. Functioning akin to a digital courier, the iMO traverses the virtual infrastructure, providing a rapid, reliable and cost-effective method for fund transfers. This service accessible at iMO Centres located within Post Offices throughout India facilitates financial exchanges between individuals, irrespective of their geographical locations within the country. With the capability to transfer amounts ranging from Rupees 1,000 to Rupees 50,000, the iMO ensures that financial transactions are readily accessible.<sup>125</sup>

**(c) *Electronic Clearance Service (ECS)***

The Electronic Clearance Service (ECS) scheme plays a pivotal role in the realm of financial transactions, facilitating the efficient management of bulk payments. This scheme provides a streamlined alternative for handling regular payments whether they occurs monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually encompassing a range of financial obligations such as interest, salaries, pensions, commissions, dividends or refunds. Banks, companies, corporations and government departments act as the primary initiators of these transactions, directing them from a central source to numerous destination account holders, including customers and investors. By eliminating the reliance on paper instruments, this initiative enhances the customer service experience, enabling banks, companies, corporations and

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<sup>124</sup>India Post, Electronic Money Order (EMO). <https://www.indiapost.gov.in/Financial/Pages/Content/Money-Order.aspx> accessed on 4th June 2025.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid

government departments to manage bulk payments with increased efficiency and effectiveness.<sup>126</sup>

Furthermore, users can efficiently monitor and track the rapid progress of Speed Post, EMO, WorldNet Express (WNX) and international mail. They also have the capability to make premium payments and access postal codes online all from any location and at any time of their choosing.<sup>127</sup>

### **State Mission Mode Projects**

The below discussed State MMPs:

#### ***1. Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP) formerly known as National Land Records Modernization Programme (NLRMP):***

In the realm of digital transformation in India, the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP) signifies a substantial advancement in land management, enhancing clarity and efficiency. Launched in 2016, this initiative seeks to address land and property disputes by improving transparency in land record maintenance. Originating from the National Land Records Modernization Programme (NLRMP) of 2008, the DILRMP has been elevated to a Central Sector Scheme, fully funded by the Central Government since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. Supported by the Ministry of Finance, the programme has been extended from the fiscal year 2021-22 to 2025-26 with an allocation of Rupees 875 crores. The scheme introduces two pivotal initiatives: the digital transformation of revenue courts nationwide and their integration with land records as well as the consent-based linking of Aadhaar numbers with Records of Rights (RoR). Under the DILRMP a significant progress has been achieved with 95 percent of land records digitized and it encompasses over 6.26 lakh villages. The digitization of cadastral maps has reached 68.02 percent nationally and 87 percent of Sub-Registrar Offices (SROs) have been integrated with land records. As the government extends the DILRMP to 2025-26 it continues to

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid

<sup>127</sup> Ibid



focus on Aadhaar-based integration with land records and the digital transformation of revenue courts, steering India towards a future of transparent land management.<sup>128</sup>

## **2. Commercial Taxes:**

Under the Digital India transformation, the Mission Mode Project for the computerization of Commercial Taxes (MMPCT) stands as a pivotal initiative. Embedded within the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) this project seeks to modernize the management of commercial taxes including the Value Added Tax (VAT) and Central Sale Tax (CST). Imagine a dynamic marketplace where dealers acting as representatives of the State Departments, collect taxes from consumers and remit them to the State treasury. The Scheme objective is to empower States and Union Territories (UTs) to transform their Commercial Tax administration departments thereby ushering in a new era of digital capability. It aims to implement advanced hardware and software systems, integrating them within a comprehensive networked environment. Envision a contemporary indirect tax administration system, marked by technological sophistication and efficiency, operating across the States. Supported by a robust Information Technology (IT) infrastructure it aims to attract investment, stimulate economic growth and facilitate the movement of goods and services within unified market in India.

The Scheme also aspires to build capacities across States, balancing uniformity with adaptability to local requirements while integrating existing initiatives. It intends to redesign key processes, improving service delivery and enabling stakeholders to function with enhanced efficiency while adopting a service-oriented approach to process re-engineering. Furthermore, the Scheme aims to address gaps in IT infrastructure, enabling the web-based delivery of essential taxpayer services. The expected outcomes include reduced interactions between

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<sup>128</sup>95 Percent of Land Records in Rural India Digitized (26<sup>th</sup> October, 2024). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2068408> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

officials and dealers, faster response times, improved service delivery, lower transaction costs, increased transparency and enhanced accountability.<sup>129</sup>

### **3)e-Transport:**

e-Transport is a MMP initiated by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), and is being developed and executed nationwide with the assistance of the Technical Partner, NIC. This initiative aims to realize the Digital India vision by offering transport related services that are accessible to citizens, government entities and businesses. The centralized web-based applications, VAHAN 4 and SARATHI 4 are nearing full implementation, having computerized over 85 percent of the country's Road Transport Offices (RTOs). This initiative encompasses a blend of Government to Government (G2G), Government to Business (G2B) and Government to Citizen (G2C) services which benefited a wide array of stakeholders including citizens, transporters, vehicle dealers, manufacturers, law enforcement agencies, banks, insurance firms and various governmental departments at both state and central levels. The key components of this project include flagship solutions such as Vahan, Sarathi, e-Challan, m-Parivahan, the National Register and Analytics. Vahan which facilitates vehicle registration and Sarathi, which manages driving licenses and serves as the foundational elements of the project, housing over 250 million vehicle records and more than 150 million license records. Furthermore, the project is integrated with other E-Governance initiatives and services including UMANG, Digilocker, Common Service Centre (CSC), e-District, e-Mitra, Aadhaar, and eSign. This initiative has not only simplified operations for state transport departments but has also yielded significant benefits for citizens, enabling them to complete various processes online, either fully or partially without the need to visit RTOs. Individuals can now book appointments, pay fees and taxes, and select personalized registration numbers all through online platforms. This initiative

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<sup>129</sup> Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. <https://dor.gov.in/introduction-it-initiatives> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

represents a rapidly evolving and dynamic effort by achieving successive milestones in the context of a new digital era.<sup>130</sup>

#### **4) e-District:**

The e-District project has been executed at both district and sub-district levels throughout all States and Union Territories, providing advantages to all citizens by offering a range of e-Services, including Certificates (Birth, Caste, Death, Income, and Local Resident), Pension services (Old Age, Disability, and Widow), Electoral services, Consumer Court, Revenue Court, Land Records, and various departmental services such as Commercial Tax, Agriculture, Labour, Employment Training, and Skill Development, among others. As of (2022) a total of 4,671 e-services have been introduced across 709 districts in India.<sup>131</sup>

#### **5) Treasuries:**

The payment-related services are organized into 13 distinct categories that span across all treasuries. Now the treasuries across all Indian states are predominantly computerized. The Indian government has initiated several schemes and programmes besides an MMP aimed at the computerization of state treasuries, such as the Computerised Treasury Operation System (CTOS) and the Computerised Treasury Management Information System (CTMIS). Additionally, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India have performed IT audits to verify the effective implementation and operation of these systems.<sup>132</sup>

#### **6) Municipalities:**

The Municipalities MMP initiative seeks to enhance municipal service delivery through the strategic application of information and communication technology (ICT) to transform urban environments. Central to this initiative is the establishment of efficient single-window facilities designed to streamline service access. The program aims to enhance the competitiveness of Urban Local Bodies

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<sup>130</sup>Ministry of Road Transport & Highways(MoRTH), Government of India. <https://parivahan.gov.in/PNM-Mailer/PNM-Mailer-Nov/readmore> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

<sup>131</sup>Press Information Bureau, GoI, MeitY (3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022). <https://www.pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1847837> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

<sup>132</sup> op.,cit Sumathy,M (2021). A Handbook of E-Governance in India, Abhijeet Publications.

(ULBs) by developing a comprehensive ULB information network. It provides timely and reliable management information thereby empowering decision-makers with enhanced clarity. By adopting a standardized approach, the initiative facilitates seamless integration with related applications. Furthermore, this MMP promotes public participation by extending essential services to millions of urban residents.<sup>133</sup>

### **7) Police:**

The Ministry of Home Affairs has initiated the Crime & Criminals Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) project, a Mission Mode Project (MMP) under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) as a significant step towards modernizing law enforcement. This initiative by the Indian government aims to enhance the capabilities of the police force in crime investigation and criminal detection. It seeks to establish a comprehensive system for information sharing among various police organizations and units nationwide thereby improving citizen services. The CCTNS project endeavors to create an integrated digital system that enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of policing at all levels, with particular emphasis on the grassroots level namely the police stations. By adopting E-Governance principles, it aims to establish a nationwide networked infrastructure and advanced IT-enabled tracking system poised to transform law enforcement. The CCTNS also project facilitates both vertical integration—connecting different levels of law enforcement from police stations to district offices, state headquarter, and the State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB) up to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)—and horizontal integration, aligning police operations at both state and central levels with external organizations. Additionally, CCTNS provides a citizen interface designed to offer essential services and foster community engagement.<sup>134</sup>

As (of 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025) 17,171 Police Stations across the country are connected and using CCTNS, this was stated by the Minister of State for Ministry of

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid

<sup>134</sup> E-Governance, Mission Mode Project (MMP), Crime & Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS).  
<https://police.py.gov.in/cctns%20with%20link%20adds/draft%20guidelines%20for%20spmc.pdf>  
accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

Home Affairs, Government of India Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.<sup>135</sup>

#### **8) Agriculture:**

The Central and State Governments have launched a range of programs to address the agricultural sector across the nation. The Agriculture MMP managed by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation (DAC) seeks to incorporate previous insights, enhance existing programs, and extend its reach nationwide. This MMP offers farmers guidance on seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, government modelling, soil advice, crop management, climate data and marketing of farm products.<sup>136</sup>

#### **9) Gram Panchayats:**

The e-Panchayat serves as the primary governmental interface for more than 60 percent of India's population, delivering essential services to millions residing in rural regions. This MMP seeks to tackle longstanding issues faced by villages, including inadequate communication infrastructure, delays in service delivery, insufficient revenue generation, and the absence of effective monitoring systems. The MMP is set to implement a variety of modules within the Gram Panchayat framework, such as the issuance of business licenses, management of household resources, provision of birth and death certificates, dissemination of agenda processes, access to Gram Sabha proceedings, tracking of funds and progress reports, and sharing of Below Poverty Line (BPL) data.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is overseeing the execution of the e-Panchayat MMP as part of the Digital India initiative, which aims to improve the transparency, accountability, and efficiency of Panchayati Raj institutions functioning as local self-government. Building on prior achievements, the Ministry

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<sup>135</sup>Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and System (1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2117265> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

<sup>136</sup> Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of Puducherry. About the Centrally Sponsored Schemes. <https://agri.py.gov.in/cssch.html> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

launched eGramSwaraj on April 24, 2020, a comprehensive application tailored for Panchayats under the e-Panchayat MMP. This platform consolidates various aspects of Panchayat operations, including planning, budgeting, accounting, monitoring, and asset management, while also enabling online payment capabilities. For the Fiscal Year (2024-25) 244,000 Gram Panchayats formulated and uploaded their Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs), and 2,06,000 Panchayats have successfully conducted online transactions for the 15th Finance Commission grants for the same period. Furthermore, to enhance transparency and accountability at the grassroots level, the Ministry introduced AuditOnline, an application under the e-Panchayat MMP, which facilitates the online auditing of Panchayat accounts and maintains comprehensive records of both internal and external audits. For the audit year (2022-23), 252,000 Audit Plans have been created, leading to the production of 248,000 Audit Reports.<sup>137</sup>

#### ***10) Employment Exchange:***

The initiative encompasses various services, including the registration of job seekers, guidance for both job seekers and potential employers, and online vacancy registration organized into six service categories. The Ministry of Labour & Employment is currently developing this MMP. The MMP aims to effectively match the needs of employers with the employee database. Additionally, it provides valuable guidance and career counseling to those who are unemployed and streamline the online registration process for vacancies from employers. According to data obtained from the States and Union Territories, there are (as of June 2025) 997 operational employment exchanges across the country. The Ministry is executing the National Career Service (NCS) Project as a Mission Mode initiative aimed at transforming the National Employment Service.

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<sup>137</sup> Ministry of Panchayati Raj is implementing e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project with the aim to making Panchayats, more transparent, accountable and effective (7<sup>th</sup> August, 2024). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2042683> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

This project offers a range of employment-related services, including job matching, career counseling, vocational guidance, and information on skill development courses. These services are accessible online through the National Career Service Portal ([www.ncs.gov.in](http://www.ncs.gov.in)), supported by a Call Centre/Helpdesk. The NCS services can be accessed through various delivery channels such as the NCS Portal, Employment Exchanges (Career Centres), and Common Service Centres. Furthermore, the NCS Project plans to establish Model Career Centres (MCCs) in partnership with States and reputable institutions to provide employment services. The Ministry allocates financial support to these centres based on submitted proposals, and States have the option to replicate these Model Career Centres using their own resources. Additionally, the NCS project includes a component for linking employment exchanges with NCS, which involves funding for the enhancement of infrastructure in employment exchanges, with financial assistance provided by the Government based on proposals from the States.<sup>138</sup>

According to the most recent data, roughly 40 lakh individuals seeking employment registered with employment exchanges in 2022. Of these, about 25 lakh were men and 15 lakh were women. The state with the highest number of job seekers was Kerala with 5.1 lakh registrations followed by Maharashtra with 4.9 lakh, Tamil Nadu with 4.8 lakh and Uttar Pradesh with 4 lakh. Among registered job seekers, 36.2 lakh were educated including 13.4 lakh women. Around 7.1 lakh Scheduled Caste (SC) job seekers registered with 6.8 lakh of them being educated. Furthermore, approximately 2.4 lakh Scheduled Tribe (ST) job seekers registered of whom 2.2 lakh were educated. The total number of differently-abled job seekers registered was around 28,000 including 902 who registered with special employment exchanges during 2022.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>138</sup>Unstarred Questions No. 1309, 'Employment Exchanges' answered by Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Government of India, on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Lok Sabha - Indian Parliament. [https://dge.gov.in/dge/sites/default/files/2023-09/1309\\_E.pdf](https://dge.gov.in/dge/sites/default/files/2023-09/1309_E.pdf) accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025

<sup>139</sup>Employment Exchange Statistics 2023. [https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/employment\\_exchange\\_2023.pdf](https://labour.gov.in/sites/default/files/employment_exchange_2023.pdf) accessed on 3rd June 2025.

## **11) Health**

The integration of electronic communication into the healthcare sector can be traced back to the National Health Policy, a seminal document adopted by the Indian Parliament in 1983 and subsequently updated in 2002. This policy served as a foundational element of the State Mission Mode Project under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) of 2006 and was further invigorated by the National Health Policy of 2017 which highlighted the transformative potential of digital technology in healthcare (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India 2017). The policy advocated for the use of ‘Aadhaar’ as a unique identifier for beneficiaries, recognized the emergence of smartphones, and envisioned the National Optical Fibre Network as the infrastructure supporting the National Health Information Architecture. In 2015, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India, proposed the establishment of the National e-Health Authority (NeHA), an initiative aimed at enhancing the quality of healthcare services for Indian citizens through information and communication technology (ICT) innovation. Through its e-Health division, the MoHFW launched a series of E-Governance projects each contributing to the dynamic development of healthcare sector in India.<sup>140</sup> Some of the initiatives in the health sector are:

### ***(a) Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Mission:***

The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) was launched with the aim of enabling seamless interoperability of health data within the healthcare system and creating comprehensive electronic health records for every citizen. The ABDM encompasses key registries such as the Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA), the Healthcare Professional Registry (HPR), the Health Facility Registry (HFR) and the drug registry. As of February 6, 2025, over 73.98 crore ABHA accounts have been created with 3,63,520 health facilities registered in the HFR and 5,64,851 healthcare professionals enrolled in the HPR. Moreover, 1.59 lakh health facilities are utilizing ABDM enabled software and approximately 49.06 crore health records

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<sup>140</sup>E-Governance in healthcare sector in India, 2020.

[https://csd.columbia.edu/sites/csd.columbia.edu/files/content/docs/ICT%20India/Papers/ICT\\_India\\_Working\\_Paper\\_28.pdf](https://csd.columbia.edu/sites/csd.columbia.edu/files/content/docs/ICT%20India/Papers/ICT_India_Working_Paper_28.pdf) accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.



are linked to ABHA accounts. These accounts span across 36 States and Union Territories, covering 786 districts nationwide including rural regions. Similarly, the 1.59 lakh health facilities using ABDM-compatible software are distributed across all these regions. Inclusion remains a core principle of ABDM by fostering a connected health ecosystem that ensures continuity of care across primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare levels. It also improves healthcare access especially in remote and rural areas through technological solutions like telemedicine. To maximize reach, several user-friendly a multilingual tool have been developed including the ABHA portal ([abha.abdm.gov.in](http://abha.abdm.gov.in)), the ABHA App and the Aarogya Setu App which designed to overcome challenges related to limited digital literacy.<sup>141</sup>

***(b) Ayushman Bharat PradhanMantri Jan ArogyaYojna Portal:***

The Government of India website functions as a comprehensive repository of information and services pertaining to the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana providing a conduit to improved health outcomes in the future

***(c) Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centre (HWC) Portal:***

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has introduced a digital platform, a web portal specifically designed to coordinate comprehensive primary healthcare services across the national health and wellness centers thereby marking a significant advancement in healthcare delivery.

***(d) Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) Portal:***

The Government of India has introduced an innovative online platform aimed at systematically monitoring disease prevalence across the nation. This initiative is integral to the National Health Mission and also serves as a vigilant mechanism to safeguard the health of its citizens.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup>Update on the implementation of Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) (11<sup>th</sup> February 2025). [https://abdm.gov.in:8081/uploads/PIB\\_2101737\\_26ebf09f0f.pdf](https://abdm.gov.in:8081/uploads/PIB_2101737_26ebf09f0f.pdf) accessed on 11<sup>st</sup> February 2025.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid

## **12) Education**

Education is a part of the State Mission Mode Project and the Government of India, under the Ministry of Education (then Ministry of Human Resource Development) has taken several initiatives in this regard. Some of the major initiatives are:-

(a) SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds):

It offers free online courses from school to postgraduate level.

(b) DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing):

A national platform for school education by providing e-content for teachers and students.

(c) e-PG Pathshala:

It provides e-learning materials for postgraduate students.

(d) National Digital Library (NDL):

This platform offers a free access to educational resources.

(e) PM eVIDYA:

A comprehensive digital education initiative under the Atmanirbhar Bharat programme by integrating digital/online education with TV, radio and community radio.<sup>143</sup>

## **13) Public Distribution System (PDS):**

Under the State Mission Mode Project for the Public Distribution System (PDS), the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Government of India has launched a scheme aimed at the comprehensive 'End-to-End' computerization of

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<sup>143</sup>Year End Review 2017 - Ministry of HRD (27<sup>th</sup> December 2017). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1514254> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

Targeted PDS. This initiative seeks to improve efficiency and transparency in food grain distribution while tackling issues such as leakage, diversion and the use of fraudulent or fictitious ration cards. As part of this effort, the entire database of ration cards and beneficiaries has been fully digitized across all States and Union Territories (UTs). Additionally, a transparency portal and online grievance redressal system including toll-free helplines have been established nationwide. Online allocation of food grains has been implemented in all States and UTs except for Chandigarh and Puducherry which have chosen the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) cash scheme instead. Moreover, the supply chain has been digitized in 31 States and UTs. The automation of Fair Price Shops (FPS) is underway across all regions by involving the installation of electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices. These devices enable transparent distribution through electronic means and facilitate the verification of beneficiaries via biometric or Aadhaar authentication.<sup>144</sup>

### **Integrated Mission Mode Projects:**

The seven integrated MMPs are as follows:

#### **1. India Portal:**

The Government of India, National Portal developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) serves as a pivotal platform for digital connectivity. This Portal functions as a comprehensive gateway, linking citizens, businesses and Indian nationals worldwide to a wealth of information and services provided by the Indian Government. It encompasses the extensive network of Central, State, District administrations and Panchayats integrating them into a unified framework. The project aims to be a definitive source of comprehensive, accurate and reliable information by reflecting the diverse nature of India. Its content is systematically organized into distinct yet interconnected modules, facilitating a seamless and integrated user experience. The Portal was

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<sup>144</sup> Public Distribution System (PDS) and E-Governance in Panchayati Raj Institutions (14<sup>th</sup> December 2021).<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1781311> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

officially launched by the then Union Minister for Electronics & Information Technology, Mr. Dayanidhi Maran on November 10, 2005. To optimize content management a secure cloud-based Content Management System (CMS) has been implemented enhancing the Portal operational efficiency with advanced technology.<sup>145</sup>

## ***2. National Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG):***

This NSDG MMP acts as a smart and secure messaging middleware that routes all service requests to the appropriate backend databases and delivers processed services to those seeking them. This system enhances information exchange among various backend databases across different departments. Furthermore, it includes six distinct service categories:

### ***a) E-Governance:***

This refers to the application of technology in the provision of government services via online platforms, thereby enhancing process efficiency.

### ***b) Citizen Engagement:***

The gateway is designed to empower citizens to engage with the government through digital channels, facilitating access to information and the opportunity to offer feedback.

### ***c) Government Processes:***

The NSDG promotes the effective management of governmental operations, which includes monitoring applications, overseeing records, and upholding transparency.

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<sup>145</sup> op.cit Sumathy,M (2021). *A Handbook of E-Governance in India*, Abhijeet Publications.

**d) *Inter-Departmental Services:***

The gateway fosters the smooth transfer of information and cooperation among various government departments and ministries.

**e) *State-Specific Services:***

The NSDG also encompasses services provided at the state level, allowing citizens to access programmes and initiatives tailored to their specific state.

**f) *Public Service Delivery:***

The gateway seeks to enhance the efficiency and accessibility of public services by offering a unified platform for the retrieval of diverse government services.<sup>146</sup>

**3. *Common Service Centres (CSCs):***

In a significant advancement towards digital empowerment a visionary program has been introduced deploying ICT-enabled kiosks in rural areas. These Common Service Centres (CSCs) serve as the foundation of the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) an initiative endorsed by the Government of India in September 2006. The government ambitiously aimed to establish 100,000 CSCs across 600,000 census villages demonstrating its steadfast commitment under the National Common Minimum Programme to implement E-Governance nationwide. The primary objective of these CSCs is to provide Government to Citizen (G2C) e-Services thereby creating a robust physical ICT infrastructure that enhances service delivery. This initiative not only promotes transparency but also reduces the need for citizens to frequently visit government offices. Following an evaluation of the previous CSC Scheme, the Government of India launched the CSC 2.0 Project in August 2015 as part of the Digital India initiative. The project aims to establish at least one CSC in 250,000 Gram Panchayats (GPs) across the country offering a range of citizen-centric services. This endeavor is managed by CSC e-Governance Services

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<sup>146</sup>Ibid

India Limited, a CSC Special Purpose Vehicle and operates on a self-sustaining entrepreneurial model supported by Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs).<sup>147</sup>

#### **4. e-Courts:**

In the context of Indian judicial development, the e-Courts Mission Mode Project (MMP) represents a significant advancement integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the justice system. This initiative managed by the Department of Justice under the Government of India is executed in collaboration with the e-Committee of the Supreme Court. It operates through individual High Courts providing tailored solutions to meet the specific needs of each judicial region. By incorporating advanced technology, the project aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and accessibility within the justice delivery framework. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Union Cabinet has launched Phase III of the e-Courts Project a Central Sector Scheme scheduled from 2023 to 2027, with a budget allocation of Rupees 7210 crore which is more than four times the financial support of Phase II which concluded in 2023. Phase III focuses on accessibility and inclusivity, aiming to transform the judicial system into a digital, online and paperless environment. This phase includes the digitization of historical court records and the implementation of universal e-filing and e-payment systems through the establishment of e-Sewa Kendras in every court complex. Additionally, it introduces advanced smart systems to provide judges and registries with data-driven insights for case management. The primary objective of Phase III is to create a seamless technological framework for the judiciary, facilitating efficient and paperless interactions among courts litigants and all stakeholders in the justice system.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup>Ibid

<sup>148</sup>E-Courts Mission Mode Project (17<sup>th</sup> December 2024). <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2085127> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

## 5. ***Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) for Trade:***

This MMP exemplifies a sophisticated integration of efficiency and innovation, facilitating the seamless execution of export and import clearance procedures and thereby enhancing operational capabilities. Analogous to a skilled conductor, it coordinates the complex interactions among various entities such as airports, airlines, apparel and textile export promotion councils, banks, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Customs, the Container Corporation of India (CONCOR), the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), export promotion bodies, Indian Railways and port trusts through the strategic implementation of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI). This initiative offers a comprehensive suite of services, including the electronic submission and clearance of export-import documents, online payment of customs duties and fees, submission and processing of DGFT licenses and the digital exchange of documents among community partners. Aimed at simplifying procedures and providing continuous access to consumers, this project represents a significant advancement aligning with global standards and reducing transaction costs while ensuring the efficient flow of trade across international borders.<sup>149</sup>

## 6. ***e-Biz:***

In a significant advancement towards modernizing Indian business infrastructure, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) operating under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has launched the e-Biz platform. This digital initiative, initially serving as a repository of forms and procedures was officially introduced by Mr. Anand Sharma, the then Union Minister of Commerce and Industry at the CII Partnership Summit in Agra on January 28, 2013. As a fundamental component of the integrated Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) envisioned in the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) by the Indian government, the e-Biz project aims to transform the business environment into one characterized by

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<sup>149</sup> op.cit Sumathy,M (2021). *A Handbook of E-Governance in India*. Abhijeet Publications.

efficiency, transparency and seamless electronic services for investors, industries and enterprises.

The platform offers a wide array of services including information on forms, procedures, licenses, permits, registrations, approvals, clearances, permissions, reporting, filing, payments and compliance throughout the entire lifecycle of an industry or business entity. Subsequently, the e-Biz platform incorporated two DIPP services: Industrial Licenses and the Industrial Entrepreneur's Memorandum (IEM) along with an integrated payment gateway in collaboration with the Central Bank of India. This enhancement significantly augments the transactional capabilities of the e-Biz portal by marking a substantial advancement in its functionality and value. Business users can now efficiently navigate the digital platform, completing e-Forms online or offline, uploading necessary attachments, making payments electronically and submitting forms for departmental processing. They receive a digital copy of the challan for record-keeping or printing, an acknowledgment of submission and the ability to track the status of their forms with SMS alerts for important notifications. Ultimately users can download certificates, approvals, clearances, permits and other documents from the e-Biz platform. This digital transformation represents a monumental shift in the government approach to service delivery, transitioning from a department-centric model to a customer-centric one.

The e-Biz platform is now accessible to the public, facilitates the integration of an expanding array of services across Central Government, State Government and Parastatal entities. Serving as India's Government to Business (G2B) interface, the e-Biz portal was developed with the expertise of the National Institute of Smart Government (NISG) as a consulting partner and implemented by M/s. Infosys Ltd., Bangalore under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model for a decade. The initial three years constituted a pilot phase followed by a seven-year expansion phase. During the pilot phase, 50 services (comprising 26 from the central government and 24 from state governments) were implemented across five pilot states: Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. This phase also introduced a single window system in Andhra Pradesh and during the second and third years, five additional states Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were



incorporated into the project. It is anticipated that over the next ten years more than 200 services aimed at investors and businesses will be launched nationwide, promising a vibrant future for India's business ecosystem.<sup>150</sup>

## **7. e-Procurement:**

The Indian Government is actively promoting the rapid adoption of e-Procurement across its various departments by marking a significant step in digital transformation. This initiative is expected to yield numerous advantages including increased transparency, improved cost-efficiency and expedited procurement processes. Central to this initiative is the Mission Mode Project (MMP) for electronic Government Procurement, a crucial component of the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) overseen by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce in collaboration with the Department of Information Technology. The Standing Finance Committee has designated the Government e Procurement Solution developed by the National Informatics Centre (GePNIC) as the National e Procurement Portal which intended for implementation across all states and Union Territories. The National Informatics Centre (NIC) is responsible for establishing this centralized portal which aims to serve as a comprehensive source of procurement information. Its objective is to function as a unified access point for the procurement activities of State Government Departments, Directorates, Statutory Organizations, Local Bodies and Undertakings/Boards. This MMP Portal is accessible at <http://eprocure.gov.in/mmp> has provides a resource for that seeking procurement information.<sup>151</sup>

### **(b) Digital India:**

On July 1, 2015, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi the Digital India initiative was launched thereby marking the beginning of a

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<sup>150</sup> Overview of e-biz Mission Mode Project. <https://easeofdoingbusiness.org/resources/overview-e-biz-mission-mode-project> accessed on 22nd May 2025.

<sup>151</sup> About e Procurement MMP Portal. <https://eprocure.gov.in/mmp/sites/default/files/eproc/AboutMMP.pdf> accessed on 22nd May 2025.

transformative effort to integrate technology into the national infrastructure. This ambitious campaign aims to revolutionize the accessibility of government services creating a comprehensive digital network that spans India diverse States and Union Territories. By promoting the expansion of internet connectivity, the initiative seeks to empower the nation digitally by encouraging the public to incorporate technology into their daily lives. Furthermore, it is committed to bridging the digital divide in rural areas by providing high-speed broadband internet access throughout the country.<sup>152</sup> The Digital India Programme is fundamentally structured around three essential core components and each serving as a crucial element in the framework of this transformative initiative:

***(a) Creation of Digital Infrastructure:***

To facilitate the nationwide deployment of diverse digital services, it is imperative to establish a robust digital infrastructure particularly in rural areas. These interior regions frequently lack adequate electronic networks or possess none at all. Consequently, a comprehensive digital network is being implemented across the nation.<sup>153</sup>

***(b) Delivery of Digital Service:***

One of the principal components of the Digital India initiative is the provision of governmental and other essential services through digital platforms. The transition from physical to digital service delivery is relatively straightforward.<sup>154</sup>

***(c) Digital Literacy:***

Digital literacy refers to the capacity to proficiently and ethically engage with digital technologies for a range of purposes, including communication, information retrieval and critical analysis across various contexts. This concept entails the comprehension and application of tools such as computers, smartphones and the

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<sup>152</sup> op., cit CSC: E-Governance Service India Ltd Annual Report 2020-2021 (2022). <https://cscspv.in/assets/docs/Annual-Report-3-Mar-22.pdf> accessed on 22nd May 2024 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2024.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid

<sup>154</sup> Ibid

internet to locate, assess, and disseminate information, while also fostering critical thinking and digital safety competencies.<sup>155</sup>

### **Nine Pillars of Digital India:**

The initiatives under the Digital India programme which include the development and enhancement of essential ICT infrastructure and service delivery, aim to integrate various pre-existing schemes. These schemes have been reorganized, refocused and implemented in a coordinated manner. The Digital India Programme is structured around nine foundational pillars which include

#### **(a) Broadband highway:**

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) of the Government of India is undertaking a significant initiative to enhance digital connectivity in rural areas through the establishment of broadband infrastructure. This project involves a substantial capital investment of Rupees 32,000 crores and aims to connect over 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats. The plan targets the connection of 50,000 Gram Panchayats in the first year with an additional 100,000 in the following two years. By integrating the State Wide Area Network (SWAN), the National Knowledge Network (NKN) and the National Optic Fibre Network (NOFN), this initiative will create a comprehensive National Information Infrastructure effectively bridging the digital divide across the nation.<sup>156</sup>

The Government has undertaken several significant measures to enhance broadband connectivity in rural regions and address the digital divide through the implementation of the National Broadband Mission (NBM) across the country. On May 14, 2022, the Gati Shakti Sanchar Portal was launched, facilitating the process of obtaining Right of Way (RoW) permissions for the installation of Optical Fiber Cables (OFC) and telecom towers. The Telecommunications Act of 2023, along with the Telecommunications (Right of Way) Rules 2024, with effect from January 1,

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid

<sup>156</sup> Ibid

2025, further simplified RoW procedures. Additionally, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is committed to ensuring reliable broadband connectivity in rural areas and closing the digital gap with support from the Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN).<sup>157</sup> Notable initiatives include:

- a) The Amended Bharat Net project aims to provide broadband access to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) and villages upon request.
- b) Various programmes are in place to deliver high-speed internet and mobile services (including 4G) to remote locations, such as the North-East states, regions affected by Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), Aspirational Districts, and border villages.
- c) Submarine optical fiber cables have been installed between Chennai and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, as well as between Kochi and Lakshadweep, to enhance internet connectivity.<sup>158</sup>

The National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0 commenced on April 1, 2025, building on the strengths and lessons learned from NBM 1.0, to advance India into a new phase of digital transformation and enhance global competitiveness. This information was provided by Dr. Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar, Minister of State for Communications and Rural Development, Government of India in a written response in the Rajya Sabha on March 20, 2025.<sup>159</sup>

#### **(b) Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity:**

Current initiatives in mobile access are primarily directed towards enhancing network reach and coverage. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) in India is undertaking the implementation of universal mobile connectivity with a capital

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<sup>157</sup> Government's Efforts to Improve Broadband Connectivity in Rural Areas through National Broadband Mission (NBM) (21<sup>st</sup> March, 2025).<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2113852> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid

<sup>159</sup> Ibid

investment of Rupees 16,000 crores. This initiative aims to extend connectivity to approximately 42,300 villages that remain unconnected.<sup>160</sup>

### **(c) Public Internet Access Programme:**

The Digital India initiative, which encompasses the Public Internet Access Programme, represents a holistic endeavor aimed at converting India into a digitally-empowered nation by enhancing Internet accessibility and offering citizens access to a diverse array of digital services.<sup>161</sup>

### **(d) E-Governance-Reforming Government through Technology:**

In the intricate framework of governance, information technology plays a pivotal role in enhancing efficiency and fostering innovation. By effectively streamlining and simplifying bureaucratic processes, governments can transform complex procedures into seamless digital operations. Electronic applications and advanced monitoring systems serve as the coordinators of this transformation, facilitating interdepartmental communication and managing the flow of data through online databases, encompassing everything from school certificates to voter identification cards. Envision a scenario where services and networks, such as the UIDAI, payment portals, mobile platforms and electronic data interchange (EDI), operate in harmony, transitioning all records from traditional paper formats to dynamic electronic systems. The focus is on automating workflows within governmental operations, where information technology acts as the conductor, orchestrating a streamlined approach to public grievance redressal. By analyzing data with precision, ongoing issues are identified and resolved, transforming a multitude of complaints into a coherent and effective resolution process.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> op.,cit CSC: E-Governance Service India Ltd Annual Report 2020-2021 (2022). <https://cscspv.in/assets/docs/Annual-Report-3-Mar-22.pdf> accessed on 22nd May 2024.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid

<sup>162</sup> Ibid

#### **(e) e-Kranti Electronic Delivery of Services:**

Pillars 4 and 5 of the Digital India initiative, titled ‘E-Governance: Reforming Government through Technology’ and ‘e-Kranti-Electronic Service Delivery,’ act as the dual driving forces behind the e-Kranti: National E-Governance Plan (NeGP) 2.0. The successful implementation of e-Kranti is crucial to the triumph of Digital India, as it seeks to revolutionize E-Governance, streamline complex governance processes and ensure efficient governance across the nation. On March 25, 2015, the Union Cabinet approved the e-Kranti Plan, unveiling its core components: a visionary blueprint, a transformative mission, fundamental e-Kranti concepts, detailed planning and methodology, a comprehensive program management framework and a strategic implementation plan, all integrated with 44 Task Mode Projects and essential ICT infrastructure. The vision of e-Kranti is to ‘Transform E-Governance for Transforming Governance’ while its mission is to facilitate a government-wide transformation by delivering government services to the public electronically through a network of interconnected and interoperable systems, ensuring these services are characterized by quality, accountability and reliability all at an affordable cost.<sup>163</sup>

#### **(f) Information for All:**

The ‘Information for All’ initiative encompasses the development of online content and the maintenance of websites and documents. This strategy aims to provide the public with straightforward and unrestricted access to information complemented by the establishment of open data platforms. Governments as is customary are actively engaged in educating citizens through social media and web platforms. The network is designed to foster interactive communication between the public and the government. Furthermore, it facilitates the transmission of online messages by individuals during special events or programs.<sup>164</sup>

#### **(g) Electronics Manufacturing:**

As India is moving towards digitalization, there is a pronounced call for a significant advancement in electronic manufacturing with the ambitious goal of

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid

<sup>164</sup> Ibid

achieving Net Zero imports. This aspiration necessitates a concerted effort across various domains, including the complex interplay of taxation and incentives, as well as the strategic implementation of economies of scale, all while addressing the substantial challenges posed by cost disadvantages. Key areas of focus include Fab-less design (FABS), set-top boxes, Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSATs), mobile devices, consumer and medical electronics, smart energy meters, smart cards and micro ATMs. Currently, a range of projects in electronic manufacturing is being refined through the support of incubator development, the strategic formation of clusters and a continuous emphasis on skill enhancement all aligned with strategies such as government procurement.<sup>165</sup>

#### **(h) IT for Jobs:**

This initiative aims to realize the aspirations of individuals residing in smaller towns and villages by equipping them with the necessary skills to excel in the information technology sector. Envision a network of Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) centers emerging across the northeastern states, each serving as a catalyst for development through the application of information and communication technology (ICT). The program also focuses on transforming service delivery agents into proficient operators of sustainable IT service enterprises while preparing the rural workforce to achieve their own goals thereby fostering readiness for the telecommunications industry. Leading this transformative effort are the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) of the Government of India, orchestrating a future where technology and tradition coexist harmoniously.<sup>166</sup>

#### **(i) Early Harvest Programmes:**

The ‘Early Harvest Programmes’ represent a significant initiative aimed at fostering innovation, particularly in the realm of digital transformation for elected officials and government employees. Central to this initiative is an IT portal, envisioned as a dynamic digital hub, facilitating connectivity across 1.36 crore

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid

<sup>166</sup> Ibid

mobile devices and 22 lakh emails through an extensive mass messaging system. This ambitious project incorporates several technological advancements: traditional government greetings are digitized into e-Greetings, biometric attendance systems are implemented to modernize government offices and WiFi access is expanded to encompass all universities. Secure government communications and standardized email formats are established to maintain order while public WiFi hotspots serve as essential points of connectivity. The conversion of school textbooks into e-books marks a progressive shift in educational resources and the dissemination of climate updates, SMS-based space notifications and emergency alerts exemplifies the programmes commitment to timely information delivery. Additionally, a digital platform is introduced to assist in tracking lost and found children among other functionalities.<sup>167</sup>

Some of the major initiatives under the Digital India Programme are:

**(i) Unified Mobile Application for New- Age Governance (UMANG)**

Since the nation is preparing for a digitally empowered society, the Unified Mobile Application for New-Age Governance (UMANG) represents a significant innovation developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in collaboration with the National e-Governance Division. This digital platform serves as a comprehensive gateway to a wide array of essential services by integrating offerings from Central and State Government departments, local bodies and various private utilities. The UMANG functions as a singular portal that provides access to numerous government services, facilitating citizen engagement through a unified application. Its adaptability is extensive, operating across multiple platforms, including mobile applications, the web, Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and Short Message Service (SMS). Whether accessed via a smartphone, feature phone, tablet,

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid



or desktop, UMANG effectively bridges the gap between citizens and governance, exemplifying digital sophistication.<sup>168</sup>

UMANG has unique features:

**(a) *Ease of access:***

UMANG is accessible across various devices, including smartphones, tablets, and desktop computers. It features a comprehensive multimedia interface that emphasizes usability, optimization, and the enhancement of user experience. The platform supports 23 Indian languages and offers scalable solutions as required. All essential services are integrated into a single 18MB Android application.<sup>169</sup>

**(b) *Integration with Aadhaar, PayGov, Digilocker:***

UMANG seamlessly integrates into the framework of widely esteemed customer-centric services, such as the consistently reliable Aadhaar and the secure platform of Digital Locker.<sup>170</sup>

**(c) *Government services at your fingertips:***

UMANG functions as an integrated platform, facilitating access to a broad spectrum of government services via a single mobile application. It enables users to engage with a multitude of services at the central, state, and regional levels. This singular application grants access to 2,297 services provided by various state and central government entities.<sup>171</sup>

**(d) *Dedicated customer support:***

The UMANG provides user-friendly support from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on all weekdays.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> UMANG, MeitY, GoI. <https://web.umang.gov.in> accessed on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2025.

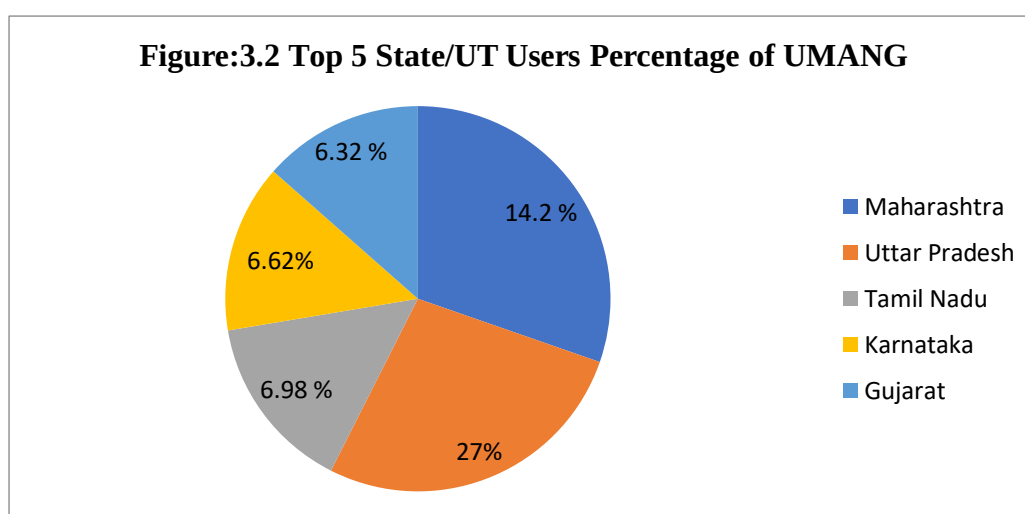
<sup>169</sup> Ibid

<sup>170</sup> Ibid

<sup>171</sup> Ibid

<sup>172</sup> Ibid

As (of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025) there are 209 Departments/Entities, (81 from the Central side and 128 from the States) that have been registered under UMANG App. A total of 2,297 Services are offered under this portal (875 from the Central and 1,422 from the State governments). So far 8.21 crores of registration have been done, and 597.81 crores of transactions from this portal.<sup>173</sup>



Source: UMANG, MeitY, GoI <https://web.umang.gov.in/landing/services> accessed on 22nd May 2025

The above chart shows States/UTs UMANG users, it shows that one of India's most developed State and our commercial hub Maharashtra secured the top position, followed by the most populous State in India i.e., Uttar Pradesh which secured 2<sup>nd</sup> rank, followed by Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat among the top five in India.

## (ii) **DigiLocker:**

The DigiLocker initiative represents a significant development implemented by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) as part of the Digital India Programme. This innovative digital platform revolutionizes the issuance and verification of documents and certificates, effectively eliminating the

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid

necessity for physical copies. Each Indian citizen engaging with DigiLocker is provided with a personal cloud storage space, directly associated with their Aadhaar number (UIDAI). The primary objective of DigiLocker is to establish a secure, centralized repository for essential documents which is accessible from any location globally.<sup>174</sup>

The advantages of DigiLocker are as follows:

- (a) To facilitate Indian citizens access to their essential documents at any time and from any location with ease.
- (b) The risk of documents or certificates being lost, damaged, or destroyed is eliminated.
- (c) DigiLocker enables the verification of documents for higher education, employment, and other services provided by governmental or private entities without necessitating the physical presence of citizens, thereby ensuring prompt and reliable verification.
- (d) There is no fee for any Digital Certificate issued by any organization.
- (e) The document verification process is expedited by offering a single access point for authentic documents.
- (f) Fraudulent and counterfeit paper certificates are eradicated.
- (g) The verification of documents between various departments and agencies is simplified.
- (h) All documents can be accessed and shared online with legal authenticity, contingent upon citizens' consent

As (of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025) DigiLocker has 52.62 crore users, 952.80 crore documents have been issued, 1936 issuers include government departments, boards, commissions, etc, and 2407 requesters from Central and State governments.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Digilocker, Digital India Corporation, MeitY. <https://www.digilocker.gov.in> accessed on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid

| <b>Table 3.1: Top 5 List of Issued Documents under Digilocker</b> |                                                                                                                                    |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Sl No                                                             | Name                                                                                                                               | Available      |
| 1.                                                                | Ministry of Health & Family Welfare                                                                                                | 1,50,00,00,000 |
| 2.                                                                | Unique Identification Authority of India, Delhi                                                                                    | 1,41,88,79,442 |
| 3.                                                                | Central Registry of Securitisation Asset Reconstruction and Security Interest of India (CERSAI) Central Know Your Customers (CKYC) | 91,00,00,000   |
| 4.                                                                | Ministry of Road Transport and Highways                                                                                            | 71,00,00,000   |
| 5.                                                                | Income Tax Department                                                                                                              | 70,24,00,000   |

Source: CoWIN, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GoI <https://www.digilocker.gov.in> accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025

### (iii) CoWIN Portal:

In the comprehensive framework of response to the pandemic by the Indian Government, the Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) emerges as a pivotal digital initiative. The CoWIN serves as an online platform facilitating COVID-19 vaccination registration since the onset of the pandemic. It efficiently displays available vaccine slots in nearby locations, accessible through a straightforward online interface. CoWIN functions as a secure and reliable system, meticulously recording vaccination details, including time, location and the administering personnel. Fundamentally, CoWIN is a cloud-based system that coordinates the planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of India's vaccination efforts. It enables the monitoring of vaccine utilization, wastage and coverage from the national level to the smallest sub-districts. The CoWIN system provides real-time tracking of the vaccination campaign across India and issues digital vaccination certificates, documenting the progression towards immunity. CoWIN is essentially an advancement of the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN). As of June

3, 2025, a total of 2,20,68,68,255 individuals have been vaccinated nationwide. Among these, 1,02,74,39,010 have received their first dose, 95,19,90,658 have completed their second dose, and 22,74,38,587 have received a precautionary or booster dose.<sup>176</sup>

#### **(iv) Unified Payments Interface (UPI):**

Introduced in 2016, the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) represents a significant advancement in mobile payment technology. This innovative system integrates various banking services, facilitating seamless fund transfers and enabling merchant transactions through a single mobile application accessible to any participating bank. Additionally, UPI supports ‘Peer-to-Peer’ transactions thereby allowing users to manage and execute payments at their own pace and convenience.<sup>177</sup>

UPI is a smartphone application that enables users to transfer money between bank accounts effortlessly. Developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) which sets the operational guidelines and protocols and UPI provides a unified platform for mobile payments. It removes the need for customers to repeatedly input their bank details or sensitive information during each transaction. Designed for real-time payments, UPI simplifies the process of transferring money across different banks through a quick two-step authentication. The interface is overseen by India’s Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The UPI leverages technologies like the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) and Aadhaar-Enabled Payment System (AEPS) to ensure seamless transactions. It supports various types of payments, including push (sending money) and pull (receiving money) over-the-counter and barcode-based payments as well as recurring payments such as utility bills, school fees and subscriptions. Once a single identifier like a Virtual Payment Address is set

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<sup>176</sup> CoWIN, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GoI. <https://www.cowin.gov.in/> accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2025.

<sup>177</sup> National Payment Corporation of India(NPCI). <https://www.npci.org.in/> accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2025.

up, users can make mobile payments without needing credit or debit cards, online banking credentials or entering their account details. This enhances security for sensitive information and allows users to link their bank accounts directly to their phones by making transactions quick and convenient.<sup>178</sup>

***Benefits of UPI:***

- a) Making online bill payments becomes much easier.
- (b) UPI allows you to pay for ride-hailing services, instant online shopping and food delivery with ease.
- (c) You can also settle payments at local restaurants, grocery stores and department stores using UPI.
- (d) Payments for rent, mobile recharge and utility bills can be completed swiftly through online transactions.

The following major banks support UPI Services:

- (a) State Bank of India (SBI Pay)
- (b) ICICI Bank (i Mobile)
- (c) HDFC Bank (HDFC Bank Mobile Banking)
- (d) Axis Bank (Axis Pay)
- (e) Bank of Maharashtra (Maha UPI)
- (f) United Bank of India (United UPI)
- (g) Vijaya Bank (Vijaya UPI)
- (h) Union Bank of India (Union Bank UPI)
- (i) Federal Bank (Lotza)
- (j) UCO Bank (UCO-UPI)
- (k) Yes Bank (Yes Pay)
- (l) Karnataka Bank (KBL Smartz)
- (m) Punjab National Bank (PNB UPI)
- (n) Bank of Baroda (Baroda MPay)

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid

(o) South Indian Bank (SIB M-Pay).<sup>179</sup>

In May 2025, UPI transactions reached an unprecedented total of 1868 crore transactions valued at Rupees 25.1 lakh crore an increase from 1789 crore transactions (Rupees 23.9 lakh crore) recorded in April 2025.<sup>180</sup>

### **Second Administrative Reforms Commission and E-Governance:**

In the 11th Report from the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, titled 'Promoting E-Governance - The Smart Way Forward,' the government unfurls its visionary blueprint for E-Governance in India. This document paints a vivid picture of a future where a nurturing environment is cultivated E-Governance projects are meticulously identified, priorities are set with precision and inter-departmental harmony is achieved. The report champions the creation of a distinct budgetary category, earmarking 2 to 3 percent of Plan funds exclusively for E-Governance endeavors. It calls for a thorough dissection of each government function and service, ensuring they are as logical and straightforward as a well-tuned symphony. Moreover, it suggests a transformative redesign of government forms, processes, and structures to embrace E-Governance, supported by procedural, institutional, and legal metamorphoses. The government has crafted a strategy for government process re-engineering, a message that should resonate across all Ministries and Departments. The report underscores the necessity of establishing standards and certification processes for Government Process Re-engineering (GPR). It highlights the importance of nurturing capacity and raising awareness for E-Governance projects, proposing capacity assessments and a roadmap to elevate the skills of employees and organizations. A network of training institutions should be woven with Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) orchestrating capacity-building programs in E-Governance. State governments should embark on the Capacity Building Roadmap (CBRMs) under the watchful eye of the Department of

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid

<sup>180</sup>UPI transactions hit new high in May but cash still thriving (2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2025). <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/upi-transactions-hit-new-high-in-may-but-cash-still-thriving/articleshow/121556499.cms> accessed on 3rd June 2025.

Information Technology (DIT) of the Government of India. Lessons from past E-Governance triumphs should be woven into training programs. The Second Administrative Reforms Commission's Second Report on 'Unlocking Human Capital' should be embraced to illuminate public awareness about E-Governance initiatives. Technological solutions include crafting a national E-Governance 'enterprise architecture' framework and fostering the use of 'enterprise architecture' for successful implementation. Organizations should conduct regular independent evaluations of their websites and devise a time-bound plan for delivering transactional information. Complex E-Governance projects should be orchestrated and executed with in-house project management expertise.<sup>181</sup>

### **Policy Document on Digital North East Vision 2022**

Digital Northeast Vision 2022 is part of the nationwide Digital India Programme focusing on the strengths of the North Eastern Region. It highlights the opportunities for growth and development, and outlines the strategies and specific initiatives to achieve digital empowerment for all the citizens living in each state of the North East India. On July 30th, 2017 in Guwahati, Assam, then honourable Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad unveiled the vision and strategy for the Digital North East 2022. The vision statement places a strong emphasis on utilising digital technologies to improve people's quality of life, ensure inclusive and sustainable growth, and transform the lives of North East Indians. This increases the government's goals for bringing the advantages of digitization to every resident of North East India. The Digital North East 2022 vision statement lists CSCs as one of the digital thrust areas under Digital Infrastructure. Through the implementation of CSCs, citizens can now access a variety of services, such as agriculture, education, and health care, at reasonable prices, especially in isolated areas of the North Eastern Region where connectivity is challenging due to the region's hilly terrain. Common Service Centres also generate

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<sup>181</sup>Second Administrative Reforms Commission: 11<sup>th</sup> Reports, Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions. <https://darpg.gov.in> accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025.



employment prospects, particularly for women and young people, as the majority of VLEs come from this category.<sup>182</sup>

### **E-Governance Initiatives in Different States:**

In India, several states have taken up their own unique E-Governance initiatives, some of which are discussed here:

#### **(A) e-Seva in Andhra Pradesh:**

Andhra Pradesh often referred to as the Kohinoor of India has emerged as a pioneer in E-Government applications within the nation. The State Government has implemented a comprehensive array of strategies, effectively utilizing information technology to enhance citizen services. The advancement of Andhra Pradesh in the IT sector coincided with the inauguration of Mr. N. Chandrababu Naidu as Chief Minister on September 1, 1995. With a visionary perspective, he recognized the critical role of information technology in shaping the states future. Consequently, Andhra Pradesh took prompt action, and by 1998, it became the first Indian state to formally establish a dedicated Department of Information Technology thereby ensuring the sector received the attention it deserved.<sup>183</sup>

The e-Seva project in Andhra Pradesh represents a significant advancement in the states digital transformation. Originating from the successful implementation of the Twins Project pilot in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad in December 1999 and also this initiative expanded with the objective of integrating advanced technology across the entire state. The project aims to redefine the concept of service by prioritizing citizen-centric governance. This initiative challenges traditional practices that favor bureaucratic convenience instead emphasizing the importance of citizen engagement in governmental processes.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>Digital North-East Vision 2022, 2018. [https://Book\\_Digital\\_North\\_East\\_2022.pdf](https://Book_Digital_North_East_2022.pdf) accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2023.

<sup>183</sup>op.,cit Sumathy,M (2021). *A Handbook of E-Governance in India*. Abhijeet Publications.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid

***Salient Features:***

- (a) A total of 35 e-Seva centers have been established, comprising 280 service counters distributed throughout the Twin Cities and Ranga Reddy district.
- (b) Each service counter is equipped with an electronic queuing system.
- (c) These centers operate from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays and from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM on the second Saturday and Sunday.
- (d) They function as comprehensive hubs for over 30 Government to Citizen (G2C) and Business to Citizen (B2C) services without jurisdictional limitations thereby enabling any resident of the Twin Cities to access services at any of the 35 locations.
- (e) Online services encompass E-forms, E-filing, and E-payments, with payment options including cash, cheque, demand draft (DD) and credit card.<sup>185</sup>

Services for payment of utility bills for the following are available:

- a) Electricity Bills
- b) Water and Sewerage Bills
- c) Telephone bills (BSNL)
- d) Property Tax
- e) Sales Tax.<sup>186</sup>

Other Services include:

***Certificates:***

- a) Registration of births and deaths
- b) Issuance of birth and death certificates
- c) Registration Department: Provision of encumbrance certificates
- d) Issuance of caste/nativity certificates.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid

<sup>186</sup> Ibid

<sup>187</sup> Ibid

### ***Permits/Licences***

- (a) Medical and Health Department: Renewal of Drug Licences
- (b) Issue/renewal of trade licences.<sup>188</sup>

### ***Transport Department Services (available at Banjara Hills Centre only)***

- (a) Modification of the address associated with a vehicle owner.
- (b) Transfer of vehicle ownership.
- (c) Issuance of learner's permits.
- (d) Renewal of driving licenses for non-commercial vehicles.
- (e) Registration of new vehicles<sup>189</sup>

### ***Information***

- a) Transport Department Procedures
- b) Registration Department: Market value assistant.<sup>190</sup>

### ***Reservation***

- a) Securing reservations for transportation via the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) buses.
- b) Arranging for a water tanker through the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB).
- c) Tourism: Securing reservations for tickets or accommodation.<sup>191</sup>

### ***Other services at the E-Seva centre are:***

- a) Sale of passport application forms.
- b) Receipt of passport applications.
- c) Receipt of applications for new telephone connections.
- d) Sale of non-judicial stamps

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid

<sup>189</sup> Ibid

<sup>190</sup> Ibid

<sup>191</sup> Ibid

- e) Document writing service.
- f) Collection of small savings.<sup>192</sup>

#### ***Internet services***

- a) The facilitation of electronic payments via the internet
- b) The access and downloading of forms and Government Orders (GOs)
- c) The completion of applications online, including the submission of complaints pertaining to citizen services.<sup>193</sup>

#### ***B2C Services:***

- a) ATM: Cash withdrawals and deposits
- b) ATM: Issue of statements of account
- c) Mutual funds: Collection of applications.
- d) Mutual funds: Transfer of Shares
- e) Cell phone bill payments.<sup>194</sup>

#### **(B) Gyandoot in Madhya Pradesh:**

In the early stages of the digital era, Gyandoot emerged as a significant initiative in E-Governance, illuminating the rural areas of Madhya Pradesh. As the 21st century commenced the government initiated a visionary project by establishing a network of computer kiosks to bridge the gap between rural communities and governmental services. This pioneering effort was implemented in the Dhar District where the introduction of technology promised progress. The pilot project was equipped with a 50 MHz Pentium III processor, 128 MB of RAM, a 40 GB hard drive, a 2 MB graphics card, a 15 monitor and a 48x CD-ROM where each component contributing to the innovative framework. The client PCs at these kiosks, though initially modest with a 433 MHz Celeron processor, 32 MB of RAM, a 4.3 GB hard drive, a floppy drive, a 4 MB graphics card, a 14 monitor and a 48x CD-

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid

<sup>193</sup> Ibid

<sup>194</sup> Ibid

ROM were instrumental in facilitating change later receiving incremental upgrades. Telecommunications were also facilitated by 56kbps modems, with one modem on the client side and five on the server side thereby utilizing a combination of dial-up lines and wireless local loop connections. Each kiosk was equipped with a dot-matrix printer and a five-hour backup UPS, ensuring resilience. The server system operated on Windows NT with an IIS server, while the client PCs utilized Windows 98. Applications were developed using MS SQL Server, Visual Basic, Java Development Kit and MS Access featuring an Indian language font set with Internet Explorer serving as the portal to this digital environment.<sup>195</sup>

In the central areas of vibrant villages called ‘soochanalayas’ where daily life unfolds with simplicity 20 kiosk referred to as as centers of knowledge. Each kiosk served as an access point to the broader world by catering to groups of 20,000 to 30,000 villagers. Subsequently, an additional 18 kiosks were established thereby further extending their reach. These kiosks, each managed by a knowledgeable operator, provide a variety of services for a nominal fee—\$0.10 for expert consultation, \$0.20 for registration and \$0.50 for matrimonial services. In a region where many individuals subsist on less than \$2 per day these services are essential. The kiosks promote e-transparency by offering a wealth of information and services that empower the community.<sup>196</sup>The information and services given relating to e-transparency shall include the following:

- (a) **Land Records:** In the agricultural sector where fields extend like patchwork quilts under the sun farmers seek the essential documentation for prosperity such as official maps and land ownership records. These crucial documents, once difficult to obtain can now be requested through kiosks by serving as modern-day facilitators and subsequently collected as tangible evidence of their legitimate ownership.

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<sup>195</sup> Raina, Monica & Cecchini Simone (2005). Electronic Government and the Rural Poor: The Case of Gyandoot, *The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Information Technologies and International Development*, Vol 2, Issue No 2, pp. 65-72.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid

- (b) ***Below Poverty Line and other lists:*** The government acting as a benevolent guardian offers support to families living below the poverty line through special welfare programs. Previously confined to the discretion of village councils, this list is now accessible online, enabling families to verify their inclusion with ease. Lists for public food distribution, pension beneficiaries and rural development schemes are also available digitally. Furthermore, reports on government grants for village committees are disclosed thereby exemplifying transparency.
- (c) ***Registration of Grievances:*** Historically, citizens with grievances against public servants undertook arduous journeys to district headquarters. Presently, they can express their concerns and monitor their progress remotely facilitated by kiosks that serve as advocates of justice.
- (d) ***Market Prices:*** This initiative is a symbol of e-transparency which provides insight into district wholesale market prices for agricultural products, rather than focusing on governmental corridors. Equipped with this information where farmers can strategically decide when to sell independent of intermediaries.
- (e) Other services include rural email facilities, village auction sites, marriage sites, children's services, 'ask the wise man' and farmers services 'ask the experts'. Village newspapers, e-education sites, and job news (ask the semi-skilled workers) are also accessible. Local government officials can use the kiosks for free, for purposes such as email or sharing health and education data with district headquarters.<sup>197</sup>

### **Application Drivers/Purpose:**

The formally stated driver or purposes of the project were:

- a) Motivating underprivileged segments of society, fostering consensus, and enhancing accountability

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid

- b) Developing a cost-effective, replicable, economically independent, and financially sustainable model to leverage information technology for rural populations
- c) Improving the effectiveness, speed, and responsiveness of the state distribution system to meet the needs of local citizens
- d) Strengthening civic participation and governance through the innovative use of information technology
- e) Implementing a new grassroots business model involving non-traditional entrepreneurial groups.<sup>198</sup>

***Stakeholders:***

In Dhar District, government officials in collaboration with villagers and kiosk operators play a pivotal role. Other significant stakeholders include senior officials from the Government of Madhya Pradesh, information technology vendors, designers, implementers, and intermediaries who facilitate interactions between villagers and the government or the wholesale market.<sup>199</sup>

***Transparency and the Poor:***

Gyandoot serves as a model of e-transparency, specifically designed to support individuals in vulnerable situations. Situated in Dhar, a rural area characterized by limited resources this initiative is purposefully crafted. It provides a tailored array of information and services specifically designed for its distinct audience. Furthermore, the selection of kiosk operators from the communities it aims to empower adds an additional layer of thoughtful design thereby ensuring that the voices of the disadvantaged are not only heard but also amplified.<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid

<sup>199</sup> Ibid

<sup>200</sup> Ibid

### ***Impact: Costs and Benefits:***

In the central area of the village, where aspirations and financial calculations converged the initial financial investment for the system amounted to a substantial US\$ 50,000. This amount contributed by the local administrative units did not encompass the expenses associated with establishing the kiosks. These dynamic centers of commerce were financed through bank loans where each facilitating the initial 20 stocks akin to a supportive hand. As commercial activities progressed, it was anticipated that the ongoing operational costs would be offset by the fees accrued from the stocks and akin to a river replenishing its banks. Additionally, a contribution of 10 percent of their profits was committed to the local government thereby symbolizing both gratitude and obligation. Concurrently, the 18 kiosks which emerged as private enterprises are remitted an annual license fee of US\$100 to the district governments by representing a modest acknowledgment for the privilege of their operation.<sup>201</sup>

In the domain of public service, the Gyandoot system has emerged as a paradigm of transparency thereby illuminating areas previously overshadowed by corruption. Historically, citizens frequently encountered the necessity of engaging in bribery to access essential services. Individuals from marginalized communities such as those belonging to lower castes or those with disabilities has experienced a significant discrimination with their requests often ignored or dismissed. Additionally, the journey to district offices represented a substantial financial burden by requiring many to forfeit a days wages and incur travel expenses. However, for a specific range of services, the Gyandoot program has introduced a framework characterized by affordability, efficiency and simplicity in certain regions. In some cases, the challenges associated with travel costs, employment disruptions and discrimination have been mitigated, providing crucial support to disadvantaged groups. The public disclosure of welfare program lists has occasionally functioned as

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid



a mechanism of transparency, enabling families to rectify their exclusion from these essential registers.<sup>202</sup>

### **(C) Akshaya Project in Kerala:**

Today Malappuram, a district of North Kerala, is proud to be the first 100 percent E-Literate district in India. This gigantic feat is the culmination of an idea launched by the then-late President of India, His Excellency Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam on the 18th of November 2002 in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. This small, powerful idea took seed when the people of Malappuram felt the need to keep in touch with sons of their soil in the Gulf, forcing the District Panchayat to seek help from the district administration to facilitate this communication. This initiative of Malappuram district panchayat and the administration germinated into the most powerful and markable IT idea, the Akshaya Project, a project which was soon to transform the lives and more than 7.5 lakh families of the District. Right from its genesis this unique project code-named Akshaya focused on familiarising even the lower socio-economic sections of society with computers and other tools with information and communication technology.<sup>203</sup>

The broad objective of the project was to make one person from each family-friendly enough to use computers and empower him or her to access relevant e-content in the regional language. Achieving this simple objective was itself a gigantic feat as it involves an area of 3550 square kilometers of topographically difficult terrain and 7.5 lakh families of different socio-economic strata in more than 100 villages, 14 blocks, and five municipalities.<sup>204</sup> To transform Digital 'Have-nots' into Digital 'Haves' Akshaya formulated three objectives:

- a) Ensuring Broad-based access to information and communication technology.
- b) Providing basic functional skills.

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid

<sup>203</sup> Sangheeta, PV & Aram Arul I (2012). Effectiveness of Grassroots ICT Projects: A Case Study of the Akshaya Project of Kerala State, India, *African Journal Online*.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid

- c) Making available content relevant to the local population in the local language.<sup>205</sup>

To achieve these objectives and to form an ICT backbone in the District, to setting up of information dissemination hubs named Akshaya e-centers with people's participation was planned. To begin with, three different surveys were launched to assess the E-readiness of the District. The first was a household survey: this survey aimed to assess computer skills and exposure levels to computers within the District. Another survey was conducted to take stock of the existing computer centres in the District. The third survey was the Location mapping conducted by the Town and Country Planning Department, which was to recommend the most viable locations for setting up Akshaya centres.<sup>206</sup>

After the surveys, applications were called from existing and prospective entrepreneurs for setting up Akshaya e-centres across the length and breadth of the District. The response was tremendous; after selection, more than 600 entrepreneurs executed MoUs with local bodies. These selected entrepreneurs were rigorously trained in various aspects of the project through interactive workshops and question-answer sessions, and the administration helped entrepreneurs secure loans without any collateral security through the State Level Bankers Committee. The IT mission organized an IT export to facilitate interaction between major ICT vendors and entrepreneurs. The collective bargaining power of the entrepreneurs helped them procure required hardware at their doorsteps that too at much more affordable prices, thereby marginally reducing their setup costs.<sup>207</sup>

In the process, Malappuram district got an investment worth 300 million rupees in the ICT sector from entrepreneurs. Soon the District got booming with 613 Multipurpose Community Technology Akshaya e-centres with distinguishingly the same colour scheme and design. Each Akshaya centre has an area of 400 to 1000 square feet and is equipped with 5 to 10 computers, scanners, printers, webcams, Internet telephony, and qualified personnel. Every Akshaya centre is strategically

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid

<sup>206</sup> Ibid

<sup>207</sup> Ibid

located within 2 kilometres of user households and caters to a thousand families. One person from a family chosen by the family itself received specially designed training which includes familiarization with computers, playing of games and basic computer knowledge. The entrepreneur gets fees of Rupees 120 per head for training people in their catchment area and a performance incentive of Rupees 20,000 for training a thousand persons.<sup>208</sup>

Each Akshaya Centre does and shows an income of Rupees 1,40,000 to the entrepreneur and his generated employment opportunities for 2500 people in the District. As 25 percent of the population of the District lives abroad, as a result, women were the main beneficiaries of the Akshaya Projects. They represent 60 percent of the computer trainees at these centres, and more than 11 percent are entrepreneurs. Apart from women, tribals and economically downtrodden and backward communities too benefited from the project as the District progressed from less than 1 percent E-Literacy to 100 percent household Computer literacy. A total of 3500 fishermen from the coastal areas of Malappuram district too benefited from the project. The tribals living in faraway, loosely connected forest areas also tasted the sweet fruits of E-Literacy. With a total of 1010 members from 1000 tribal families were trained in using computers. The most daunting task of the Akshaya project was to connect all these E-Centres with broadband Internet, as the Nilgiris, Arabian Sea, Evergreen forests, ravines, hills, and palm-fringed coast of the topography of the district made it uneconomical and impractical to roll out a wired solution.<sup>209</sup>

These Akshaya Centres act as E-Governance delivery points, birth and death certificates issued by the Panchayats, government application forms in the local language, online grievance redressal with the district collector and Superintendent of police, and an interactive web portal in the local language have all been made possible by the IT mission in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> NaikSwamy, Karanthothu (2021). E- Governance Success Projects in Kerala: A Study of Akshaya, *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research*, Vol 10, Issue No. 11(3), pp. 36-38.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid

<sup>210</sup> Ibid

Now people of Malappuram make hassle-free e-payment of their taxes and utility bills such as electricity, telephone and mobile phones through Akshaya centers at a stone's throw from their homes. The other services that these centers provide are money transfer, hardware supply, and product marketing services. Many Akshaya centres are running E-Clubs and offer community education programmes for children. The district administration launched a successful health mapping programme through this project. This helped Mapping provide a database of patients and individuals for the infrastructure upgradation of Primary Health Centers. The webcasting of community events is a regular feature in Malappuram. The success of the Akshaya pilot project in Malappuram district is being replicated in other districts of Kerala. This small, powerful idea is not only transforming the lives of the common man but also empowering him to be part of a global IT revolution-based society. The dream of the father of the Nation, Gandhiji, of reaching out to the poorest of the poor is being realized today through the Akshaya project in Kerala.<sup>211</sup>

#### **(D) e-Bhoomi Project in Karnataka:**

Bangalore, often referred to as the Silicon Valley of India and the capital of Karnataka, has been intrinsically associated with the information technology (IT) sector since its inception. In 1985, Karnataka established Electronic City, providing entrepreneurs with land, water, an incubation center, and state-of-the-art communication facilities. Notably, it was the first Indian city to set up a satellite earth station for high-speed communication, thereby facilitating software exports. Prominent companies, such as Infosys, have their headquarters in this city. The presence of world-class IT infrastructure and a substantial pool of specialized technical talent are primary factors contributing to the continued establishment of IT firms in Bangalore. Furthermore, the city is characterized by a favorable climate, a

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid

cosmopolitan environment and numerous high-quality research and development institutions.<sup>212</sup>

In recognition of the widespread utilization of computers across various departments and the independent advancements in statistical methodologies within these sectors, the Government of Karnataka has established a Centre for E-Governance under the Department of Information Technology. This Centre is dedicated to the rapid and efficient promotion of information technology usage among the general populace. It provides technical assistance and coordination for IT projects across all governmental departments and oversees several key initiatives anticipated to be implemented across multiple departments.<sup>213</sup>

In this context, the Bhoomi project was launched to digitize rural land revenue records which is a vital document for an individual lives. These records are crucial for securing loans, bail applications, obtaining scholarships for children, accessing rural development benefits and more. Previously, around twenty million land records, covering details like ownership, land area, crop type, bank loans and irrigation were maintained manually. These records have spread across 67 lakh farmers in 27,000 villages and were managed by nearly 9,000 village accountants. The manual system was marred by issues such as corruption, document tampering, delays in record retrieval, lack of updates and the absence of instant data needed for planning and decision-making. The Bhoomi project aimed to address these challenges by bringing efficiency and transparency through digitalization.<sup>214</sup>

The Bhoomi project transformed the entire system by converting land data into a digital format. This information was made accessible to the public through a straightforward user-friendly process that was convenient, fast and gained wide popularity. Additionally, in 177 talukas touch-screen kiosks were installed by allowing farmers to obtain their revenue documents quickly by paying a nominal user fee of Rupees 15. The process of digitization, training, and putting the scheme

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<sup>212</sup> Kumar, Sathish & K.S Hampesh (2012).Bhoomi Project as an E-Governance Initiative: A Study of Select Districts in Karnataka, *International Journal of Scientific Research*, Vol 1, Issue No. 5, pp. 135-136.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid

<sup>214</sup> Ibid

into operation involved about 20,000 men and months of data entry tasks, followed by the validation of nearly 20 million printouts. These printouts were distributed to 6.7 million farmers for their feedback. Many officials at the level of village accountants and deputy tehsildar were thoroughly trained for 177 sub-districts. The software for this project was developed by the National Informatics Centre.<sup>215</sup>

#### **(E) e-Prastuti Project in Assam:**

Assam located in the Northeast of India, also a Gateway of 7 sisters has made significant strides in enhancing its digital governance through the e-Prastuti project aimed at standardizing government websites across the state, by enhancing the usability and accessibility of its departmental websites. By collaborating with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), the initiative sets a framework to unify and improve the user experience on all government websites. This pioneering effort, recognized at a national level, emphasizes a citizen-centered design that prioritizes transparency and accessibility. With detailed guidelines that encapsulate best practices, the project encourages all government departments to present their information clearly and effectively. Recognizing the diversity of users, Assam's approach underscores the importance of engaging citizens and crafting content that meets their specific needs ensuring that the information offered is both accurate and user-friendly.<sup>216</sup>

The implementation phase saw the creation of a Standardized Website Framework (SWF), which served as a guideline for developing all government websites in Assam. The project has undergone structured phases, beginning with thorough surveys to identify existing challenges and culminating in the establishment of a robust institutional mechanism led by dedicated officials to oversee website management. Training programs were executed to build the capabilities of department officials designated as Master Trainers, who would then foster content

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid

<sup>216</sup> Government of Assam, General Administration, Assam.<https://darpg.gov.in> accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2024.

management and website sustainability. In total, over 200 departmental websites transitioned to this updated protocol by significantly improving navigation and information retrieval. The outcome has been a noticeable increase in user engagement and satisfaction, with the initiative solidifying a structured and efficient approach to government digital presence. The program established a Website Development Cell tasked with guiding departments in both the design and development of their sites, focusing on standardization for user-friendliness. An expert committee from IIT Guwahati, chaired by Professor A.K. Das, evaluated existing websites and provided recommendations for improvement.<sup>217</sup>

The content management framework within government departments is built upon a structured approach that ensures clarity, accessibility, and relevance to users. Each department is expected to delineate distinct areas of work, listing functions and categorizing generated content into relevant types whether as information or services. A nuanced understanding of the target audience is also a critical component, allowing departments to rank the content based on priority for the intended users such as citizens, businesses or internal government users. This methodical approach not only categorizes the content but also enhances user interaction with clear navigation pathways by fulfilling the overarching goal of facilitating user engagement with government websites.<sup>218</sup>

Moreover, the establishment of a Standard Government Information Architecture (SGIA) serves as the backbone for effective online presence across all departments. It emphasizes the significance of a well-planned information structure that resonates with user expectations, ensuring that critical information is readily accessible. The development of this infrastructure facilitates a uniform and logical content presentation, enhancing user experience through intuitive navigation and well-organized information hierarchy. Support structures like Content Managers and Master Trainers within departments are essential for sustaining this framework as they take charge of content identification, organization and ongoing training requirements to adapt to evolving user needs ultimately fostering a culture of

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid

<sup>218</sup> Ibid

continuous improvement and responsiveness in government digital services. Regular assessments, awards for best practices, and continuous professional development maintain the quality and relevance of these platforms, demonstrating a robust model of governance through technology. As a result, e-Prastuti not only positions Assam as a leader in digital initiatives but also serves as a valuable model for other states and government bodies aiming to enhance their online governance and public engagement.<sup>219</sup>

#### **(F) e-Jan Sampark in Chandigarh:**

In an effort to establish a comprehensive digital infrastructure throughout the city, the Chandigarh administration has initiated a significant technological initiative aimed at fostering a robust information technology sector. Central to this initiative is the e-Sampark, an optical fiber cable (OFC) backbone network that extends its connectivity across the urban landscape. Complementing this initiative is the Wired City Plan, a collaborative effort involving companies such as Spectra Net Limited, HFCL, Reliance, Power Grid and Bharti as these companies are independently investing in the installation of OFC ducts throughout the city thereby facilitating the development of a high-speed broadband network in alignment with the National Policy. Furthermore, the State-Wide Area Network Project (SWAN) is being implemented with the support of the Department of IT (DIT), Government of India and the National Informatics Centre (NIC). This project aims to enhance connectivity by providing broadband access to every government building thereby supporting all E-Governance projects. Among these initiatives, E-Sampark serves as a digital service platform which offered a multi-service, single-window experience to citizens while E-Jan Sampark caters to individuals without internet access by providing services through kiosks. The ongoing E-Gram Sampark Centres further extend this

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid



digital outreach ensuring comprehensive coverage of the city in the digital transformation.<sup>220</sup>

The initiative aims to cultivate a knowledge-driven society through the application of information technology, thereby facilitating effective communication between the government and its citizens. The objectives of e-Sampark encompass providing seamless, one-stop solutions for the public by minimizing the necessity for multiple interactions enhancing the speed of service delivery, processing, issuance and ensuring transparency in service provision. The project has been implemented across various sectors including excise and taxation, transportation, social welfare, engineering, municipal services, law enforcement, tenant and domestic servant registration and government services. e-Sampark centers offer online transaction processing and a web-enabled portal serving as a primary source of information dissemination. This has led to reduced processing times and increased efficiency thereby decreasing long queues and wait times for the public. Furthermore, transparency in service delivery and the easy maintenance of management information systems facilitate the swift reconciliation of treasury collections. Consequently, the project is designed to provide any citizen-focused service with new services being introduced through e-Sampark centers based on public demand. The project success is attributed to its ability to streamline processes and enhance the quality of life for the residents of Chandigarh.<sup>221</sup>

#### **(G) e-DISHA Ekal Seva Kendra in Haryana:**

The e-DISHA Ekal Seva Kendra (Ekal Seva Kendra: Common Service Centres) initiative of the Haryana Government aims to create a Citizen Services Network, providing citizens with access to information about government services, local best practices, and delivery of government services at their doorstep. The Haryana State Wide Area Network (HarSWAN) was established to connect the State Head Quarter

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<sup>220</sup> Chandigarh IT for Society. <https://darpg.gov.in/sites/default/files/34.%20e-Sampark.pdf> accessed on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2024.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid

of Chandigarh with the District headquarters and further link Blocks/Sub-Divisions/Tehsils on a three-level vertical structure. The e-DISHA Ekal Seva Kendras scheme aims to disseminate various services to citizens, including G2C and B2C less than one roof. The Haryana State Data Centre has been established in the Civil Secretariat with 8 TB storage capacities. The core ICT infrastructure (SWAN, HSDC, CSCs) in Haryana was integrated, and e-DISHA Ekal Seva Kendras (CSCs) have been established across the state on a PPP model through Service Center Agencies (SCAs). The project aims to improve the quality of life of the people, upgrade the standard of administration, especially in social and public services, and provide public-centered efficient and cost-effective governance.<sup>222</sup>

The Haryana government aims to make governance transparent, improve citizen interaction, reduce costs of service delivery, improve public service quality and eliminate corruption. They have established District Level e-DISHA Centers (DLeDCs) in all district mini secretariats, providing government-domain services like certificate issuing, driving license, vehicle registration, birth and death certificates, passports and arms licenses. These centers have improved efficiency and eliminated middlemen, saving citizens from running around various departments. They also help in integrating databases of government departments and organizations, promoting process reengineering and standardization. The project is a self-sustainable model. The integration of DLeDCs and CSCs is essential for e-DISHA Ekal Seva Kendras (CSCs) in Haryana.<sup>223</sup>

#### **( H ) e-Suvidha in Tripura:**

In the year 2000, the Government of Tripura launched the E-Governance initiative known as e-Suvidha (Service Facilitation Centre) to leverage Information Technology (IT) to enhance the efficiency and transparency of administrative operations. This initiative aimed to establish a centralized service point for citizens to obtain 23 different certificates including Permanent Resident of Tripura Certificate (PRTC), Income, Survival, SC, ST, and OBC Certificates, among others. To address

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<sup>222</sup> Vir, Dharam & Bansal, Ghanshyam. e-DISHA Ekal Seva Kendra – Citizen Centric e-Governance, pp. 86-94.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid

the challenges associated with the traditional manual system, which often required citizens to make multiple inquiries and visits to track the status of their applications during various stages such as verification, validation, decision-making, and rejection. The e-Suvidha allowed citizens to submit their service requests at a single location and monitor their application status via designated kiosks or the internet. The project was first implemented in July 2000 at the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) office in Udaipur (then Rangamati), Tripura. In March 2004, the government decided to expand the initiative to all Sub-Divisions by establishing Service Facilitation Centres (SFCs) at every SDM office across the state. Ultimately, 162 SFCs were set up in 16 out of the 17 SDM offices, with an expenditure of Rupees 1.93 crore allocated for the project's implementation. E-Suvidha operates as a Client Server system over a Local Area Network (LAN), utilizing VB 6.0 as the front-end tool, Crystal Report 7 for reporting and SQL Server 2000 as the back-end database engine, all running on the Windows 2003 platform, and developed by the NIC. The necessary hardware was procured and installed by NIC through its subsidiary, the National Informatics Centre Services (NICSI). Technical support is provided by District Information Officers (DIOs) from NIC stationed at district headquarters.<sup>224</sup>

The primary goals of the e-Suvidha initiative included: offering a range of services to citizens from a centralized location by enabling citizens to check the status of their applications via kiosks or the Internet thereby overseeing the performance of subordinates in fulfilling their duties related to service delivery, enhancing transparency in the service provision process and minimizing the time and inconvenience experienced by citizens. The Revenue Department led by a Principal Secretary and supported by Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) is responsible for executing the project. The State's IT Department and the NIC are involved in providing technical assistance. The existing personnel from the SDM offices were employed for the project's implementation and system operation.

The initiative however faced challenges due to the absence of clearly defined objectives and ambiguity regarding its completion. Furthermore, the improper utilization of the application hindered the goal of allowing citizens to access the

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<sup>224</sup> Comptroller & Auditor General of India. <https://cag.gov.in/accessed on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025>.

status of their applications via kiosks or the Internet which remains unachieved. The project is now being restructured as e-District Tripura.<sup>225</sup>

### **E-Government Development Index (EGDI):**

The E-Government Development Index (EGDI) functions as a digital guide, mapping the progression of E-Government among United Nations Member States. This index extends beyond a superficial examination of national website trends and thoroughly evaluates the foundational infrastructure and educational context to assess a nation's proficiency in utilizing information technologies to enhance access and promote inclusivity for its citizens. The EGDI is a comprehensive tool thereby assessing three critical dimensions of E-Government such as the availability of online services, the robustness of telecommunication connectivity and the extent of human capacity. Rather than providing an absolute assessment of E-Government advancement EGDI offers a comparative analysis of national government's performances

### ***Methodology***

In the complex landscape of global digital environments the evaluation of national websites and the formulation of E-Government policies and strategies are critical endeavours undertaken by Member States. This assessment which is similar to a comparative analysis has evaluates the E-Government capabilities of various countries, providing a relative perspective rather than an absolute measure. The results a collection of insights are constructed using indicators that reflect a countries capability within the information society which is essential for the immediate success of E-Government initiatives. While the foundational model remains a constant reference point the interpretation of these values evolves with each Survey edition has advanced as an understanding of E-Government potential and its technological foundations progresses. This distinction underscores a comparative framework that accommodates diverse approaches, continually evolving rather than following a

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid

linear trajectory with a fixed endpoint. Mathematically, the EGDI is derived as a weighted combination of three normalized scores, each representing a key dimension of E-Government

- a) The Online Service Index (OSI) can be conceptualized as a digital tapestry which intricately woven with the threads of modernity by representing a diverse spectrum of virtual offerings.
- b) Each element within this spectrum signifies the range and quality of online services available. In parallel, the Telecommunication Infrastructure Index (TII) serves as a monumental structure which symbolizes the complex network of connectivity that supports our digital era.
- c) Additionally, the Human Capital Index (HCI) is depicted as a reservoir of potential enriched with the inherent talents and skills of humanity. Each of these indices is a multifaceted entity which is capable of being independently analyzed to reveal the intricate patterns of progress and potential.<sup>226</sup>

The E-Government Development Index (EGDI) of SAARC countries and China from 2016-2024 were listed in the tables given below:

| Country Name | E-Government Rank | E-Government Index | E-Participation Index Value | Online Service Index | Human Capital Index | Telecommunication Infrastructure Index |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Afghanistan  | 171               | 0.23132            | 0.42373                     | 0.30435              | 0.28304             | 0.10658                                |
| Bangladesh   | 124               | 0.37995            | 0.52542                     | 0.62319              | 0.39731             | 0.11934                                |
| Bhutan       | 133               | 0.35065            | 0.35593                     | 0.31884              | 0.51391             | 0.21919                                |
| India        | 107               | 0.46375            | 0.76271                     | 0.74638              | 0.50189             | 0.14298                                |
| Maldives     | 117               | 0.43299            | 0.22034                     | 0.23188              | 0.63005             | 0.43703                                |
| Nepal        | 135               | 0.34581            | 0.50847                     | 0.39855              | 0.47142             | 0.16745                                |
| Pakistan     | 159               | 0.25832            | 0.37288                     | 0.32609              | 0.32609             | 0.12989                                |
| Sri Lanka    | 79                | 0.54454            | 0.66102                     | 0.65217              | 0.73691             | 0.24453                                |
| China        | 63                | 0.60713            | 0.81356                     | 0.76812              | 0.686               | 0.36727                                |

<sup>226</sup> UN E-Government Survey. <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government-Development-Index> accessed on 20.10.2023

Source: UN E-Government Survey. [https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government- Development Index](https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government-Development-Index) accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

| <b>Table 3.3: E-Government Development Index (EGDI)2018</b> |                   |                    |                             |                      |                     |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Country Name                                                | E-Government Rank | E-Government Index | E-Participation Index Value | Online Service Index | Human Capital Index | Telecommunication Infrastructure Index |
| Afghanistan                                                 | 177               | 0.2585             | 0.3202                      | 0.3056               | 0.3562              | 0.1138                                 |
| Bangladesh                                                  | 155               | 0.4862             | 0.8034                      | 0.7847               | 0.4763              | 0.1976                                 |
| Bhutan                                                      | 126               | 0.4274             | 0.5281                      | 0.5                  | 0.4743              | 0.308                                  |
| India                                                       | 96                | 0.5669             | 0.9551                      | 0.9514               | 0.5484              | 0.2009                                 |
| Maldives                                                    | 97                | 0.5615             | 0.4101                      | 0.4931               | 0.6754              | 0.5159                                 |
| Nepal                                                       | 117               | 0.4748             | 0.7809                      | 0.6875               | 0.4957              | 0.2413                                 |
| Pakistan                                                    | 148               | 0.3566             | 0.5                         | 0.5486               | 0.3682              | 0.1529                                 |
| Sri Lanka                                                   | 94                | 0.5751             | 0.6292                      | 0.6667               | 0.7451              | 0.3136                                 |
| China                                                       | 65                | 0.6811             | 0.9045                      | 0.8611               | 0.7088              | 0.4735                                 |

Source: UN E-Government Survey. [https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government- Development Index](https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government-Development-Index) accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

| <b>Table 3.4: E-Government Development Index (EGDI)2020</b> |                   |                    |                             |                      |                     |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Country Name                                                | E-Government Rank | E-Government Index | E-Participation Index Value | Online Service Index | Human Capital Index | Telecommunication Infrastructure Index |
| Afghanistan                                                 | 169               | 0.3203             | 0.4643                      | 0.4118               | 0.3728              | 0.1762                                 |
| Bangladesh                                                  | 119               | 0.5189             | 0.5714                      | 0.6118               | 0.5731              | 0.3717                                 |
| Bhutan                                                      | 103               | 0.5777             | 0.631                       | 0.6824               | 0.5139              | 0.5367                                 |
| India                                                       | 100               | 0.5964             | 0.8571                      | 0.8529               | 0.5848              | 0.3515                                 |
| Maldives                                                    | 105               | 0.574              | 0.4405                      | 0.4353               | 0.6886              | 0.5981                                 |
| Nepal                                                       | 132               | 0.4699             | 0.369                       | 0.4                  | 0.5405              | 0.4691                                 |
| Pakistan                                                    | 153               | 0.4183             | 0.5238                      | 0.6294               | 0.3818              | 0.2437                                 |
| Sri Lanka                                                   | 85                | 0.6708             | 0.7143                      | 0.7176               | 0.766               | 0.5289                                 |
| China                                                       | 45                | 0.7948             | 0.9643                      | 0.9059               | 0.7396              | 0.7388                                 |

Source: UN E-Government Survey. [https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government- Development Index](https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government-Development-Index) accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

| <b>Table 3.5:E-Government Development Index (EGDI)2022</b> |                   |                    |                             |                      |                     |                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Country Name                                               | E-Government Rank | E-Government Index | E-Participation Index Value | Online Service Index | Human Capital Index | Telecommunication Infrastructure Index |
| Afghanistan                                                | 184               | 0.271              | 0.1932                      | 0.277                | 0.3493              | 0.1867                                 |
| Bangladesh                                                 | 111               | 0.563              | 0.5227                      | 0.6521               | 0.59                | 0.4469                                 |
| Bhutan                                                     | 115               | 0.5521             | 0.4659                      | 0.5996               | 0.5305              | 0.5261                                 |
| India                                                      | 105               | 0.5883             | 0.5909                      | 0.7934               | 0.5761              | 0.3954                                 |
| Maldives                                                   | 104               | 0.5885             | 0.3068                      | 0.4873               | 0.6937              | 0.5845                                 |
| Nepal                                                      | 125               | 0.5117             | 0.2386                      | 0.4592               | 0.5636              | 0.5123                                 |
| Pakistan                                                   | 150               | 0.4238             | 0.3636                      | 0.5658               | 0.3933              | 0.3122                                 |
| Sri Lanka                                                  | 95                | 0.6285             | 0.3523                      | 0.5644               | 0.7726              | 0.5483                                 |
| China                                                      | 43                | 0.8119             | 0.8636                      | 0.8876               | 0.7429              | 0.805                                  |

Source: UN E-Government Survey. [https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government- Development Index](https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government-Development-Index) accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

| <b>Table 3.6:E-Government Development Index (EGDI)2024</b> |                   |                    |                             |                      |                     |                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Country Name                                               | E-Government Rank | E-Government Index | E-Participation Index Value | Online Service Index | Human Capital Index | Telecommunication Infrastructure Index |
| Afghanistan                                                | 188               | 0.20827            | 0.1096                      | 0.14379              | 0.2643              | 0.21672                                |
| Bangladesh                                                 | 100               | 0.65696            | 0.6164                      | 0.73744              | 0.6501              | 0.58337                                |
| Bhutan                                                     | 103               | 0.6511             | 0.4932                      | 0.58862              | 0.81695             | 0.54781                                |
| India                                                      | 97                | 0.66776            | 0.6575                      | 0.81842              | 0.61487             | 0.57004                                |
| Maldives                                                   | 94                | 0.67453            | 0.4795                      | 0.62201              | 0.61298             | 0.78856                                |
| Nepal                                                      | 119               | 0.57813            | 0.2192                      | 0.44806              | 0.521               | 0.76529                                |
| Pakistan                                                   | 136               | 0.50955            | 0.4932                      | 0.70417              | 0.34996             | 0.47453                                |
| Sri Lanka                                                  | 98                | 0.66668            | 0.411                       | 0.54937              | 0.65704             | 0.79359                                |
| China                                                      | 35                | 0.87184            | 0.9315                      | 0.92576              | 0.79023             | 0.89954                                |

Source: UN E-Government Survey. [https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government- Development Index](https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/About/Overview/-E-Government-Development-Index) accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2024

The data presented in the table indicates that the EGDI for SAARC countries is notably inadequate. Afghanistan and Pakistan lag significantly due to

administrative failures. India, despite being the fourth largest economy, has not achieved a higher ranking on the index; however, some progress was observed following the implementation of the Digital India initiative although its ranking declined again in the 2020 and 2022 indices but improved in 2024 with the rank of 97. Conversely, Sri Lanka has performed relatively well in E-Governance, managing to remain within the top 100 despite facing a financial crisis thus outperforming its neighbour India. China holds the highest rank among these nations attributed to its status as one of the leading economies in Asia yet India continues to trail behind China in the E-Governance Index. Meanwhile, Nepal, the Maldives and Bangladesh express satisfaction with their standings as they continue to enhance their IT infrastructure.

In conclusion, India has achieved considerable progress in E-Governance via initiatives such as the National E-Governance Plan (NeGP), Digital India, and various State-led unique E-Governance programmes/projects etc. Nevertheless, obstacles including infrastructural deficiencies, sluggish execution and resistance to change impede the realization of optimal results. The Digital North East Vision 2022 holds the potential for addressing regional inequalities in the North East states of India. To elevate its global standing India needs to expedite digital literacy, bolster cyber security measures and refine the implementation process.



## CHAPTER IV

### E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM

The present chapter focuses on the E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram, examining the operations of the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) in relation to the implementation and execution of significant Information Technology programmes and policies in the state of Mizoram. Additionally, this chapter aims to analyze the various ongoing schemes and initiatives undertaken by the Department of Information & Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram.

#### **Department of Information & Communication Technology (ICT), Government of Mizoram:**

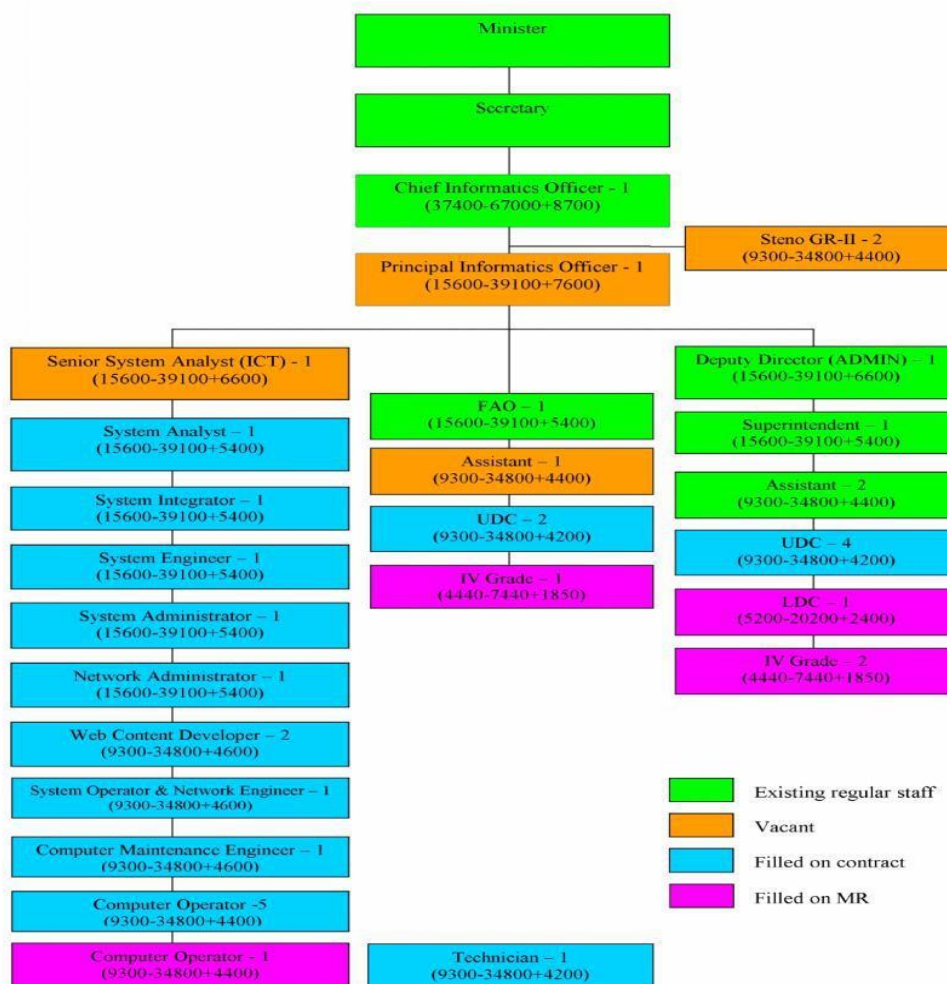
In the year 1991, the Government of Mizoram established an Electronics Cell in the Directorate of Industries, soon a private firm called Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Limited (ZENICS) created under the aegis of the Directorate of Industries to handle the rapid transition to digitalization and computerised administration. The ZENICS has been given training to local literate persons for having an in-depth knowledge of Information Technology. Later on, an Electronics Cell under the Directorate of Industries was upgraded to an Information Technology Cell under the aegis of the Planning and Programme Implementation Department. After being operationalized as a directorate for nearly 20 years, it became a full-fledged department i.e., Department of Information & Communication Technology in 2008 to accelerate the implementation of National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) Mission Mode Projects and later Digital India.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Sharma, L.S & Lalnuntluanga, C. (2015). E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram: An Overview. *International Journal of Management and Social Science Research Review*, Issue No. 1(11), pp. 28.

## Organizational Structure

**Figure:4.1 Organizational Structure of Department of Information & Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram**



Source: Department of Information & Communication Technology, GoM.  
<https://dict.mizoram.gov.in/page/home> accessed on 3rd June 2025

The organizational framework of the DoICT, Government of Mizoram is led by a Minister followed by the Secretary and then the Chief Informatics Officer who oversees technical operations. The chart lists various IT roles such as System Analysts, Engineers, Network Administrators and Web Developers, alongside

administrative support positions like Assistants, Upper and Lower Division Clerks (UDC/LDC) and Superintendents.

The above chart also categorizes positions by staffing status, distinguishing between existing regular staff, vacant roles, and those filled on contract or mutual agreement. Some roles, like Computer Operator and UDC appear multiple times suggesting multiple vacancies or departmental divisions. Lower-tier positions such as IV Grade staff have significantly smaller pay scales compared to senior technical roles. This document likely serves as a reference for workforce planning helping the department track vacancies, contractual appointments and salary administration while maintaining clarity in reporting lines and organizational structure. The blend of IT and administrative roles implies this could be a public sector IT wing or a government department managing both technical and clerical functions.

### **National e-Governance Plan Roadmap for the State of Mizoram:**

As India is in the progress of the digital knowledge and empowered society, the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) stands as a cornerstone which seamlessly blending innovation with advancement. At the heart of this ambitious initiative is a central authority that orchestrates the nationwide implementation of E-Governance while each State Government acts as a conductor and is managing the execution of these visionary projects. For the NeGP to thrive, it is crucial to craft a strategic plan that empowers the State Government and its leading agency by equipping them to tackle challenges with agility and foresight. In this spirit of collaboration, the Government of Mizoram has enlisted the expertise of Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) to develop a comprehensive project proposal. This proposal outlines an E-Governance roadmap thereby aligning the state strategic priorities with the NeGP and includes a capacity-building roadmap that charts the course to achieving these ambitious goals.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> E-Governance Roadmap for the State of Mizoram (2006). <https://dict.mizoram.gov.in/page/e-governance-roadmap-for-mizoram> accessed on 20th July 2023.

### *Objectives*

- While the primary objective of the roadmap is to align the State Government plan for E-Governance in line with the national strategy where there are multiple objectives for the preparation of the roadmap.
- Articulate the E-Governance vision for the state of Mizoram and understand the state's priorities and develop a strategic approach for achieving the E-Governance vision of the State.
- Bring citizen focus in the E-Governance and define the immediate action points based upon the state's priorities.<sup>229</sup>

### **Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS):**

In the lush hills of Mizoram where tradition meets the rise of digital technology, the Mizoram State e-Governance Society stands as a beacon of innovation. Founded in 2005, this trailblazing organization is woven into the fabric of the Societies Registration Act of 1860 with its establishment further bolstered by the Societies Registration (Extension to Mizoram) Act, 1976. Much like a skilled conductor leading a symphony of progress, the society has been instrumental in launching and nurturing transformative E-Governance projects. Among its notable achievements are the State Data Centre (SDC), the State Wide Area Network (SWAN) and the Common Service Centres (CSCs) each a testament to the society unwavering commitment to propelling Mizoram into a new era of digital empowerment.<sup>230</sup>

### **Vision:**

The society is tasked with overseeing the implementation of E-Governance initiatives aimed at benefiting citizens by establishing the necessary administrative,

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid

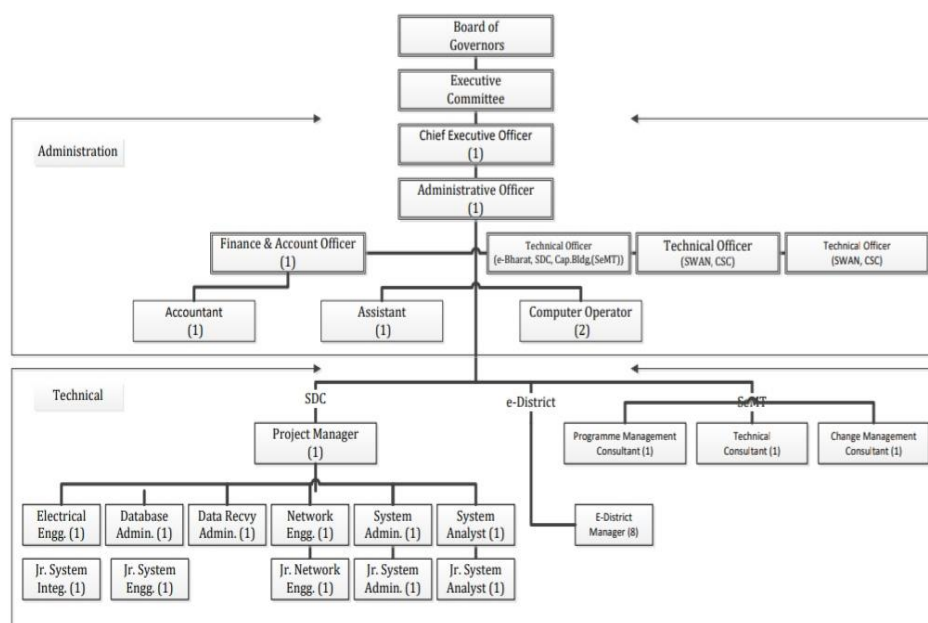
<sup>230</sup> Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations for MSeGS, 2005. <https://Memorandum of Association and Rules and Regulations for MSeGS, 2005> accessed on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2023.

financial, legal and technical frameworks as well as the implementation strategies and resources within the State of Mizoram.<sup>231</sup>

### Organization Structure and Board of Members:

As per the organizational structure of MSeGS, there are the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Administrative Officer, Executive Officer, Accounts Officer, Technical Officer, and other Technical & non-technical staff to manage the organization. The roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee, and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) are specified in the Memorandum of Agreement/Rules and Regulations of the society. The hierarchical set up of the society can be seen in the organization chart below:

**Figure 4.2: Organizational Structure of MSeGS**



Source: Mizoram State E-Governance Society Website. <https://msegs.in> accessed on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2023

<sup>231</sup> Ibid

The following are the details of the Board of Governors and Executive Committee constituted by MSeGS:

| <b>Table 4.1: Board of Governors of MSeGS</b> |                                                                     |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Sl No</b>                                  | <b>Name</b>                                                         | <b>Designation</b> |
| 1.                                            | Chief Secretary, Government of Mizoram                              | Chairman           |
| 2.                                            | Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, Department of ICT           | Vice Chairman      |
| 3.                                            | Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, Finance Department          | Member             |
| 4.                                            | Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, DP&AR                       | Member             |
| 5.                                            | Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, Planning Department         | Member             |
| 6.                                            | Adviser/Joint Secretary, Government of Mizoram, Planning Department | Member             |
| 7.                                            | Chief Scientific Officer, Science & Technology Department           | Member             |
| 8.                                            | Chief Informatics Officer, Information & Communication Technology   | Member             |

Source: Mizoram State E-Governance Society Website. <https://msegs.in> accessed on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2023

| <b>Table 4.2: Executive Members of MSeGS</b> |                                                                                                    |                    |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Sl.No</b>                                 | <b>Name</b>                                                                                        | <b>Designation</b> |
| 1.                                           | Secretary to the Government of Mizoram, Department of ICT                                          | Chairman           |
| 2.                                           | Representative of Finance Department not below the rank of Joint Secretary, Government of Mizoram  | Member             |
| 3.                                           | Representative of Planning Department not below the rank of Joint Secretary, Government of Mizoram | Member             |
| 4.                                           | Chief Informatics Officer, Information & Communication Technology Member Secretary                 | Member Secretary   |

Source: Mizoram State E-Governance Society Website. <https://msegs.in> accessed on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### **Functions:**

#### **The functions of the society are:**

- Formulate decisions concerning policy matters related to the governance, operation and oversight of the Society.

- Develop and implement Rules, Regulations, and Bye-laws for the administration of the Mizoram E-Governance Society including their amendment, modification or repeal as necessary.
- Review, approve and authorize the financial operations of the Society. Collect payments and user fees on behalf of other departments and agencies and allocate or utilize them as stipulated in the agreements.
- Delegate requisite powers to any Officer or Committees constituted by the Board.
- Establish project-based contractual roles and manage work on a job-work and/or outsourcing basis for the Society by determining the terms and conditions and the method of hiring such personnel.
- Negotiate, enter into and execute contracts and deeds on behalf of the Society independently of government assistance. Engage in legal and corporate agreements for the Society and represent it in all legal proceedings.
- Develop and implement comprehensive plans and programs for the Society's operations and manage its administration.
- Safeguard and ensure the appropriate utilization of the Society's funds and manage all its resources.
- Provide the necessary operational, administrative, technical, ministerial and other personnel under MSeGS on a job-work, contract or outsourcing basis to ensure efficient project operation and Society management and establish the conditions for hiring and dismissing such personnel by other departments and organizations as required.
- Consider and approve Resolutions on the Society's annual report, annual accounts and financial estimates as deemed appropriate.<sup>232</sup>

### **Mizoram Information Technology Policy 2001:**

The Mizoram IT Policy 2001 was adopted with a Mizoram Government decision dated 28.05.2001 aims to make Mizoram the most IT-literate state in the country and a global center of excellence in IT Education, Training, Research and Development.

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid

The policy focuses on promoting IT in various sectors such as E-Governance, Empowerment of the people and society, Education, Industry, Health, Rural Development, Agriculture, Tourism, IT for Masses and IT Enabled Services.<sup>233</sup>

The objectives of the Mizoram IT Policy include promoting IT industry, software, products, and services within the state, achieving total computer literacy by 2010, improving efficiency and productivity in governance, enhancing transparency and responsive attitude in governance, generating IT-skilled manpower and IT capacity-building, promoting IT skills among the youth, propelling growth of IT and IT-related activities, providing people-friendly interfacing between government and citizens, providing better information and interactive services to tourists, businessmen, entrepreneurs, farmers, agriculturists and rural populations improving revenue assessment and collection mechanisms, improving general employment opportunities and employment generation widespread use of IT in educational institutions, developing capabilities of governance as a catalyst for economic development by collaborative action and learning and proliferation of Internet, e-Governance, e-Commerce and e-Education.<sup>234</sup>

The policy classifies IT policies into nine categories:

1. Government: The government to establish a Task Force with members from various organizations and experts to oversee the implementation of programmes.
2. IT Department: The government to examine the possibility of creating the Department of IT to coordinate IT matters and implement IT projects.
3. Electronics Governance and Citizen Facilitation: The government to introduce IT literacy as compulsory for recruitment to government services.
4. Administrative Training Institute (ATI): The government is to strengthen the Administrative Training Institute for conducting IT Awareness courses and provide internet/intranet connectivity for district offices and directorates.
5. Special budget allocation every year for IT programmes completion.

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<sup>233</sup> Mizoram IT Policy 2001. <https://dict.mizoram.gov.in/page/mizoram-it-policy-2001> accessed on 17th January, 2025

<sup>234</sup> Ibid



6. Electronic Document Filing Facilities: The governments revamp and strengthen Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Ltd. (ZENICS), which play the role of facilitator and assist various government departments in selecting appropriate hardware, software and training programs.

7. Internet Access: All government regulations, schemes, forms, tenders, etc. to be put online.

8. Cyber Laws: The government implements cyber laws to combat piracy cases and illegal business practices and take appropriate action against Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) of creators, content and software through vigorous enforcement of relevant copyright laws.

9. Information Technology in Schools and Colleges: The government to establish a Study Team on IT Education under the chairmanship of the Director of Education Department to implement IT in education.<sup>235</sup>

### **E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram: Past**

Some of the E-Governance initiatives implemented in the state of Mizoram in the past are:

#### **1. Government of Mizoram Internet Backbone (GoMIB):**

National Informatics Centre provides computer and communication-based support to Mizoram State Government using its satellite-based computer communication network called (NICNET). Because of certain curbs and constraints in facilities provided by NIC, government departments unable to furnish with low internet connectivity. This issues can get better by enhancing and equipping the NIC with modern infrastructural facilities for which the Government of Mizoram has given all essential infrastructural facilities, such as a Web Server, DNS Server, Mail Server, Proxy Server, Remote Access Server, PSTN line not less than 30 connections, Dial-up Modem and Routers.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid

<sup>236</sup> op.cit Sinha, R.P. (2006). *E-Governance in India: Initiatives and Issues*. Concept Publishing Company.

## **2. *Secretariat Campus Area Networks:***

The Mizoram Government took the initiative to modernise all Secretariat offices with IT facilities for enhancing service delivery, fairness and modesty better competency and success in the government offices. The whole secretariat complex was connected through an optic fibre network and automatic switching technology. The secretariat campus area network solution can be classified into three areas/parts and act consequently.

Part I: Cabling Infrastructure

Part II: Networking Infrastructure

Part III: Internet Connectivity Infrastructure.<sup>237</sup>

## **3. *IT Learning Centre at Secretariat Complex:***

The centre provides an in-service IT training programme to all the staff and officers working under the State Government including State Civil Service officers. The trainees have been taught various computer application software as well as the most recent IT trends. The Mizoram Government aimed to make IT literacy mandatory for government service recruitment. It also aims to make all existing government employees IT literate.<sup>238</sup>

## **4. *IT Entrepreneurs Development Programme for Educated Unemployed Youths of Mizoram:***

This project aims to improve the skills and capacity of educated unemployed youth, including unemployed engineers and graduates, to generate sustainable self-employment through an IT entrepreneurship development programme.<sup>239</sup>

## **5. *E-Governance Plan:***

The Mizoram Government has taken cues from the Central Government's approach to bringing E-Governance to departments, as well as ideas from successful stories in other states. Because Mizoram is small in size and population, it is well

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid

<sup>238</sup> Ibid

<sup>239</sup> Ibid

suited for introducing SMART governance, which means improving digital services to citizens and businesses through SMART governance.<sup>240</sup>

#### **6. *Mizoram Portal:***

The Government of Mizoram envisions its Portal as a large website with a large number of Mizoram Database designs in the form of graphics, animations, texts, pictures, and so on, as well as a Search Engine, links to other sites and a Mail Server.<sup>241</sup>

#### **7. *Multimedia Content Creation Centre at ZENICS:***

A Multimedia Content Creation Centre was established to encourage creativity and use it to provide self-employment to educated unemployed people in Mizoram through content-fuelling entrepreneurship, extensive and productive education, and training in rural, social, and economic development areas. It aid in the provision of professional training in multimedia content creation to individuals who could then go on to teach further training at their institutions act as producers/entrepreneurs or work in the content creation industry.<sup>242</sup>

#### **8. *Community Information Centre (CIC):***

In the year 1999 Ministry of Information Technology (now Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, MeitY), the Government of India prefers to install at least one Computer Centre in the entire eight northeastern states. And also, the region is intended to connect and bridge with the central server for disseminating information and partaking Internet and e-mail facilities. The Community Information Centre (CIC) was the name given to this project. The hardware and software were purchased and installed under the auspices of MIT under this scheme. Each development block and district headquarters are outfitted with computers in a LAN and connected via V-SAT to a central facility in New Delhi. The citizens access the

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid

<sup>241</sup> Ibid

<sup>242</sup> Ibid

Internet at the block and district levels and switch information through E-mail, Chat, and File Transfer Protocol (FTP) with the help of these centres.<sup>243</sup>

### **9. IT Education in School:**

With a strong interest in IT and IT-enabled services and vocations, the state has attempted to universalize computer and IT knowledge by making it a compulsory subject for primary and middle sections(Class III to VIII) and an elective subject for High School and Higher Sections(Class IX to XII). This project proposal for a 'Computer Education Plan for the State of Mizoram' was put forward to the then Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India (now Ministry of Education), which provided ten computer systems for 40 selected institutions during the financial year 2001-02.<sup>244</sup>

### **Present E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram:**

The present E-Governance initiative in Mizoram is undertaken by the Mizoram State E-Governance Society (MSeGS). It created under the Society Registration Act XXI of 1860 in the year 2005 as the State Designated Agency, and Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Ltd (ZENICS) as the implementing partner of E-Governance projects in Mizoram till 2014, because ZENICS Pvt Ltd was disbanded in the year 2014 due to an unknown reason. Now Mizoram State e-Governance Society is the main agency for implementing E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram.

Some of the present E-Governance initiatives in the State of Mizoram are:

#### **1) e-District:**

The Government of India, through the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) allocated funding for this initiative as part of the National E-Governance Plan (NeGP), with a total budget of Rupees 19.23 crore. The project was

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<sup>243</sup> Ibid

<sup>244</sup> Ibid

executed over a span of four years including three years dedicated to operation and maintenance. The primary objective was to significantly enhance the efficiency of district operations thereby improving the services available to citizens. The initiative aimed to automate the entire workflow and internal processes of district administration, facilitating the seamless integration of various departments to support electronic service delivery. The project focused on specific high-demand services at the district level and sought to implement backend computerization to enable the electronic delivery of these services through Common Service Centres (CSCs) in a sustainable manner adhering to a predetermined timeline.<sup>245</sup>

## **2) *Online RTI:***

This Portal is a joint initiative of the Secretariat Administration Department (SAD) and the Mizoram Information Commission (MIC), intending to empower citizens and promote accountability in government operations. Furthermore, it is a significant step toward informing citizens about the government's activities and also provides a timely response to citizen requests for government information. As (of June 2025) this portal has received 3125 RTI Applications.<sup>246</sup>

## **3) *Mizoram State Data Centre (SDC):***

To have a successful E-Governance project implementation in Mizoram, SDC is one of the core components that started with the NeGP. The SDC is a place where all government official information, documents, and data are stored. And this Centre (SDC) connects and links with the State Wide Area Network (SWAN), now people from rural and remote areas can access government services through CSCs. Mizoram State Data Centre was inaugurated by then Chief Minister Lalthanhawla of the Congress government in August 2014.<sup>247</sup>

## **4) *Mizoram Scholarship Portal:***

Before the inception of the Scholarship Portal in Mizoram, a large number of students applying for scholarships fill their particular details manually through forms

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<sup>245</sup> Mizoram State e-Governance Society Website.<https://mseg.in/> accessed on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid

<sup>247</sup> Ibid

for every academic block year. Now, the Government of Mizoram and its technical partner MSeGS have created a common platform for all beneficiaries and applicants for all kinds of scholarships and related schemes where applicants now can create an account and store their details. Mizoram State e-Governance Society has successfully implemented a Mizoram Scholarship Portal benefitting students and other stakeholders.<sup>248</sup>

**5) *Common Service Centre (CSC):***

Common Service Centres is a platform where citizens easily avail and access government services at their doorsteps. It is also an important tool for having a transparent government. Initially, around 136 CSCs have been planned to be established in different cities, districts and villages of Mizoram. The CSCs are owned and operated by VLE (Village Level Entrepreneur) under the Service Centre Agency through a franchise system. Now, CSCs have been functioning in many localities in the state of Mizoram. The CSCs in Mizoram have been discussed separately in detail in Chapter 5.<sup>249</sup>

**6) *State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) and State Portal:***

The State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) is engineered to minimize direct interactions between governmental departments while enhancing the provision of services to citizens. This is accomplished through the implementation of standardized interfaces, messaging protocols and routing mechanisms which enable various entities, including departments and both front-end and back-end service providers to ensure seamless integration of their applications and data. In alignment with the E-Governance Standards framework, the SSDG aims to achieve a high degree of interoperability among independent and diverse organizations.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>248</sup> Ibid

<sup>249</sup> Ibid

<sup>250</sup> Ibid

**7) *District Intranet Connection:***

The District Intranet Connection project, funded by North Eastern Council (NEC) Shillong aims to provide stable and high-speed internet connections to all district headquarters offices and schools within the district capital. The project costs Rupees 160 lakh and aims to enable the provision of various e-Services at the district headquarters and submit MIS reports to the state headquarters and central government. The objective is to create a high-capacity, open-standard and scalable network for data, video, and voice traffic between different government offices. This enables efficient service delivery to citizens, minimizing travel time and costs.<sup>251</sup>

**8) *Implementation of G-PON Technology in Mizoram:***

The G-PON Technology project, funded by the Government of Mizoram under the New Economic Development Programme (NEDP) Scheme, aims to improve the existing network infrastructure for internet connectivity to all Secretariat offices and District headquarters. The project costs Rupees 450 lakhs and aims to provide reliable internet backbone connectivity to all district headquarters. The project also aims to establish good communication infrastructure facilities in all government offices, establish reliable video conferencing facilities, enable responsive government for quick disposal of grievances or applications, minimize waiting time and cost for citizens and empower government employees with high-speed internet connectivity for better governance and delivery services. The project is to provide efficient and effective delivery of government services to citizens.<sup>252</sup>

**9) *Ease of Doing Business (EoDB):***

The project aims to create a single window clearance portal that provides convenient and efficient services to investors and businesses throughout their life cycle. This enables entrepreneurs to submit one integrated application for multiple licenses and make consolidated payments for various licenses, reducing the number

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid

<sup>252</sup> Ibid

of procedures, costs, and time taken to obtain approvals. The main objectives include designing and implementing an online system for investors to access information on state approvals for establishing businesses, implementing an online Common Application Form (CAF) and ensuring public availability of information on land banks for industrial use. The initiative aims to reduce costs and decrease the duration of the department's application processing. It also seeks to minimize the intermediaries between investors and the government and to provide continuous online government services. This approach allows government departments to allocate more time to the efficient delivery of services as the labour intensive task of data entry is already managed on their behalf.<sup>253</sup>

***10) Online Property Return System for Group A and B Employees of the Government of Mizoram:***

The Vigilance Department, Government of Mizoram aimed to automate the property returns filing process to provide faster and more efficient examination and verification. The Property Returns Online system has a built-in self-assessment system, generating records of all transactions made within the system, making the filing process simpler and more transparent. The system also automates the returns approval/rejection system for effective decision making and planning. It has a monitoring mechanism to track returns files and identify any process shortfalls by applicants. SMS and application Message Notifications are sent to top-level officials and mid-level officials involved in day to day monitoring and authorizing work at the department. The project was implemented by the Mizoram State e-Governance Society. Thus, the overall objectives of the project include providing an online system for employees to file returns, developing a centralized repository of filed returns, digital approval/rejection of filed returns, notification/information dissemination using SMS and/or email, centralized MIS on officer statistics in the State, IT enabling internal processes, automation of workflow and internal processes, easy access to department services and facilities for generating reports both manually

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<sup>253</sup> Ibid



and automatically. The system also aims to provide easy access to the property records of every Group A & B Officer under the Government of Mizoram.<sup>254</sup>

***11) Right To Public Service Portal (RTPS): A request platform service for citizens of Mizoram that is highly customizable as per the requirements of the user***

The Mizoram Government aims to provide transparent, accountable, and responsive administration to its citizens. In this regard, the Right to Public Services Act, 2015, was legislated in 2015 to deliver public services within a stipulated time limit. As of (May 2024) there are 192 services available through this portal. The Mizoram State e-Governance Society developed an online portal for service delivery under the Act which has been successfully implemented in the state. The project, sanctioned by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG) aims to increase transparency, public accountability and reduce corruption by imposing penalties for late and delayed service delivery.<sup>255</sup>

***12) Inventory Management System: Enhancing E-Government infrastructure, information access using IMS to provide better G2G services and efficient MIS for better decision making***

The Mizoram State e-Governance Society initiated the Inventory Management System (IMS) project to enhance the state's E-Governance programme by streamlining the approval process for specific indent items for departmental officers through automation. This comprehensive system which includes software, solution definition, and support, was successfully piloted at the Secretariat Administration Department (SAD) of the Government of Mizoram. The project was awarded the Skoch Order of Merit 2016 in the 'service delivery' category, recognizing exceptional government organizations in sectors such as Health, Education, Rural Development/Panchayati Raj, Urban Development, Finance and Security. The primary objectives of the project include establishing a unified IT platform for all government departments, optimizing inventory management and requisition

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid

<sup>255</sup> Ibid

processes, automating workflows, ensuring easy access to departmental services, and providing both manual and automatic report generation capabilities. The initiative aims to equip departments with tools for effective programme implementation and service delivery.<sup>256</sup>

***13) Inner Line Pass Portal: Application, renewal and other services related to Inner Line Permit for the state of Mizoram***

The Inner Line Pass (ILP) is a necessary document for entry into Mizoram, which is traditionally done manually. It can be obtained from various sources, including the Liaison Officer, Government of Mizoram, and Mizoram Houses located in Kolkata, Silchar, Shillong, Guwahati and New Delhi. The Government employees traveling for official purposes are exempt from obtaining ILP but must carry a photo identification card. Tourists arriving by air can obtain temporary passes from the Security Officer at Lengpui Airport, Aizawl, or a temporary permit at the Security Check Gate at Vairengte. The Mizoram State e-Governance Society has developed an online system for obtaining ILP applications, which includes details such as travel dates, district, name, purpose of visit, local reference details, permit category, and supporting documents like Aadhaar, Driving License, Passport, PAN Card, Voter ID Card and Ration Card. The system aims to improve the manual ILP system, increase functional efficiency, generate reports manually and automatically and provide more convenient, efficient and transparent services for travellers visiting Mizoram.<sup>257</sup>

***14) Content Management System: Providing a centralized theme and Graphic User Interface management for different sectors, units, and divisions of various Departments in Mizoram***

The Content Management System (CMS) is an initiative undertaken by the Mizoram State e-Governance Society. This web application facilitates the

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<sup>256</sup> Ibid

<sup>257</sup> Ibid

publication, editing, modification, organization, deletion and maintenance of content through a centralized interface. It establishes procedures for managing workflows in a collaborative environment across all government department websites. Functioning as a digital asset management system the CMS stores documents, videos, images, phone numbers and personal information. It enables the storage, control, revision, semantic enrichment and publication of documentation. Furthermore, the CMS is capable of cataloguing and indexing content, compiling or assembling content during runtime and delivering it to specific visitors in a customized manner. The project was awarded the ‘Skoch Platinum Award 2016’ by the Skoch Summit, recognizing it as a leading achievement in smart governance. The primary objective of the CMS project is to develop an efficient system for disseminating information to citizens thereby enhancing transparency and accountability in the information dissemination process and reducing the workload of departments.<sup>258</sup>

***15) Thenzawl Golf Resort: Exploring and booking the first and only golf course resort in Mizoram has gotten much easier***

Thenzawl, a popular tourist destination in North East India, located in Mizoram offers a variety of tourism activities including ecotourism, adventure tourism, golf tourism, wellness tourism and sports tourism. To promote these activities, a modern attraction called Thenzawl Golf Resort was established. The resort, rated as one of the best all-season golf courses in the region which features 105 acres of space and 75 acres of golfing area. It features an 18-hole golf course with a shared fairway and automated sprinkler irrigation system by Rain Bird, USA. The resort features 30 Eco-Log Huts, a cafeteria, an open-air food court, a reception area and a waiting lounge all constructed with Siberian Pinewood and furnished with world-class furniture and fixtures.<sup>259</sup>

The main objective of this project is to provide a full-fledged online booking system for all facilities in Thenzawl Golf Resort. The site aims to provide a glimpse

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid

<sup>259</sup> Ibid

into Thenzawl and its unique local attractions, listing all available facilities, including club membership details. The website also offers 24x7 online booking for features such as day passes, convention halls, log huts, camera and video permissions and car rental services across Mizoram.<sup>260</sup>

**16) *Mizoram Tourism: Glimpse into Mystical Mizoram with the new tourism website and mobile applications***

Mizoramtourism.com is a new platform launched by the Mizoram Tourism Department, Government of Mizoram to provide a comprehensive guide to Mizoram, offering information on various districts, locals and activities like hiking, paragliding, camping, cave exploration and fishing. The site offers features such as directions, local festival dates, restaurant lists, car rental options, travel agents and tour guides. It also integrates online booking for affiliated lodges from the Mizoram Tourism Department. The project aims to provide a comprehensive experience for tourists interested in visiting Mizoram offering insights into the region's history, unique locals and tourist attractions. The site also offers a search feature for the best tourist spots by allowing users to filter their search by selecting activities. Online booking is available for affiliated lodges and the site also lists tourist guides and operators working under the Mizoram Tourism Department. Contact numbers for car rentals and hotels are also available on the site.<sup>261</sup>

**17) *Employment Exchange Mizoram:***

Employment Exchange Mizoram is an online platform that connects job seekers and employers in both public and private sectors. It allows job seekers to register their profiles including skills, experience, education and employers to search for qualified candidates based on their job requirements. Employers can post job vacancies, search for and shortlist suitable candidates and communicate directly with job seekers. This streamlines the job search and recruitment process, saving time and resources. The platform also integrates online payment for registration fees. Thus,

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<sup>260</sup> Ibid

<sup>261</sup> Ibid

the main objectives of the project are to create an online platform for job seekers and employers, offering online employment registration, renewal, job post exploration, notifications for job openings, registration for employers from public and private sectors, and jobseeker data and metrics report generation. As (of June 2025), there are 17,266 active jobseekers registered under this scheme with 10,199 male and 7058 female. The platform is available on the Google Play Store and the App Store.<sup>262</sup>

***18) Digital File Tracking System: Government Department files can now be tracked and handled easily using any smart device***

The Digital File Tracking System was created for the Department of Personnel & Administrative Reforms Good Governance Cell (GGC) to manage receipts and files. The system includes features for recording receipts, updating status, opening new files, tracking file movement, dispatching letters and records management. The application has been successful as a pilot project in DP&AR GGC and is set to be rolled out for all Secretariat Offices. The software aims to simplify the management of thousands of files in a department. Users can track file history, including access, changes and access history. Administrators can view access to specific files or folders. Users can receive notifications when files are changed or updated. The software also allows users to send files to other departments making it easier to locate specific files. The software is available on the Google Play Store and App Store.<sup>263</sup>

***19) Leave Application Management System: Applying and Managing Leave for Government Employees has gotten a lot easier***

The Online Leave Application System is a platform developed by the DP&AR to streamline the leave application process for government employees and departments. The system is designed to increase efficiency, ease of application and automation in leave management. The system is responsive to Android mobile and is maintained by MSeGS. The main objective is to digitize and manage government employee leave

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid

<sup>263</sup> Ibid

records. The system allows for quick and easy submission of leave requests, allowing managers to review and approve them without the need for physical paperwork. The system can apply for all types of leaves, including casual leave, equated leave and medical leave. It promotes transparency, allowing real-time status views for employees and managers. The system ensures proper documentation of leave requests and approvals leading to cost savings by eliminating the need for physical paperwork.<sup>264</sup>

**20) *Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PM-JAY): Management of PM-JAY funding and expenditure reports for All district hospitals***

Claim funds provided by the state health department are financial resources used to cover the costs of providing medical care to patients. These funds are typically disbursed based on claims submitted by hospitals for services rendered to patients covered under state-funded healthcare programs, such as Medicaid. The PM-JAY is a World Bank-funded scheme that provides funding to all Empaneled hospitals in Mizoram to improve healthcare facilities. Quarterly reports are submitted by the Block Account Manager for these hospitals which are then vetted by the State Health Agency. The website aims to facilitate seamless transactions between hospitals and the State Health Agency by offering features such as easy submission of reports, viewing hospital status, SMS notifications and generating various categories of reports for funding statistics.<sup>265</sup>

**21) *mCOVID-19: Providing precautions and protection for the citizens of Mizoram from Covid- 19***

The mCovid19 web and mobile application was created by MSeGS to support the Government of Mizoram's efforts, particularly through the Department of Health. This initiative focuses on keeping users informed about COVID-19 risks, best practices, and essential advisories. The app offers a seamless experience for citizens

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<sup>264</sup> Ibid

<sup>265</sup> Ibid

by allowing them to easily apply online for entry permits for goods, flights, road access, exemptions, inter-district permissions and quarantine facilities.<sup>266</sup>

**22) e-Roll for Mizoram State Election Commission:**

The e-Roll portal was created for the Mizoram State Election Commission (SEC) to assist its officers in gathering and consolidating electoral rolls of voters across the state. This platform enables the commission to effortlessly collect statistics (data and records, etc) and produce reports from various constituencies in a faster way. Additionally, the portal includes a feature that allows voters to verify their identities using their ID.<sup>267</sup>

**23) Power Billing: Paying Electricity bill from the comfort of your home using smart devices**

The Power & Electricity Department of the Government of Mizoram rolled out the Power Bill Online Payment Portal in April 2017 for making it easier for consumers to pay their electricity bills online. The portal has been developed and maintained by the Mizoram State e-Governance Society and is hosted at the Mizoram State Data Centre. Currently, there are 65,856 registered consumers across 14 sub-divisional offices within the Power & Electricity Department. Additionally, the portal is fully integrated with the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) for the benefit of the consumers.<sup>268</sup>

**24) Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC) Online: Registering for Mizoram Public Service Commission conducted exams is made more accessible**

The Mizoram Public Service Commission has launched an innovative application created by MSeGS, streamlining the online management of job applications for vacancies within the State Government. This system allows the commission to efficiently register applicants, process and verify their documents digitally and

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<sup>266</sup> Ibid

<sup>267</sup> Ibid

<sup>268</sup> Ibid

publish admit cards and results. Additionally, a mobile application has been developed to facilitate the verification and authentication of admit cards presented by candidates during their qualifying examinations.<sup>269</sup>

**25) Revenue Tax: Perform Revenue Tax Calculation and Surveyor Detailing in a more efficient way**

The Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) has embarked on a project titled “Revenue Tax Calculation and Surveyor Detailing” for the Land Revenue and Settlement Department of Mizoram. This initiative entails the documentation of details pertaining to various categories such as Agricultural Land Legal Services Corporation (LSC) or House Side LSC in conjunction with the grade level (1,2 or 3) and land specifics including area and unit (square meter or hectare) for the purpose of revenue tax calculation. Furthermore, the project incorporates surveyor detailing which includes a personalized internal schedule for each surveyor. On 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 the Chief Minister of Mizoram, Pu Lalduhoma inaugurated the state’s new e-Ram online service portal marking a significant advancement in the modernization of land records and services. This portal developed by the Land Revenue & Settlement Department with technical assistance from Lailen Consultancy is designed to streamline and enhance access to land-related processes. Funded with Rupees 6.4 crore from the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), the e-Ram portal was initially piloted in the Aizawl District. It offers 27 services provided by the Revenue Department, accessible to individuals through Common Service Centers (CSCs) across the state.<sup>270</sup>

**26) Fish Info: Enabling the Fisheries Department to Verify Fish Ponds directly through the Application**

The Fish Info application portal, created by MSeGS for the Fisheries Department, Government of Mizoram streamlines essential processes through innovative

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<sup>269</sup> Ibid

<sup>270</sup> Ibid



information technology. The platform transforms traditional methods of physical registration, verification, and documentation into an efficient workflow that is fully managed by the system. Notably, the department can now verify fish ponds via Google Maps by removing the need for on-site visits. As (of February 2021), the Fisheries Department took over the management of the portal while MSeGS continues to provide ongoing maintenance and support for the system.<sup>271</sup>

**27) Public Works Department Road Cutting: Request road-cutting application and directly pay for road cutting fees using the application**

The PWD Road Cutting application portal has been launched by MSeGS for the Public Works Department (PWD), Government of Mizoram to streamline the process for domestic applicants seeking road cutting permits. Recognizing that most requests come from individual users rather than commercial businesses, the PWD aimed to create a user-friendly portal similar to those developed for similar services under the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) initiative. The MSeGS is responsible for the ongoing operations and maintenance of this portal for the PWD Department.<sup>272</sup>

**28) Land Tax and Zoramchhiah Payment: Providing Citizens an Easy Method to Pay Land Tax and Zoramchhiah**

The Zoramchhiah and Land Tax software of the Government of Mizoram aims to improve efficiency in tax payment by integrating SMS-based reminders and notifications. This reduces manpower for collecting Land Tax and Zoramchhiah, making the process eco-friendly. Users can start paying these taxes directly from any smart device by visiting <https://landtax.mizoram.gov.in/>. The software main objectives include providing a convenient, efficient and reliable online platform for paying Land Tax and Zoramchhiah enabling better examination of tax payments by

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid

<sup>272</sup> Ibid

the government, and offering a convenient system for viewing paid Land Tax and Zoramchhiah.<sup>273</sup>

| <b>Table 4.3: Allocation of Budget Expenditure by ICT Department, Government of Mizoram during 2019-20 to 2023-24</b> |                |                |                |                |                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <i>Rupees in lakhs</i>                                                                                                |                |                |                |                |                |
| <b>Budget Head</b>                                                                                                    | <b>2019-20</b> | <b>2020-21</b> | <b>2021-22</b> | <b>2022-23</b> | <b>2023-24</b> |
| Administrative & Establishment                                                                                        | 311.84         | 298.86         | 328.05         | 365.59         | 382.40         |
| IT Manpower Development                                                                                               | 39.00          | .75            | 1.00           | 1.00           | 1.00           |
| IT Promotional Development                                                                                            | 27.40          | 1.00           | 1.00           | 1.00           | 5.00           |
| IT Infrastructure Development                                                                                         | 347.20         | 12.23          | 52.10          | 24.90          | 32.90          |
| Promotional & Development of Society (MSeGS)                                                                          | 112.82         | 111.21         | 107.23         | 111.00         | 122.08         |
| <b>TOTAL :</b>                                                                                                        | <b>838.26</b>  | <b>424.05</b>  | <b>489.38</b>  | <b>503.49</b>  | <b>535.38</b>  |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL :</b>                                                                                                  | <b>2790.56</b> |                |                |                |                |

Source: RTI Application answered by SPIO, Directorate of ICT Department, Government of Mizoram dated 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### **On-Going ICT Project, Government of Mizoram:**

Under the ICT Department, Government of Mizoram, there are some of the ICT projects which are going on, they are:

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid

### **1) Bharat Net project:**

Bharat Net Project (BNP) is a Central Government Project under the Rural Telecom Project which aims to provide broadband connectivity in rural areas. Mizoram was also covered under this project. The Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) is the implementing agency and finished installing broadband connectivity in 41 villages under phase I. Under phase II a VSAT communication system has been installed in 480 Villages and 20 more villages are to be covered. Presently, they are proposing a new project under the amended Bharat Net Scheme.<sup>274</sup>

### **2) 4G Saturation project:**

This 4G Saturation Project is a project that aims at covering all rural areas where mobile connectivity is not available. In Mizoram, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) conducted a survey related to mobile connectivity uncovered villages, as per the rules if a village has signal strength of 60 percent with  $RSRP \geq -100$  dBm then it should be considered as an uncovered village. So, based on the survey a total of 53 towers are still to be installed in order to provide mobile connectivity in uncovered villages while 13 towers have been installed so far.<sup>275</sup>

### **3) 5G Services Rollout:**

The 5G services in Aizawl were started by Reliance Jio on January 2023 and subsequently by Airtel on 14 February 2023. Right now 5G services have been covered in all District Capitals in Mizoram and will also be provided gradually in every village. Currently, there are 402 5G towers in Mizoram (136 Airtel & 266 Jio), other service providers BSNL and Vodafone still wait 5G license and hence it cannot provide 5G services in Mizoram.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>274</sup> RTI Application received from SPIO Directorate of Information, Communication & Technology, Government of Mizoram, dated 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024

<sup>275</sup> Ibid

<sup>276</sup> Ibid

#### **4) Online Right of Way (RoW) Portal:**

An Online RoW Portal (<https://row.mizoram.gov.in/>) is an E-governance initiative taken by the ICT Department, Government of Mizoram. This Portal is very useful and more accountable for Telecom Service Providers where they can easily apply for permission to install towers in the State of Mizoram. Till today a sum of Rupees 17,67,750 (License fees) has been collected from different Telecom Service Providers.<sup>277</sup>

#### **A. Initiatives under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK)**

**1) IT Skill Development & Training Centre:** Establishment of IT Skill Development & Training Centre in Minority Concentration Areas of Mizoram under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) a Centrally Sponsored Scheme has been worked out by the ICT Department, under this project an IT Skill Development & Training Centre has been so far created in seven minority concentrated areas. Those areas are:

- i. Chawngte Block
- ii. Lawngtlai Block
- iii. Bungtlang 'S' Block
- iv. Zawlnuam Block
- v. West Phaileng Block
- vi. Lungen Block
- vii. West Bunghmun Block

M/s Okahito Consultancy Services are the implementing agencies and the total estimated amount is Rupees 693 Lakhs.<sup>278</sup>

#### **B. Initiatives under Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SACSI):**

1) “Establishment of Optical Ground Wire (OPGW) & All-Dielectric Self Supporting (ADSS) optical fibre cable for backbone connectivity of district and blocks in Mizoram” project has been carried out under Scheme for Special Assistance to States

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<sup>277</sup> Ibid

<sup>278</sup> Ibid

for Capital Investment (SASCI). For the fiscal year (2022-23), Rupees 5000.00 lakhs has been sanctioned by the Central Government on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The Mizoram Government has selected M/s ZENICS as the implementing agency and M/s Ernst & Young as the Project consultant.

2) “*Mizoram e-services portal and up gradation of Mizoram State Data Centre & Cloud enablement*” is a project received under SASCI (2022-23) where Rupees 2250.00 Lakhs sanctioned by the Central Government. This project aims at streamlining all different Government Portals under one Portal. Besides this, Mizoram State Data Centre’s IT equipment is upgraded with modern technology. For this project M/s Interlace India Pvt Ltd is the implementing agency

***C. Initiatives under National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD):***

1) A sum of Rupees 450 Lakhs has been sanctioned under NABARD (RIDF-XXVII) for the “*Establishment of 15 Village Knowledge Centres (VKCs) in Mizoram*”. These VKCs especially benefit the local farmers by providing information related to farming and agriculture schemes in the country. Also, each centre is to be taken care of by the Village Level Entrepreneur (VLE), who has proper IT Knowledge. Different online services can be avail by the people in these centres which include banking, e-services, form submission, etc. The Government of Mizoram has selected M/s Junior Consultancy Service for establishing these VKCs.<sup>279</sup>

***D. Initiatives under Software Development:***

**1) e-District Version 2.0 - DC Online (<https://dconline.mizoram.gov.in>):**

This Online Portal is created for easy access to different certificates from the Deputy Commissioner’s Office which includes Income, Tribal, Residential, and Permanent Residential. In Mizoram, CSCs are the ones where citizens can apply for these services.

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid

**2) Myanmar Refugee Registration System (MRRS)**  
(<https://mrrs.mizoram.gov.in>):

This portal is for the Myanmar people who fled from Myanmar to Mizoram due to unforeseen circumstances. From this online portal, a registration can be done from the Deputy Commissioner's office and an Identity Card will be issued.

**3) Leave Application Management System (<https://e-leave.mizoram.gov.in>):**

This Portal is for a Group 'A' government employees for applying leave and is currently following this new system.

**4) Government Website Content Management System (CMS):**

Under this system, more than 200 Government of Mizoram Websites have been integrated with Meri Pachaana a Single Sign-on system which is an outcome of the Digital India Week introduced by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing(C-DAC) in the year 2022.<sup>280</sup>

| Table 4.4: Result of the Mizoram Government Online Awards, 2023-2024 |               |                           |                          |                             |                                     |                                                |                      |                                  |                          |                                                                       |                                                                    |                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sl. No.                                                              | Rank/Position | Department & Domain Name  | Web Presence             |                             |                                     |                                                |                      |                                  | Interaction              |                                                                       |                                                                    |                                   |
|                                                                      |               |                           | Organization Information | Citizen Charter Information | Notification /PR/OM/ Circular/ News | Other information relevant to the Organization | Compliance with GIWG | Overall information Architecture | Search engine visibility | Digital resources form/ tender/ reports, brochures etc(pdf doc.etc..) | Online Grievance Channel (Contact /email/ Ph.no. /Social Media Ac. | Effective use of Pictures & Video |
|                                                                      |               | <b>Points Available →</b> | <b>10</b>                | <b>6</b>                    | <b>20</b>                           | <b>8</b>                                       | <b>10</b>            | <b>6</b>                         | <b>3</b>                 | <b>6</b>                                                              | <b>3</b>                                                           | <b>3</b>                          |

<sup>280</sup> Ibid

|   |    |                                                                                          |    |   |    |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1  | Transport<br>transport.mizoram.gov.in                                                    | 10 | 6 | 14 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 2 | 5  | MPSC<br>mpsc.mizoram.gov.in                                                              | 10 | 0 | 15 | 6 | 9  | 5 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 5  | Land Revenue & Settlement<br>landrevenue.mizoram.gov.in                                  | 10 | 5 | 12 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 4 | 10 | Food, Civil Supplies &<br>Consumer Affairs<br>fcsc.mizoram.gov.in                        | 10 | 6 | 17 | 7 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 |
| 5 |    | Deputy Commissioner, Aizawl<br>dcaizawl.mizoram.gov.in<br>[or]aizawl.nic.in              | 9  | 0 | 12 | 6 | 9  | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 6 |    | Deputy Commissioner,<br>Lawngtlai<br>dclawngtlai.mizoram.gov.in<br>[or] lawngtlai.nic.in | 10 | 4 | 5  | 4 | 9  | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 |

Source: Department of Information & Communication Technology, GoM.  
<https://dict.mizoram.gov.in/uploads/attachments> accessed on 22nd May 2025.

|         |               | Table 4.5: Result of the Mizoram Government Online Awards, 2023-2024<br>continuation..... |                                                                     |                                |                                        |                             |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                 |
|---------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Sl. No. | Rank/Position | Department<br>&<br>Domain Name                                                            | Transaction                                                         |                                |                                        |                             | Transformation                                                           |                                                                   |                                                 |
|         |               |                                                                                           | Online fee payment through 3rd party services (mobile app/wallet or | Integration of Payment Gateway | Online Services of the Citizen Charter | Online Application Tracking | Whether Services in citizen charter are available e fully online without | Integration with other services(internal or external) through API | Availability of Native Mobile App(Android & iOS |
|         |               | Points Available →                                                                        | 3                                                                   | 3                              | 7                                      | 2                           | 6                                                                        | 2                                                                 | 2                                               |
| 1       | 1             | Transport<br>transport.mizoram.gov.in                                                     | 2                                                                   | 2                              | 4                                      | 2                           | 2                                                                        | 1                                                                 | 2                                               |
| 2       | 5             | MPSC<br>mpsc.mizoram.gov.in                                                               | 3                                                                   | 3                              | 4                                      | 2                           | 3                                                                        | 0                                                                 | 2                                               |
| 3       | 5             | Land Revenue & Settlement<br>landrevenue.mizoram.gov.in                                   | 3                                                                   | 3                              | 4                                      | 2                           | 2                                                                        | 0                                                                 | 0                                               |

|   |    |                                                                                                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 10 | <b>Food, Civil Supplies &amp; Consumer Affairs</b><br><b>fcscs.mizoram.gov.in</b>                          | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 |    | <b>Deputy Commissioner, Aizawl</b><br><b>dcaizawl.mizoram.gov.in</b><br><b>[or]aizawl.nic.in</b>           | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 |    | <b>Deputy Commissioner, Lawngtlai</b><br><b>dclawngtlai.mizoram.gov.in</b><br><b>[or] lawngtlai.nic.in</b> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: Department of Information & Communication Technology, GoM  
<https://dict.mizoram.gov.in/uploads/attachments> accessed on 22nd May 2025

The above two tables provide an analysis that evaluates the digital services and online presence of various government departments in Mizoram. However, here only the top Four Departments and the Deputy Commissioner's office of Aizawl and Lawngtlai are analysed.

Table 4.4 assesses web presence and interaction, examining elements such as organizational information, details of citizen charters, notifications, adherence to guidelines, visibility in search engines, availability of digital resources, channels for grievances, and the use of multimedia. In this evaluation, the Transport Department stands out with robust information architecture and compliance, while other departments exhibit deficiencies in citizen charters and grievance handling mechanisms.

Table 4.5 focuses on assessing the capabilities for online transactions and transformations, emphasizing criteria such as online fee payments, integration of payment gateways, services related to citizen charters, tracking of applications, API-based integrations, and the availability of mobile applications. The Transport Department achieves the highest ranking, demonstrating excellence in digital payments and online services while the Mizoram Public Service Commission (MPSC) and Land Revenue departments perform at a moderate level, and the Deputy Commissioner both Aizawl and Lawngtlai offices receive low scores which indicates in a limited adoption of digital technologies. In summary, the evaluation identifies



the Transport Department as the leading performer, while also highlighting significant digital disparities, especially the Deputy Commissioner offices in both districts thereby emphasizing the necessity for improved E-Governance initiatives throughout Mizoram.

In conclusion, Mizoram has established a robust framework for E-Governance, implementing initiatives that enhance governance, transparency, and service delivery. Nevertheless, on-going investment, development of skills, and expansion of infrastructure are essential to realize the vision of Digital Mizoram in accordance with national objectives. The state's emphasis on services centered on citizens, digitization of rural areas, and administrative efficiency positions it as a prospective leader in E-Governance within the North-Eastern region.

## CHAPTER V

### COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN INDIA AND MIZORAM

This chapter focuses on the implementation of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in India and Mizoram aiming to explore the initiatives associated with CSCs, their objectives, and goals. Also, the chapter emphasizes the various services provided by CSCs and their transactions.

#### **Common Service Centres in India:**

Common Service Centres (CSCs) constitute a crucial component of the National E-Governance Plan (NeGP), was approved by the Government of India in 2006. This initiative seeks to establish 100,000 CSCs to serve all 600,000 census villages maintaining a 1:6 ratio to ensure equitable distribution across rural India. This endeavor is part of the National Common Minimum Programme commitment to implementing E-Governance on a large scale. The CSCs operate as access points for delivering e-Services from the government to citizens by establishing a physical ICT infrastructure for service delivery. This approach facilitates transparent service delivery and reduces the necessity for citizens to visit government offices.<sup>281</sup>

Initiated in 2015, the Digital India initiative encompasses a programme known as the Common Services Centres (CSC) which has been further developed and enhanced under the designation CSC 2.0. This revised programme seeks to optimize service delivery through a unified technological platform, thereby facilitating access to electronic services particularly Government to Citizen (G2C) services, for individuals nationwide. The primary aim of the CSCs is to establish at least one center in every Gram Panchayat or village thereby covering all 2.50 lakh Gram Panchayats across the country. The scheme's principal objective is to create a self-sustaining network of over 2.50 lakh Common Services Centres at the Gram

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<sup>281</sup> Inayat, Anaita Sabhikhi.(2017) 'No Man's Land: Tale of Common Service Centre', The Hindu Centre for Politics and Public Policy.<https://www.thehinducentre.com/thearena/current-issues/article9881757ece>.

Panchayat level in alignment with Digital India's three core components: the Internet Access Programme, the National Rural Internet Mission and the provision of various citizen focused services. By emphasizing the schemes sustainability and rural accessibility it forms a nationwide network that addresses the country's regional, geographic, linguistic and cultural diversity, thereby supporting the Government's vision of a socially, financially and digitally inclusive society. As anticipated by the Government of India, CSCs have become instrumental in extending technology and services to citizens particularly in rural areas. They facilitate the grassroots dissemination of digital services thereby promoting citizen participation in governance.<sup>282</sup>

In India, Common Service Centres (CSCs) are administered by a private entity, E-Governance Services India Limited, which operates as a Special Purpose Vehicle and establishes a State Designated Agency in each state. However, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India oversees the implementation of the CSC scheme and acts as the principal executing agency. It actively engages with government departments, businesses, banks, insurance companies and educational institutions to enhance the range of services provided through the CSCs thereby ensuring their sustained viability.<sup>283</sup>

As (of January 2025), 5,97,441 CSCs are operating across all States and Union Territories in India. Out of these, 4,73,357 are located in rural areas, while 124,084 serve in urban regions. The CSCs provide a variety of services, especially under the Aadhaar programme, including Aadhaar generation. Additionally, individuals can access key Central Government to Citizen (G2C) services such as PM Welfare Services, which encompass schemes like Ayushman Bharat Yojana and PM Fasal Bhima Yojana. Other essential services available at CSCs include applications for Voter ID Cards, Passports, and PAN cards. At the State level, services like the e-District and Public Distribution System (PDS) are provided. Furthermore, CSCs also cater to a wide array of offerings, including Financial

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<sup>282</sup> MeitY CSC Implementation Guidelines 2015. <https://csc.gov.in/implementationguidelines> accessed on 22nd April 2023.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid

Inclusion Services, Legal Services, Educational Services, Health Care Services, Utility Bill Payment Services, Tours and Travels, Skill Development Services as well as various Business to Citizen (B2C) and Business to Business (B2B) services.

### **Objectives of Common Service Centres:**

The following are some of the objectives of CSCs:

- Facilitating equitable access to electronic services for rural populations by transforming Common Service Centres (CSCs) into comprehensive service hubs and leveraging the existing backend infrastructure established through prior Mission Mode Projects (MMPs).
- Expansion of self-supporting CSC organization to incorporate 2.5 lakh CSCs, or possibly one CSC per town or gram panchayat, with numerous CSCs, linked.
- Empowering the District e-Governance Society (DeGS) to carry out the plan under the District Administration.
- Enhancing and fortifying the institutional framework for implementation and project management serves to support the State and District administrative systems. This initiative also provides assistance to Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) through Help Desk services available in local languages.
- To enhance accountability, transparency, efficiency and traceability in service delivery at CSC outlets, it is proposed to integrate and streamline online services into a unified digital platform. This approach aims to foster technology driven interactions among all stakeholders.
- Offering a centralised technology platform to deliver diverse services to citizens transparently.
- Promoting women to become VLEs and sharing the highest commission received from providing e-services will increase the viability of VLEs.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid

**Envisaged Outcomes:**

- The CSCs provide citizens with e-services through a self-sustaining network, one in each Gram Panchayat and Village (more than one would be preferred).
- Direct communication between VLE and the government, with an empowered DeGS overseeing the district's network or CSC outlets to boost sustainability.
- Establishing a framework to encourage the VLEs entrepreneurial spirit by regularising their share of the profits made from the provision of services.
- Increased CSC transactions thanks to the State, UT and other service provider's facilitation of a wide array of services.
- By implementing a unified technological platform across all Common Service Centres (CSCs) nationwide, electronic services particularly Government to Citizen (G2C) services, become accessible throughout the country. This technology-driven integration among all stakeholders facilitates a consistent framework for monitoring the CSC network via a universal technological platform thereby ensuring that service delivery at CSC outlets is accountable, transparent, efficient and traceable.<sup>285</sup>

**Implementation Framework:**

1. The CSC 2.0 is a full-fledged entrepreneurial model, with the State/UT Administration facilitating the variables that would enable the CSC outlets to sustain themselves.
2. The State & UT Administration, State Designated Agency (SDA), and District e-Government Society are involved in the implementation of CSC 2.0 through the CSC Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).
3. The State & UT Administration may engage a Third Party (TP) through a proper process at the relevant DeGS level and would be functional within the DeGS framework if the State/UT needs help from a Third Party (TP) to build up and operationalise the CSC network in selected Districts. These CSCs

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<sup>285</sup> Ibid

would have to abide by the project's principles for income sharing and would be required to transact over the universal CSC technology platform that would be created for CSC 2.0.

4. To advance the growth of the CSC Network for a better service delivery process, a combined effort from all related Departments and Ministries, such as the Department of Telecom, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, and the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, etc.
5. According to CSC 2.0, revenue sharing with VLEs should account for at least 80 percent of the money from commission on transactions, with the remaining 20 percent going to other stakeholders to ensure the viability of VLEs.<sup>286</sup>

The CSC 2.0 envisions the creation of a comprehensive, all-encompassing technology CSC platform to enhance service delivery. For the CSC 2.0 deployment, a CSC Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) formed to make the platform live. It would be a secure cloud-based platform.

### **Services Offered Under Common Service Centres:**

Some of the popular services offered by CSCs are:

1. **Aadhaar Service:** Aadhaar services fundamentally encompass the advantages and features provided by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) to all residents of India via their Aadhaar number. These services include Aadhaar enrollment, authentication, and a range of functionalities related to digital identity.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid

<sup>287</sup> Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), Government of India. <https://www.uidai.gov.in/en/16-english-uk/aapka-aadhaar/14-what-is-aadhaar>. accessed on 17th May 2025.

## 2. Central G2C Services - PM Welfare Schemes:

- a) ***Ayushman Bharat Yojana:*** The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission seeks to establish a foundational framework to enhance the integrated digital health infrastructure across the nation. This initiative aims to connect various stakeholders within the healthcare ecosystem through digital channels. The Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA) Number offers a convenient means of accessing and sharing health records in a digital format. It facilitates interactions with participating healthcare providers and enables the seamless receipt of digital lab reports, prescriptions, and diagnoses from accredited healthcare professionals and service providers.<sup>288</sup>
- b) ***E-Shram Registrations:*** The E-Shram Portal is a significant initiative launched by the Government of India to support and empower the country's unorganized labour force, which plays a vital role in the national economy. Launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment on August 26, 2021, this portal aims to create a comprehensive National Database of Unorganized Workers (NDUW), verified and linked with Aadhaar for accuracy. This integration enables targeted delivery of welfare schemes and benefits. By leveraging technology, the E-Shram Portal ensures workers gain access to social security, employment opportunities, and financial inclusion, thus fostering a more equitable and resilient labour market. Registration on the portal is completely free of charge. An allocation of Rupees. 704.01 crore has been set aside for the development of the NDUW during the fiscal years (2019-20 to 2024-25). As of December 19, 2024, more than 30.48 crore individuals have registered on the platform. People can register either online through the [www.eshram.gov.in](http://www.eshram.gov.in) portal or by visiting nearby Common Service Centres (CSCs) and State Seva Kendras (SSKs).<sup>289</sup>
- c) ***PM – Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana:*** The PM-KISAN initiative is a government programme designed to provide financial assistance to small and marginal

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<sup>288</sup> Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission Component. <https://abdm.gov.in/> accessed on 17th May 2025.

<sup>289</sup> E-Shram Portal: World's Largest Database of Unorganised Workers: From registration to recognition, a revolutionary journey (19<sup>th</sup> December, 2024) <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2086193> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025

farmers throughout India. This scheme allows qualifying farmers to receive an annual sum of Rupees 6,000, disbursed in three equal payments directly into their bank accounts. Completely financed by the Government of India, PM-KISAN aims to deliver prompt financial support to enhance the livelihoods of farmers and foster agricultural development. Citizens can register for this programme through the CSC.<sup>290</sup>

- d) **PAN Application:** The Income Tax Department provides a Permanent Account Number (PAN) card which features a distinct 10-digit PAN. This number serves as a form of identification for individuals or entities across various applications. All tax-related data pertaining to an individual is linked to their specific PAN. Additionally, the card display the cardholder's name, father's name, date of birth and signature. An application for a PAN card may be submitted through either online or offline methods.<sup>291</sup> The citizens can utilise the service of CSC.

| Table 5.1: List of Services offered through CSCs |                                         |       |                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------|
| SL No                                            | CONTENTS                                | SL No | CONTENTS                                  |
| <b>1</b>                                         | <b><i>Aadhaar Service</i></b>           |       |                                           |
| 1.1                                              | Aadhaar Service – Generation of Aadhaar | 1.2   | Aadhaar Service – E- KYC & Authentication |

<sup>290</sup> National Government Services Portal. <https://services.india.gov.in/service/detail/pm-kisan-samman-nidhi> accessed on 17th May 2025

<sup>291</sup> Tax Information Network, Income Tax Department. <https://www.onlineservices.nsdl.com/paam/endUserRegisterContact.html> accessed on 17th May 2025



|          |                                                         |      |                                       |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.3      | Aadhaar Service – Aadhaar Printing                      | 1.4  | Aadhaar Updates (UCL)                 |
| <b>2</b> | <b><i>Central G2C Services – PM Welfare Schemes</i></b> |      |                                       |
| 2.1      | Ayushman Bharat Yojana                                  | 2.2  | PM Fasal Bima Yojana                  |
| 2.3      | PM Ujjwala Scheme (LPG Booking)                         | 2.4  | PM – Shram Yogi Maan- dhan Yojana     |
| 2.5      | PM – Kisan Maan-dhan Yojana                             | 2.6  | PM – Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana        |
| 2.7      | PM – Merchant Pension Yojana                            | 2.8  | PM – Kisan Credit Card Yojana         |
| 2.9      | PM – SVA Niddhi Yojana                                  | 2.10 | E-Shram Registrations                 |
| <b>3</b> | <b><i>Other G2C Services</i></b>                        |      |                                       |
| 3.1      | Election Commission Services                            | 3.2  | Passport Application                  |
| 3.3      | PAN Application                                         | 3.4  | Swachh Bharat Abhiyan                 |
| 3.5      | FSSAI Registration/ Licence                             | 3.6  | Jeevan Pramaan                        |
| 3.7      | Udyam Jyoti Parichay                                    | 3.8  | Recruitment Applications through CSCs |
| <b>4</b> | <b><i>State G2C Services</i></b>                        |      |                                       |
| 4.1      | E- District Services                                    | 4.2  | PDS Services                          |

|          |                                               |     |                                                                                               |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.3      | Labour Registration Services                  | 4.4 | E – Stamp                                                                                     |
| 4.6      | Himachal Swasthya Bima Yojana (HIMCARE)       | 4.7 | Other State G2C Services - Recruitment Services                                               |
| 4.8      | Other State G2C Services – Municipal Services | 4.9 | Other State G2C Services – Fasal Bima Yojana                                                  |
| <b>5</b> | <b><i>Educational Services</i></b>            |     |                                                                                               |
| 5.1      | Education Services – Digital Literacy         | 5.2 | Various Online courses of NIELIT & NIOS, various courses of IGNOU, IITs, Private Universities |
| 5.3      | Various courses at CSC Academy                |     |                                                                                               |
| <b>6</b> | <b><i>Legal Services</i></b>                  |     |                                                                                               |
| 6.1      | Tele – Legal Consultation Services            | 6.2 | E – Courts Services                                                                           |
| <b>7</b> | <b><i>Financial Inclusion Services</i></b>    |     |                                                                                               |
| 7.1      | Financial Inclusion – Banking Services        | 7.2 | Financial Inclusion – Digi Pay (AEPS)                                                         |
| 7.3      | Financial Inclusion – Insurance Services      | 7.4 | Financial Inclusion – New Pension Scheme & Atal Pension Yojna                                 |
| 7.5      | Financial Inclusion – Fastag                  | 7.6 | Financial Inclusion – CIBIL                                                                   |

|           |                                                          |      |                                             |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------------|
|           | Services                                                 |      | Registrations                               |
| <b>8</b>  | <b><i>Tours &amp; Travels</i></b>                        |      |                                             |
| 8.1       | Tours & Travels – IRCTC Services                         | 8.2  | Tours & Travels – Other Services            |
| <b>9</b>  | <b><i>Utility Bill Payment Services</i></b>              |      |                                             |
| 9.1       | Utility Bill Payment – Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) | 9.2  | Utility Services – Electricity Bill Payment |
| 9.3       | Utility Services – Water Bill Payment                    | 9.4  | Utility Services – LPG Booking              |
| <b>10</b> | <b><i>Healthcare Services</i></b>                        |      |                                             |
| 10.1      | Healthcare Services – Tele-Medicine                      | 10.2 | Healthcare Services – Medicine Sales        |
| 10.3      | Healthcare Services – Stree Swabhiman                    |      |                                             |
| <b>11</b> | <b><i>Other B2C / B2B Services</i></b>                   |      |                                             |
| 11.1      | Grameen E-Store                                          | 11.2 | Other Services – Products Distribution      |
| 11.3      | Other Services – Agriculture Services                    | 11.4 | Other Services – Mobile / DTH Recharge      |

|           |                                        |      |                                 |
|-----------|----------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------|
| 11.5      | Other Services – IT Return Filing      | 11.6 | Other Services – Diginame       |
| <b>12</b> | <b><i>Skill Development</i></b>        |      |                                 |
| 12.1      | Skill Development: Schemes and Courses | 12.2 | Skill Development – Job Portals |

Source: Unstarred Questions No. 3349, 'Services in CSC' answered by Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022, Lok Sabha - Indian Parliament

### 3. Other G2C Services:

**Passport Application:** An online passport application entails the submission of your passport application and associated information via a digital platform, typically a government website, rather than through a traditional paper application form. This procedure requires users to register on the platform, complete the application form online, and electronically submit the necessary documents.<sup>292</sup> The CSC provides a valuable service in this context.

### 4. State G2C Services:

**e-District Services:** The e-District serves as the primary platform for governmental operations, facilitating the majority of Government to Citizen (G2C) interactions. This initiative was developed to enhance these interactions and improve the efficiency of district-level departments thereby ensuring seamless service delivery to the public. As part of this program, citizen facilitation centers have been established at the District, Tehsil, Sub-division and Block levels. Additionally, village-level access points have been created through Common Service Centres (CSCs) to provide essential services. The e-District services include the issuance and distribution of various certificates, such as income, domicile, caste, birth and death certificates. Other services such as provision of licenses, including arms licenses,

<sup>292</sup> National Portal of India. <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/passport-seva-portal-convenient-way-get-passport#tab=tab-1> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

management of the Public Distribution System (PDS) for ration card issuance, administration of social welfare schemes such as old-age pensions and widow pensions are also available under this G2C services.<sup>293</sup>

**5. Financial Inclusion Services:** Financial inclusion refers to the provision of accessible and affordable financial services that are designed to meet the diverse needs of individuals and businesses. These services encompass payments, savings, credit and insurance thereby empowering users to effectively utilize them through the CSCs across India.

**6. Utility Bill Payment System:** Utility bill payment services facilitate the convenient settlement of expenses related to utilities such as electricity, water, gas, and telecommunications through multiple platforms including applications, websites and banking services with the help of CSCs. These services present various payment options, including UPI, credit and debit cards as well as net banking. Additionally, numerous platforms provide functionalities such as bill tracking, automated payments and notifications to assist users in effectively managing their utility expenses.<sup>294</sup>

**7. Skill Development Job Portal:** Rather than the emergence of nominal technical training centers across the nation the Skill India Mission (SIM) represents a structured and resourceful initiative that signifies a progressive approach to technical education. In consideration of the comprehensive technological advancement of the country, a range of skill-oriented training programmes, beginning with computer applications are tailored to meet the requirements of diverse governmental and private entities through the CSCs platform from any place.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Deputy Commissioner Office, Lunglei District. <https://lunglei.nic.in/administrative-setup/collectorate/e-district/> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

<sup>294</sup> Utility & Bill Payment, EKO. <https://eko.in/products/utility-and-bill-payment> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025

<sup>295</sup> <https://skillindiamission.in/about-us> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

| Table 5.2 :Status of CSC Rollout in India (As of January 2025) |                                 |                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| State/UT                                                       | Functional CSCs (Urban + Rural) | Functional CSCs at GP level |
| ANDAMAN & NICOBAR                                              | 92                              | 68                          |
| ANDHRA PRADESH                                                 | 13,015                          | 9,620                       |
| ARUNACHAL PRADESH                                              | 275                             | 205                         |
| ASSAM                                                          | 15,821                          | 14,502                      |
| BIHAR                                                          | 56,556                          | 50,383                      |
| CHANDIGARH                                                     | 117                             | 9                           |
| CHHATTISGARH                                                   | 20,782                          | 16,601                      |
| DADRA & NAGAR<br>HAVELI, DAMAN & DIU                           | 160                             | 113                         |
| DELHI                                                          | 4573                            | 0                           |
| GOA                                                            | 280                             | 210                         |
| GUJARAT                                                        | 18,638                          | 13,300                      |
| HARYANA                                                        | 20,074                          | 14,044                      |
| HIMACHAL PRADESH                                               | 6,407                           | 5,662                       |
| JAMMU & KASHMIR                                                | 7,933                           | 6,685                       |
| JHARKHAND                                                      | 25,369                          | 22,309                      |
| KARNATAKA                                                      | 19,129                          | 14,910                      |
| KERALA                                                         | 9,948                           | 7,965                       |
| LADAKH                                                         | 79                              | 66                          |
| LAKSHADWEEP                                                    | 22                              | 22                          |
| MADHYA PRADESH                                                 | 50,434                          | 38,242                      |
| MAHARASHTRA                                                    | 59,149                          | 44,328                      |
| MANIPUR                                                        | 1,093                           | 888                         |
| MEGHALAYA                                                      | 1,134                           | 1,027                       |

|               |                 |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| MIZORAM       | 602             | 432             |
| NAGALAND      | 541             | 364             |
| ODISHA        | 23,496          | 20,798          |
| PUDUCHERRY    | 319             | 184             |
| PUNJAB        | 10,058          | 7,021           |
| RAJASTHAN     | 23,770          | 18,831          |
| SIKKIM        | 233             | 199             |
| TAMIL NADU    | 19,562          | 13,506          |
| TELANGANA     | 8,381           | 5,553           |
| TRIPURA       | 2,010           | 1,647           |
| UTTAR PRADESH | 1,42,356        | 1,13,664        |
| UTTARAKHAND   | 9,498           | 7,047           |
| WEST BENGAL   | 25,535          | 22,952          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>5,97,441</b> | <b>4,73,357</b> |

Source: Unstarred Questions No. 3101, 'Common Service Centres(CSCs)' answered by Shri Jitin Prasada , Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, on 19.03.2025, Lok Sabha - Indian Parliament

Table 5.2 shows (as of 31.01.2025), a total of 5,97,441 CSCs are operational across the country, with 4,73,357 CSCs functioning at the Gram Panchayat (GP) level. The state of Uttar Pradesh has the most number of functional CSCs (Urban+Rural) and also at the Rural level. The State of Sikkim has the least number of numbers of functional CSCs (Urban+Rural) and Rural areas amongst the State category, while the Union Territory of Lakshadweep has the lowest number of functional CSCs (Urban+Rural) and Rural areas amongst the Union Territory level.

| <b>Table 5.3 : State-wise CSCs Transaction in the North Eastern Region (FY-2020-21 to 2024-25)</b> |              |               |               |               |                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>in lakh</b>                                                                                     |              |               |               |               |                               |
| State                                                                                              | 2020-21      | 2021-22       | 2022-23       | 2023-24       | 2024-25 (Apr 2024 to Jan2025) |
| ARUNACHAL PRADESH                                                                                  | 0.89         | 1.39          | 1.70          | 1.28          | 1.42                          |
| ASSAM                                                                                              | 41.05        | 75.28         | 88.81         | 138.60        | 115.02                        |
| MANIPUR                                                                                            | 4.01         | 6.11          | 4.03          | 2.89          | 3.01                          |
| MEGHALAYA                                                                                          | 2.32         | 4.64          | 4.50          | 10.10         | 8.69                          |
| MIZORAM                                                                                            | 0.48         | 1.09          | 1.81          | 2.80          | 2.75                          |
| NAGALAND                                                                                           | 1.08         | 3.44          | 2.11          | 3.60          | 2.16                          |
| SIKKIM                                                                                             | 0.63         | 0.91          | 0.83          | 0.81          | 0.52                          |
| TRIPURA                                                                                            | 11.56        | 22.02         | 20.00         | 34.50         | 16.72                         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                                                                 | <b>62.01</b> | <b>114.88</b> | <b>123.81</b> | <b>194.58</b> | <b>150.30</b>                 |

Source: Unstarred Questions No. 3101, 'Common Service Centres(CSCs)' answered by Shri Jitin Prasada ,Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, on 19.03.2025, Lok Sabha - Indian Parliament

Table 5.3 shows the transaction of CSCs in the North Eastern Region from 2020-21 to 2024-25 Financial Year. Here, the largest and the most populous State Assam have the highest number of CSC transactions, while the State of Tripura comes second followed by the State of Manipur. The CSC transactions in the state of Mizoram saw an increasing trend which is a good sign for the growth of e-services in the state of Mizoram.



| Table 5.4: Number of CSCs transactions in India ( As of 25/05/2025) |                                                                    |                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Number of transactions (in lakh)                                    | Number of transactions through Digital Seva Portal (DSP) (in lakh) | Number of transactions through non-DSP ( in lakh) |
| 388.50                                                              | 169.93                                                             | 218.57                                            |

Source: [digitalseva.csc.gov.in/https://csc.gov.in/](https://digitalseva.csc.gov.in/) accessed on 24.5.2025

### Digital India Common Service Centre (DICSC) Project:

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has unveiled the Digital India Common Service Centre (DICSC) initiative, which commences its initial phase in Pilibhit and Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. This project is designed to address the digital disparity in rural India by offering citizens access to e-governance, financial and commercial services. A total of 4,740 Digital Centres are set to be established with MeitY planning to develop 4,740 model DICSCs across gram panchayats in ten districts nationwide. Specifically, Pilibhit will have 720 service centres while Gorakhpur will feature 1,273 centres. Other districts participating include Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar (formerly Aurangabad in Maharashtra) with 870 centres, Chamba in Himachal Pradesh with 309, Khammam in Telangana with 589, Gandhinagar in Gujarat with 288, Mamit in Mizoram with 100, Jodhpur in Rajasthan with 415, Leh in Ladakh with 95 and Puducherry with 81 centres.<sup>296</sup>

This large scale initiative aims to enhance digital inclusion across the country. The DICSC centres will serve as comprehensive hubs offering essential services such as Aadhaar registration, banking, financial planning, tele-law, telemedicine, education and e-commerce support. Equipped with high-speed broadband and modern amenities where each centre is designed to function as a multifunctional resource point in rural areas. Through these services, the project

<sup>296</sup> Digital transformation of rural India for inclusive growth (1<sup>st</sup> November 2024).<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2070062> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

intends to empower Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) who operate the centres thereby fostering economic growth and creating new employment opportunities in rural communities. The MeitY has allocated Rupees 31.6 crore for the first six months of the DICSC project with the possibility of extending it up to nine months based on the outcomes. The implementation and centralized technical management are handled by CSC e-Governance Services India Limited by ensuring efficient service delivery and long-term sustainability. This centralized oversight aims to enhance transparency and service quality supporting MeitY's goal of building an integrated accessible digital platform for rural India.<sup>297</sup>

The initiative aims to empower rural communities digitally. In addition to the established DICSC centers, the project deploys GPS-enabled mobile vans that actively promote government schemes and deliver essential services directly to residents in remote locations, thereby enhancing digital access. These mobile units play a crucial role in reaching areas that are otherwise challenging to access through traditional methods thereby amplifying the effectiveness and reach of the DICSC initiative. The DICSC project exemplifies MeitY's dedication to providing digital empowerment and convenience to rural populations by enabling citizens to access vital services from their local centers. This initiative is anticipated to revolutionize the digital environment in these regions, stimulate economic development and deliver essential digital services to underserved communities. By empowering local entrepreneurs and creating job opportunities, MeitY seeks to cultivate a more inclusive and digitally connected India through the DICSC initiative.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> MeitY to roll out Digital India Service Center Project- Here's what you need to know (1<sup>st</sup> November, 2024). <https://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/meity-to-roll-out-digital-india-service-center-project-> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

<sup>298</sup> MeitY to launch the Digital India Common Service Center project; starting with Pilibhit, Gorakhpur (1<sup>st</sup> November, 2024). <https://theprint.in/economy/meity-to-launch-the-digital-india-common-service-center-project> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

### **Common Service Centres in Mizoram:**

In the state of Mizoram, there are a number of CSCs that provide various public services which are located more conveniently or near to the people. The CSCs in Mizoram at the initial stages were undertaken by the Mizoram e-Governance Society (MSeGS) as a designated agency, and ZENICS as an implementing partner under CSC 1.0 (during NeGP), but in the year 2014 ZENICS was defunct, and at present, MSeGS alone implementing agency for CSCs in Mizoram including CSC 2.0 (Digital India). As far as the CSC 2.0 scheme is concerned, the Ministry of Electronics & IT, Government of India introduced this scheme in 2015 but there are no supporting funds from the Central Government to the state government for implementing this scheme.<sup>299</sup> Hence, in Mizoram the MSeGS is the implementing agency for CSC 2.0.<sup>300</sup>

In the early stage of inception, the Government of Mizoram established 136 CSCs across the State and received a total amount of Rupees 4.92 Crores (Rupees 7000 per CSC per month for 4 years) from the Central Government after the project was approved on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008. The location of CSCs has been selected in such a way that a cluster of 5-6 villages or localities can share one CSC. Each CSC equipped with a Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) for reliable internet connectivity and a Solar Module Battery for interruption of power supply. In line with CSC, 300 Rural Information Kiosk (RIK) Centre was also introduced in the State, for which financial assistance was received from the North Eastern Council (NEC) with a total of Rupees 56,30,00.<sup>301</sup> As of 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024, there are 1071 CSCs in the State of Mizoram.

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<sup>299</sup> RTI Application on CSC answered by SPIO, Directorate of Information & Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid

<sup>300</sup> Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021). An overview of Common Service Centre with Special Reference to Mizoram. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, Vol 8, Issue 1, pp.155-160.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid

| <b>Table 5.5: Number of CSCs in Mizoram (as of 14/02/2024 )</b> |                 |                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>Sl no</b>                                                    | <b>District</b> | <b>No of CSC</b> |
| 1                                                               | Aizawl          | 260              |
| 2                                                               | Champhai        | 71               |
| 3                                                               | Hnahthial       | 32               |
| 4                                                               | Khawzawl        | 29               |
| 5                                                               | Kolasib         | 103              |
| 6                                                               | Lawngtlai       | 143              |
| 7                                                               | Lunglei         | 163              |
| 8                                                               | Mamit           | 131              |
| 9                                                               | Siaha           | 23               |
| 10                                                              | Saitual         | 34               |
| 11                                                              | Serchhip        | 82               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                    |                 | <b>1071</b>      |

Source: Data collected from CSC Mizoram on 14.02.2024

| <b>Table 5.6: Number of Transactions done at CSCs in terms of Volume and Value in Mizoram</b> |                               |                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Year</b>                                                                                   | <b>Volume of Transactions</b> | <b>Value of Transactions in Rupees</b> |
| 2020                                                                                          | 42,042                        | 31,26,2,506                            |
| 2021                                                                                          | 1,05,787                      | 15,62,57,669                           |
| 2022                                                                                          | 1,85,544                      | 26,49,63,629                           |
| 2023                                                                                          | 2,62,217                      | 62,83,06,537                           |

Source: RTI Application received from SPIO, Directorate of Information & Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

## **Services Offered Through Common Service Centres in Mizoram**

The following are the services:

### **1. Government to Citizen (G2C)**

- Passport
- e- District Services
- Pension Services
- Aadhaar Printing and Enrolment
- PAN Card
- Electoral Services
- e-Courts Services
- Services from the Department of Post.<sup>302</sup>

### **2. Business to Citizen (B2C)**

- Services for booking tickets through IRCTC as well as air and bus travel
- Mobile and DTH recharge services
- English language instruction
- Online retail of books, electronics, household items and related products
- Agriculture Services
- CSC Bazaar
- e-Learning<sup>303</sup>

### **3. Educational Services:**

**IGNOU Services-** Examination Form, Students Admission or Offering courses from IGNOU, Results declaration services, etc provided by CSCs.

**Digital Literacy-** The initiative encompasses computer courses and provides IT skills to ASHA and Anganwadi workers as well as authorized ration card holders. It also includes investor awareness programmes, the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (PMGDISHA) and the NABARD Financial Literacy Programme all facilitated through Common Service Centres (CSCs)

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<sup>302</sup> RTI Application on CSC answered by SPIO, Directorate of Information & Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024

<sup>303</sup> Ibid

**NIELIT Services-** The CSC provides services including online registration, fee payment, submission of online examination forms and the capability to print examination hall tickets.

**NIOS Services-** Common Service Centres (CSCs) function as facilitation centres for the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) to enhance access to open schooling in rural areas. They are responsible for managing student registration by processing examination fee payments and announcing results.<sup>304</sup>

#### **4. Financial Inclusion**

Financial Services like Banking, Insurance, and Pension are provided to Citizens in Rural and Remote Areas, particularly to women and marginalised communities to secure their livelihood through CSCs.

**Banking-** A range of banking services, including deposit, withdrawal, balance inquiry, account statements, recurring deposit accounts, overdraft, retail loans, general purpose credit cards, Kisan credit cards and credit facilities for borrowers can be accessed through Common Service Centres (CSCs). These CSCs have established partnerships with 42 public and private sector banks as well as regional rural banks.

**Insurance-** CSC provides a range of insurance products and services through Authorized Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs). These offerings include life insurance, health insurance, crop insurance, personal accident insurance, motor insurance among others.

**Pension-** Common Service Centres (CSCs) play a pivotal role in facilitating the National Pension System in rural and semi-urban areas by establishing Tier 1 and Tier 2 accounts by managing contributions and performing related functions.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid

<sup>305</sup> Ibid

## 5. Other Services

**Agriculture-** To avail of the various agriculture services, Farmer registration is done at CSCs. It helps the farmers to receive advisories related to it from experts. In addition, many other services like Weather Information and soil Information are also provided to the citizens.

**Recruitment-** Job vacancy announcements for the Indian Navy, Indian Army and Indian Air Force and other kinds of recruitment application can be done and currently accessible at CSCs.

**Income Tax Filing-** Individuals have the option to file their Income Tax Returns at CSCs, serve as a convenient alternative for tax filing. These centers are typically local establishments that offer a variety of government services, enabling individuals to receive assistance with their tax returns without the necessity of visiting tax offices or directly utilizing online systems.

### **Services Provided under DC Online Portal/E-District in Mizoram through CSCs**

- Scheduled Tribe Certificate
- Residential/Permanent Residential Certificate
- Income Certificate
- Employment Registration
- Forms Download and Submission.
- National Generic Document Registration System.<sup>306</sup>

### **Digital India Common Service Centre (DICSC) in Mizoram:**

In the Mamit district of Mizoram, the inaugural ceremony for the Digital India Common Service Centre (DICSC) took place on March 6, 2025, at the DC Conference Hall in Mamit, with District Commissioner Pu K Laltlawmlova

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid

officiating the event. The DICSC has been established in ten districts throughout India, with Mamit being the sole district chosen from the Northeastern States. The introduction of this initiative in the Mamit district marks a significant achievement, as it is poised to greatly enhance community access to services, representing a vital advancement. Furthermore, the initiative aims to improve service delivery to the populace, thereby increasing convenience and awareness among residents.<sup>307</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The CSC's importance cannot be underestimated especially in a state like Mizoram with its difficult geographical terrain and infrastructure, it is necessary to provide various public services to the people very close to them. The people in Mizoram may now quickly receive a variety of public services from the closest delivery point at a reasonable price and skip the long queues at government offices, thanks to the CSCs. Because of this, it saves time, energy and money on transportation, especially for those who live in rural and isolated places. Also, it brings the administration closer to the people, which leads to an increase in transparency, accountability, etc and ultimately achieving good governance in the society.

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<sup>307</sup>Directorate of Information & Public Relations ,Governmetn of Mizoram (6<sup>th</sup> March 2025). <https://dipr.mizoram.gov.in/post/digital-india-common-services-centre-dicsc-launched-at-mamit-district> accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025.



## **CHAPTER –VI**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents an analysis of field data obtained through the Semi-Structured Questionnaire and Observation method from both the Village Level Entrepreneurs and Customers of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts of Mizoram, with the help of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for generating data, in the form of simple percentages, frequency distributions, etc.

#### **History of Mizoram:**

The history of Mizoram is very rich, and reflects the experiences of various ethnic groups in the remote northeastern region of India. Primarily shaped by the migration of Chin people from Chin State in Burma, the details of their westward movement rely heavily on oral traditions and archaeological insights, leaving many questions unanswered. Formal documentation of this area, began in the mid-19th century, coinciding with British colonial expansion into neighbouring regions. Today, Mizoram is home to a diverse mix of communities, including those from the Chin Hills and Bangladesh, with the Lusei, Hmar, Lai, Mara and Chakma tribes playing significant roles in its cultural identity. In the mid-20th century, various social, political and religious changes united these groups into, now recognized as the Mizo community, leading to the establishment of Mizoram as a distinct entity. The earliest records of Mizoram trace back to the 1850s, when British military officers documented their encounters with local tribes during conflicts in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, referring to the region as Lushai Hills. In response to ongoing tribal encroachments often resulting in violent encounters, the British undertook military campaigns in 1871 and 1889, ultimately incorporating the entire area into their empire. Following India's independence in 1947, Mizoram became a district within Assam. In 1972, it was designated as a union territory adopting a more

culturally representative name, Mizoram. Finally, in 1986 Mizoram achieved full statehood within the Indian federation by solidifying its unique history and culture.<sup>308</sup>

### **Profile of Aizawl District:**

The historical narrative of Aizawl is intricately linked to that of Mizoram, which is situated in the remote north-eastern region of India. This narrative reflects the diverse history of various ethnic groups particularly the Chin people who migrated from the Chin State in Burma. However, the specifics of their westward migration remain ambiguous, relying primarily on oral traditions and archaeological interpretations. The earliest written accounts of Mizoram date back to the 1850s, documented by British military officers, who faced a series of incursions from local tribes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. This prompted British authorities to assert control over the tribal chiefdoms. Subsequent military campaigns in 1871 and 1889, led to the annexation of the Lushai Hills, officially incorporated into British India in 1890, resulting in the formation of the Lushai Hill Districts under British administrative oversight. The Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council was established on April 25, 1952, coinciding with the dissolution of the chieftaincy system within Mizo society. Similar to other north-eastern Indian states, Mizoram was part of Assam until 1972, when it designated as a Union Territory. It achieved statehood on February 20, 1987, becoming the 23rd state of India through the Fifty-Third Amendment of the Indian Constitution in 1986. Initially, the establishment of Aizawl as a settlement prompted by the disruptive actions of Khalkom, a Mizo chief, which led the British to set up an outpost that eventually evolved into the village of Aizawl. In 1890, Assam Police officer Dally and his contingent of 400 men arrived in Aizawl, to assist Colonel Skinner's forces during a military operation against the Mizo tribe. Following Dally's advice, Aizawl was chosen as the location for a fortified post mandated by Colonel Skinner. The construction of stockades and buildings commenced at this site, and by 1892-95, Aizawl became accessible from Silchar via a seasonal road under Major Loch's supervision. Prior to 1966, Aizawl

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<sup>308</sup>About Mizoram.

<https://mizoram.nic.in/about/history.htm#:~:text=The%20Mizos%2C%20in%20the%20early,in%20to uch%20with%20one%20another> accessed on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

was primarily a sizable village; however, following the reorganization of Mizo villages post-uprising, it evolved into a larger town and subsequently a city. Aizawl emerged as the central hub of the road network in Mizoram, facilitating connections between the northern and southern regions, as well as the eastern and western areas. Currently, over 25 percent of Mizoram population lives in Aizawl as per Government of Mizoram data.<sup>309</sup>

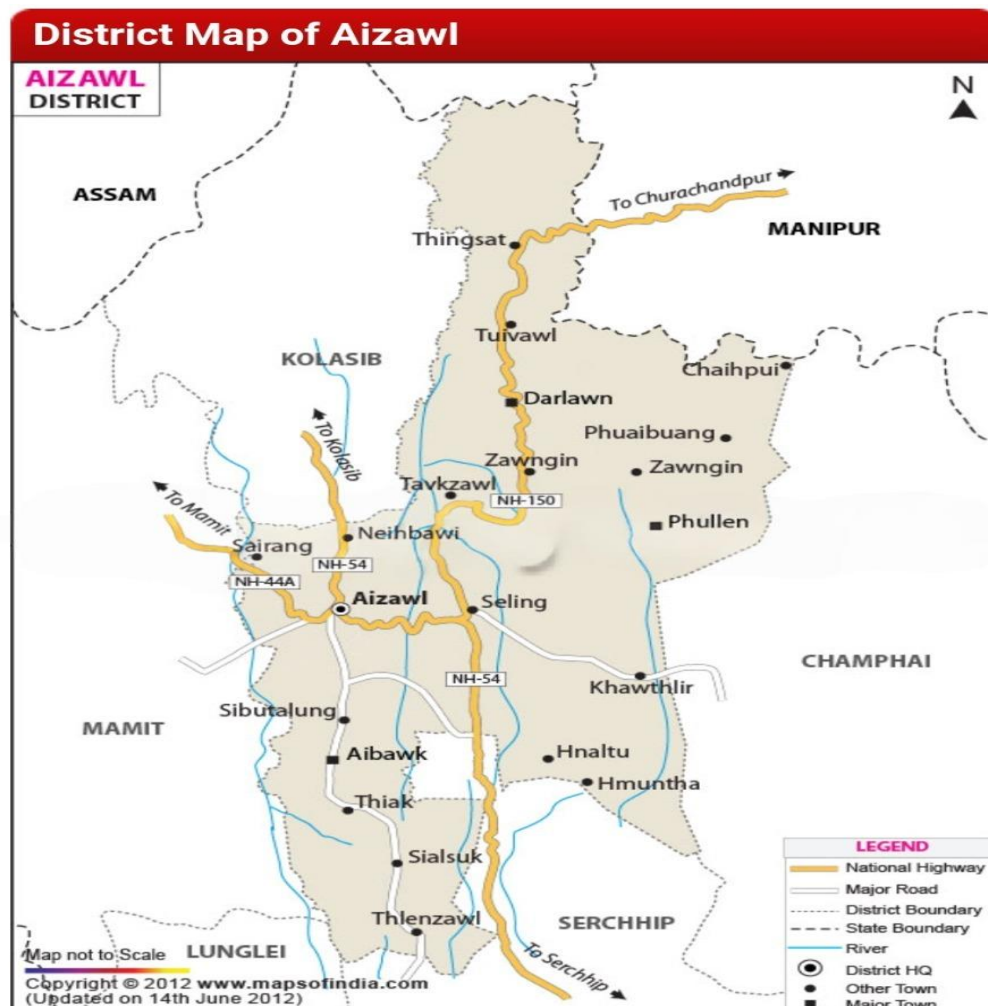
According to the 2011 Census, the district had a population of 400,309, with a high gender ratio (1,009 females to every 1,000 males), near-literacy (97.89 percent) and predominantly Christian demographics (94.71 percent). Between 2001 and 2011, the population increased by 22.92 percent, marking a slower growth compared to earlier decades. Notably, about 78.63 percent of this growth was concentrated in urban areas, primarily around the town of Aizawl. This indicates a significant urbanization trend thereby reflecting shifting demographic patterns and expanding city influence. The economy is based on agriculture (rice, maize), handicrafts and public services. Projections estimate a population of around 504,000 by 2025, reflecting gradual growth in the context of urbanization and infrastructural development cementing Aizawl role as the socio-economic nucleus of Mizoram.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> Department of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation, GoM, History of Aizawl. <https://udpa.mizoram.gov.in/> accessed on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid

Map 5.1: Map of Aizawl District



Source: Map of India.

<https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/mizoram/districts/aizwal.html>

accessed on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

### Profile of Lawngtlai District:

Lawngtlai District is one of the eleventh administrative districts in Mizoram, established on November 11, 1998. Before its formation, it was part of the undivided Chhimituipui District, which included Saiha and Lawngtlai. The historical roots of Lawngtlai District within Mizoram trace back to the era of chieftainship, where local chiefs governed the region uninterrupted until the arrival of the Britishers in the late 18th century. On February 21, 1888, a significant incident occurred when Lai Chief Dokulha Chinzah attacked a British survey team, resulting in the deaths of Lt. Steward, two other British nationals, and a soldier. This led to punitive measures by

the British, establishing direct control over Lawngtlai District following their expedition in 1889. After India gained independence in 1947, the Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council was formed in 1952, under the Sixth Schedule to safeguard the identities of the Lushai people. Lawngtlai District remained part of Assam, until it was designated as Mizo District in 1954. Concurrently, leaders from the Lai (then known as Pawi), Mara (previously Lakher) and Chakma communities sought separate Autonomous District Councils, asserting their distinct tribal identities. Consequently, in April 1953, the Indian and Assam governments established separate Autonomous Regional Councils under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which co-existed until the formation of the Union Territory of Mizoram in 1972, as per the North Eastern Areas Reorganization Act of 1971. Ultimately, the Mizo Autonomous District Council was dissolved, and the former Pawi-Lakher Regional Council was divided into three distinct Autonomous District Councils, namely the Pawi, Lakher and Chakma Autonomous District Councils as stipulated by the same legislation.<sup>311</sup>

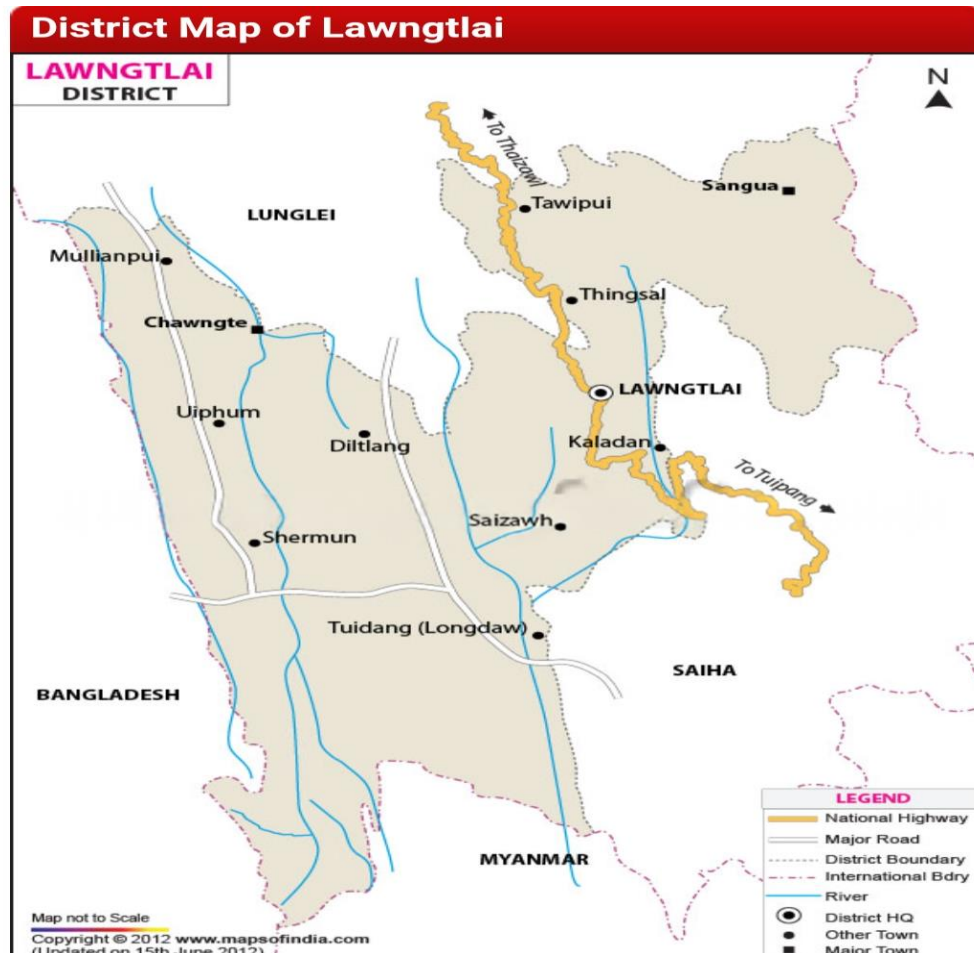
As per the 2011 Census, Lawngtlai District in Mizoram underwent notable demographic transformations, with its population increasing from 73,620 to 117,894, reflecting an impressive growth rate of 60.14 percent during (2001 to 2011). This population surge was paralleled by enhancements in sex ratios, as the overall ratio improved from 899 to 945 females per 1,000 males, and the child sex ratio (ages 0–6) rose from 938 to 967 girls per 1,000 boys. Conversely, literacy rates experienced a slight decline, from 67.16 percent in 2001 to 65.88 percent in 2011, with female literacy falling from 60.96 percent to 57.12 percent, a trend that diverges from national averages. The district's religious demographics are predominantly Christian (54.19 percent), followed by Buddhists (43.72 percent) with Hindus and Muslims representing smaller groups. In terms of geography, Lawngtlai is characterized by a low population density of merely 46 individuals per square kilometer as of 2011 census. Urban areas, which comprise only 17.67 percent of the population, exhibit a high literacy rate of 95.66 percent while the rural population by making up 82.33

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<sup>311</sup> Population Census 2011. <https://www.census2011.co.in> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025.

percent has a significantly lower literacy rate of 59.10 percent. Future projections indicate that the population may reach approximately 204,100 by 2025.<sup>312</sup>

**Map 5.2: Map of Lawngtlai District**



Source: Map of India.

<https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/mizoram/districts/lawngtlai.html> accessed on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

The reason behind Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts are selected for the comparative study, as they have the highest number of CSCs, according to the report from the Common Service Centre office in Mizoram. Also, the Aizawl District is located in the northern part of Mizoram, while Lawngtlai District is situated in the southernmost part of the state. This research study on '*E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram: A Comparative Study of Common Service Centres in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts*' aims to assess, how the CSCs in these two districts function in terms of a

<sup>312</sup> Ibid

number of parameters from the perspective of both Village Level Entrepreneurs and Customers, who are very important stakeholders in effective implementation of CSCs in the society. The following data collected from the respondents with the help of semi-structured questionnaires have been analysed and interpreted to make the reliable findings as follows:

**Data Analysis for Village Level Entrepreneurs of Common Service Centres in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts:**

| Table 6.1: Age Group |          |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl               |          |           |         |               |                    |
|                      |          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                | 18-25    | 14        | 40.0    | 40.0          | 40.0               |
|                      | 26-35    | 12        | 34.3    | 34.3          | 74.3               |
|                      | 36-45    | 9         | 25.7    | 25.7          | 100.0              |
|                      | 46-55    | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                      | 56 above | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                      | Total    | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai            |          |           |         |               |                    |
|                      |          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                | 18-25    | 5         | 14.3    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|                      | 26-35    | 22        | 62.8    | 62.8          | 77.11              |
|                      | 36-45    | 8         | 22.9    | 22.9          | 100.0              |

|  |             |    |       |       |   |
|--|-------------|----|-------|-------|---|
|  | 46-55       | 0  | 0     | 0     | 0 |
|  | 56<br>above | 0  | 0     | 0     | 0 |
|  | Total       | 35 | 100.0 | 100.0 |   |

**Source: Field Study**

According to the data presented in Table 6.1, among the total 35 respondents (Aizawl District) from the VLEs, 14 VLEs or 40 percent belong to the age range of 18-25, 12 VLEs or 34.3 percent are from the 26-35 age groups and 9 VLEs accounting for 25.7 percent are from the 36-45 age groups in Aizawl District. Similarly, among the 35 respondents (Lawngtlai District) from the VLEs, 5 VLEs representing 14.3 percent belong to the 18-25 age group, 22 VLEs constituting 62.8 percent are from the 26-35 age group and 8 VLEs accounting for 22.9 percent, are from the 36-45 age group in Lawngtlai District. In comparison in Aizawl District, the majority 40 percent are aged 18-35, followed by 34.3 percent in the 36-45 age group while in Lawngtlai District 62.8 percent are in the 26-35 age group. Moreover, the field data shows that the VLEs managing CSCs in Aizawl and Lawngtlai District predominantly belong to the age group under 45, indicating their proficiency in modern technology. In contrast, the absence of VLEs from the age category above 46 implies a lack of familiarity with modern technology as CSCs are fundamentally reliant on computers and associated technologies.



| Table 6.2: Gender |        |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl            |        |           |         |               |                    |
|                   |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid             | Male   | 29        | 82.9    | 82.9          | 82.9               |
|                   | Female | 6         | 17.1    | 17.1          | 100.0              |
|                   | Total  | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai         |        |           |         |               |                    |
|                   |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid             | Male   | 34        | 97.1    | 97.1          | 97.1               |
|                   | Female | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                   | Total  | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

Table 6.2 indicates 29 male VLEs and only 6 female VLEs among a total of 35 respondents in Aizawl District. At the same time, in Lawngtlai District, there are 34 male VLEs and just 1 female VLE among the 35 respondents. Thus, Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts VLEs are predominantly male 82.9 percent and 97.1percent respectively. Therefore, female participation in CSCs as VLEs should be enhanced for inclusive development in both districts. Here the role of the Government of Mizoram and the CSCs Mizoram State Manager is important. This empowerment is essential for achieving gender balance which is critical for the sustainability of these CSCs.

| Table 6.3: Educational Qualification |                                     |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                               |                                     |           |         |               |                    |
|                                      |                                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                | Below 10 <sup>th</sup>              | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                      | 10 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> | 13        | 37.1    | 37.1          | 37.1               |
|                                      | Graduate                            | 19        | 54.3    | 54.3          | 91.4               |
|                                      | Post Graduate                       | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 97.1               |
|                                      | Other                               | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                      | Total                               | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                            |                                     |           |         |               |                    |
|                                      |                                     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                | Below 10 <sup>th</sup>              | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 5.7                |
|                                      | 10 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> | 7         | 20.0    | 20.0          | 25.7               |
|                                      | Graduate                            | 18        | 51.4    | 51.4          | 77.1               |
|                                      | Post Graduate                       | 8         | 22.9    | 22.9          | 100.0              |
|                                      | Other                               | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                      | Total                               | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Regarding the educational qualifications of VLEs, the data indicates that 37.1 percent attained below higher secondary education (10th–12th), 54.3 percent of VLEs are graduates, 5.7 percent are pursuing their Master's degree and there is one Bachelor in Computer Applications (BCA) among the 35 respondents from Aizawl District. Whereas, the educational qualifications of VLEs in Lawngtlai District, the data indicates that 5.7 percent have not completed the 10th standard, 20 percent have completed between the 10th and 12th standards, 51.4 percent hold undergraduate degrees and 22.9 percent have completed their Master's degrees. Thus, in

comparison, in Aizawl Districts 54.3 percent are graduates and 37.1 percent have 10th–12th educations, but in Lawngtlai Graduates 51.4 percent are graduates followed by 22.9 percent with postgraduate education. Moreover, the VLEs from both Aizawl and Lawngtlai predominantly possess a bachelor’s degree.

| Table 6.4: CSC operational duration |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                              |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                     |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                               | Less than 1 year  | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 2.9                |
|                                     | 1-3 years         | 7         | 20.0    | 20.0          | 22.9               |
|                                     | 3-5 years         | 8         | 22.9    | 22.9          | 45.7               |
|                                     | 5-7 years         | 11        | 31.4    | 31.4          | 77.1               |
|                                     | More than 7 years | 8         | 22.8    | 22.8          | 100.0              |
|                                     | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Lawngtlai |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid     | Less than 1 year  | 5         | 14.3    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|           | 1-3 years         | 12        | 34.3    | 34.3          | 48.6               |
|           | 3-5 years         | 15        | 42.9    | 42.9          | 91.4               |
|           | 5-7 years         | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 94.3               |
|           | More than 7 years | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 100.0              |
|           |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|           | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

Out of the 35 VLEs (Aizawl District) respondents, 22.8 percent (8 VLEs) have operated CSCs for over 7 years, 31.4 percent (11 VLEs) for 5-7 years, 22.8 percent (8 VLEs) for 3-5 years, 20 percent (7 VLEs) for 1-3 years and 1 VLE has operated a CSC for less than one year. In case of (Lawngtlai District) out of 35 VLE respondents, 5.7 percent (2 VLEs) have operated CSCs for over 7 years, 2.9 percent (1 VLE) for 5-7 years, 42.9 percent (15 VLEs) for more than 3-5 years, 34.3 percent (12 VLEs) for 1-3 years and 14.3 percent (5 VLEs) have operated their CSCs for less than a year. Overall, in the Aizawl Districts 31.4 percent of CSCs have been operating for 5-7 years, and 22.9 percent for over 7 years but in Lawngtlai District 42.9 percent of CSCs have been operating for 3-5 years.

| Table 6.5: Type of Internet Connection available at CSC |                           |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                  |                           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                         |                           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                   | Jio Fibre                 | 20        | 57.14   | 94.3          | 94.3               |
|                                                         | Airtel Xtreme Fibre       | 10        | 28.57   | 2.9           | 97.1               |
|                                                         | BSNL Fibre                | 2         | 5.72    | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                                         | Others                    | 3         | 8.57    | 0.6           |                    |
|                                                         | Total                     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                               |                           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                         |                           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                   | Jio Fibre                 | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                                         | Broadband Fibre           | 4         | 11.4    | 11.4          | 91.4               |
|                                                         | Cellular Data (Airtel 4G) | 28        | 80.0    | 80.0          | 80.0               |
|                                                         | Others                    | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 100.0              |
|                                                         | Total                     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

In Aizawl District, out of 35 respondents from VLEs, 20 used Jio Fibre, 10 used Airtel Xtreme Fibre, 2 used BSNL and 4 used other internet connections broadband and cellular services. In Lawngtlai District, among 35 respondents from VLEs, 28 utilized cellular Data (Airtel 4G) and 4 have alternative broadband services and 3 using other internet connections. In comparison, in Aizawl District, most of the VLEs use Jio Fibre (57.1 percent) but in Lawngtlai majority of the VLEs (80%) use Cellular Data (Airtel 4G) for providing CSC services. Moreover, the internet connectivity in Aizawl District is relatively satisfactory however in Lawngtlai District it presents significant challenges like the scarcity of mobile towers results in weak signal strength and the lack of power supply also further restricts the use of internet services in Lawngtlai District.

| Table 6.6: Number of services offered at CSC |              |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                       |              |           |         |               |                    |
|                                              |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                        | 1-5          | 5         | 14.3    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|                                              | 6-10         | 7         | 20.0    | 20.0          | 34.3               |
|                                              | 11-15        | 6         | 17.1    | 17.1          | 51.4               |
|                                              | More than 15 | 17        | 48.6    | 48.6          | 97.1               |
|                                              | Can't Say    | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                              | Total        | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                    |              |           |         |               |                    |
|                                              |              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                        | 1-5          | 17        | 48.6    | 48.6          | 48.6               |
|                                              | 6-10         | 9         | 25.7    | 25.7          | 74.3               |
|                                              |              |           |         |               |                    |

|  |              |    |       |       |       |
|--|--------------|----|-------|-------|-------|
|  | 11-15        | 4  | 11.4  | 11.4  | 85.7  |
|  | More than 15 | 4  | 11.4  | 11.4  | 97.1  |
|  | Can't say    | 1  | 2.9   | 2.9   | 100.0 |
|  | Total        | 35 | 100.0 | 100.0 |       |

**Source: Field Study**

The number of CSCs that provide services varies from one to more than fifteen. 14.3 percent of CSCs provided between 1–5 services, 20 percent 6–10 services, 17.1 percent 11–15 services and 48.6 percent more than 15 services. In Lawngtlai, each CSC has a different number of services available. Here, out of 35 CSCs, 48.6 percent provided between 1–5 services, 25.7 percent 6–10 services, 11.4 percent 11–15 services and again 11.4 percent provided more than 15 services only 2.9 percent can't say anything

In comparison between the two districts, the number of services offered by CSCs varies widely. In Aizawl, 48.6 percent of CSCs provide more than 15 services, while in Lawngtlai District only 11.4 percent of CSCs provide more than 15 services. Also, in Lawngtlai the percentage of CSCs providing services between 1-5 is very high with 48.6 percent in comparison with 14.3 CSCs in the Aizwal district.

| Table 6.7: Types of services provided by CSC |     |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------|-----|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                       |     |           |         |               |                    |
|                                              |     | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                        | G2C | 9         | 25.7    | 25.7          | 25.7               |
|                                              | G2B | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 31.4               |
|                                              | B2C | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 34.3               |

|                  |           |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  | Any other | 23        | 65.7    | 65.7          | 100.0              |
|                  | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | G2C       | 21        | 60.0    | 60.0          | 60.0               |
|                  | G2B       | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 65.7               |
|                  | B2C       | 4         | 11.4    | 11.4          | 77.1               |
|                  | Any other | 8         | 22.9    | 22.9          | 100.0              |
|                  | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

Researcher found that the types of services provided by CSCs in Aizawl at various levels are wide-ranging such includes types of services provided by government-to-citizen are 25.7 percent of CSCs, government-to-business services by 5.7 percent, and business-to- citizen services by 2.9 percent. At the same time, 65.7 percent of VLEs were offering ‘other services’ other than G2C, G2B and B2C to the customers in Aizawl District. In Lawngtlai District, among the services offered, 60 percent of CSCs only give services government to citizens, whereas 5.7 percent only offer services to government to businesses and 11.4 percent offer businesses to citizens services. Meanwhile, 22.9 percent of VLEs offer services to citizens other than (G2C; G2B and B2C). Overall in Aizawl District, 48.6 percent offer more than 15 services; most provide a variety of services beyond just government-to-citizen (G2C) but in Lawngtlai District 60 percent provide G2C services only with 22.9 percent offering a mix of services thus the CSCs in Lawngtlai District need to expand their services in the category of any other services.

| Table 6.8: Actively promote CSC Services |       |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                   |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                          |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                    | Yes   | 34        | 97.1    | 97.1          | 97.1               |
|                                          | No    | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                          | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                          |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                    | Yes   | 24        | 68.6    | 68.6          | 68.6               |
|                                          | No    | 11        | 31.4    | 31.4          | 100.0              |
|                                          | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Regarding the promotion of CSC Services, except One VLE responded that he did not advertise CSC services to the common public, whereas 97.1 percent of VLEs actively promote their businesses, where few VLEs use local newspapers to advertise their CSCs; on the other hand, the majority of VLEs use social media platforms, particularly Instagram and Whatsup App to promote their services in Aizawl District. In relation to CSC Services publicity in Lawngtlai District, 31.4 percent of VLEs do not advertise their CSC services, compared to 68.6 percent that actively do. The majority of VLEs use social media platforms particularly Instagram and WhatsApp to advertise their services but some also use local newspapers. In comparison, 97.1 percent of VLEs from Aizawl Districts promote their services while in Lawngtlai District 68.6 percent actively promote their services. These two districts promote their services mainly through social media platforms.



| Table 6.9: Receive any training before becoming a VLE |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                 | Yes   | 25        | 71.4    | 71.4          | 71.4               |
|                                                       | No    | 10        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 100.0              |
|                                                       | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Lawngtlai |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid     | Yes   | 20        | 57.1    | 57.1          | 57.1               |
|           | No    | 15        | 42.9    | 42.9          | 100.0              |
|           | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

A key component of human development in every field is training. Therefore, above Table 6.9 also shows that 28.6 percent of VLEs did not get any kind of training, while 71.4 percent of the majority of VLEs already received training in Aizawl District. Meanwhile, in Lawngtlai District majority of VLEs or 57.1 percent had some kind of training before becoming VLE while 42.9 percent were still awaiting one.

Overall VLEs in Aizawl District are in a better position in comparison with the VLEs from the Lawngtlai district in terms of training received. If the Department of Information and Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram, or Mizoram State e-Governance Society or CSCs Pvt Limited or any other concerned stakeholders can provide training to all VLEs then it will be much worthwhile for the effective and efficient functioning of CSCs.

| Table 6.10: Getting any support from the government |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                              |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                     |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                               | Yes   | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 8.6                |
|                                                     | No    | 32        | 91.4    | 91.4          | 100.0              |
|                                                     | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                           |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                     |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                               | Yes   | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 8.6                |
|                                                     | No    | 32        | 91.4    | 91.4          | 100.0              |
|                                                     | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

From above Table 6.10, the data indicates that merely 8.6 percent of VLEs, specifically those operating CSCs in version 1.0, received government support. In contrast, 91.4 percent of VLEs lack any assistance and request the government to improve services at the CSCs portal, reliable Internet connections, and urgently needed essential equipment such as solar modules, computers and printers according to VLEs in Aizawl District. In Lawngtlai District, currently only 8.6 percent of VLEs are receiving financial or in-kind support from the government, specifically those operating CSCs under version 1.0. In contrast, 91.4 percent of VLEs are not receiving any form of assistance from the government. Overall the VLEs from both the districts, have expressed a critical need for essential equipment such as solar modules, computers and printers as well as a more reliable internet connection and additional services available through the CSCs portal from the government side.

| Table 6.11: Sufficient resources available to operate effectively |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                            |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                   |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                             | Yes   | 18        | 51.5    | 51.5          | 48.6               |
|                                                                   | No    | 17        | 48.5    | 48.5          | 97.1               |
|                                                                   | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                         |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                   |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                             | Yes   | 18        | 51.5    | 51.5          | 48.6               |
|                                                                   | No    | 17        | 48.5    | 48.5          | 97.1               |
|                                                                   | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

The above table 6.11 shows that in both the Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts, 51.5 percent of respondents have sufficient resources to operate CSCs effectively, while 48.5 percent are experiencing challenges related to financial capital for the effective operation of CSCs. Thus in both the Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts, the opinion of VLEs is more or less the same about the resources for the operations of CSCs. Also, these VLEs have expressed a desire to get some kind of financial support from the Government of Mizoram for the smooth functioning of CSCs

| Table 6.12 Customer's Frequency to Visit CSC |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                       |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|                                              |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                        | Daily (10-20 Customers) | 32        | 91.4    | 91.4          | 91.4               |
|                                              | Weekly (10 Customers)   | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 100.0              |
|                                              | Monthly (1-5 Customers) | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                              | Total                   | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                    |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|                                              |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                        | Daily (10-20 Customers) | 31        | 88.6    | 88.6          | 88.6               |
|                                              | Weekly (10 Customers)   | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 97.1               |
|                                              | Monthly (1-5 Customers) | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                              | Total                   | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Table 6.12 illustrates that three CSCs representing 8.6 percent have an average of 10 customers each week while 32 percent of CSCs receive at least 10 to

20 frequent customers daily in Aizawl District. In the case of Lawngtlai District, the data presented in the table indicates that 31 percent of CSCs receive a minimum of 10 to 20 regular visitors daily while 3 CSCs, accounting for 8.6 percent have an average of 10 customers per week and 1 VLE has experienced 1 to 5 customers monthly. Thus, most (91.4 percent) of CSCs from Aizawl have daily customers while 88.6 percent of CSCs from Lawngtlai have daily customers. Additionally, the researcher while having a conversation with the VLEs observed that, while customers in Aizawl frequently visit CSCs and there is a significant number of visitors, but in Lawngtlai most customers tend to avoid CSCs, instead they prefer to go to the DC office for the services. This preference is primarily due to the lower costs associated with the DC office which is also less crowded compared to the Aizawl District.

**Table 6.13: Category of Services most utilized by Customers**

| <b>Aizawl</b> |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|               |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid         | E -District       | 20        | 75      | 75            | 94.3               |
|               | Adhaar Enrollment | 10        | 20      | 20            | 97.1               |
|               | Others            | 5         | 5       | 5             | 100.0              |
|               | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | E-District        | 34        | 97.1    | 97.1          | 97.1               |
|                  | Adhaar Enrollment | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                  | Others            | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                  | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Table 6.13 shows that most customers utilize CSCs for e-District services (75 percent), followed by Aadhaar enrollment and correction (20 per cent). Additionally, customers likely use various other government schemes such as PM-KISAN, e-Shram and the Online Scholarship Application from CSCs in Aizawl District. Similarly, the data presented in this table indicates that the majority of customers (97.1 percent) utilize CSCs for e-District services followed by various Government Schemes such as PM-KISAN, e-Shram and the Online Scholarship Application among other services avail from CSCs at Lawngtlai District. Thus, this table indicates that most customers from both districts use CSCs for e-district services. Of course in comparison with Aizawl District, the customers in Lawngtlai are in large numbers. Also, some customers access government schemes like PM-KISAN, e-Shram, and the Online Scholarship Application at CSCs which is very minimal. Furthermore, it observed that customers from the Lawngtlai District CSCs possess a greater awareness of Central Government services compared to those in Aizawl District. This disparity can primarily be attributed to the relatively low socio-economic conditions in Lawngtlai District where the population relies significantly on Government Schemes and Programmes.

| <b>Table 6.14: Customers find CSC service charges reasonable</b> |           |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Aizawl</b>                                                    |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                  |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                            | Yes       | 30        | 85.7    | 85.7          | 85.7               |
|                                                                  | No        | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 94.3               |
|                                                                  | Can't say | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 100.0              |
|                                                                  | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Lawngtlai |           |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid     | Yes       | 9         | 25.7    | 74.3          | 74.3               |
|           | No        | 26        | 74.3    | 25.7          | 100.0              |
|           | Can't say | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|           | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

According to the VLE respondents in Aizawl District, 85.7 percent of customers believe their service charges are fair. In contrast, 8.6 percent of CSC customers think the rates are likely high while 5.7 percent believe neither is the case. However, in Lawngtlai District, 25.7 percent of customers consider their service charges to be reasonable whereas 74.3 percent of CSC customers believe that the service charges are not reasonable as per the VLEs response. Thus in comparison with the Aizawl District, the customers in Lawngtlai District found service charges more costly or not reasonable. This is the reason why Lawngtlai District customers favour the DC office over the CSCs due to lower charges. Additionally, the DC office benefits from the provision of paper, printers and ink at no cost courtesy of the Government of Mizoram which contributes to their reduced fees compared to the CSCs. Also, this reflects the socio-economic status of both districts with Aizawl being more prosperous than Lawngtlai District.

| Table 6.15: Rate the overall satisfaction of customers |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                 |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                        |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                  | Very satisfied    | 10        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 28.6               |
|                                                        | Satisfied         | 15        | 42.8    | 42.8          | 71.4               |
|                                                        | Neutral           | 9         | 25.7    | 25.7          | 97.1               |
|                                                        | Dissatisfied      | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                                        | Very Dissatisfied | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                                        | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                              |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                        |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                  | Very satisfied    | 10        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 28.6               |
|                                                        | Satisfied         | 21        | 60.0    | 60.0          | 88.6               |
|                                                        | Neutral           | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 97.1               |
|                                                        | Dissatisfied      | 1         | 2.8     | 2.8           | 100.0              |
|                                                        | Very Dissatisfied | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                                                        | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

According to the aforementioned data (Table 6.15), 28.6 percent of VLEs reported that customers are very satisfied with the way CSCs deliver the services. Meanwhile, 42.8 percent express satisfaction while the remaining 25.7 percent of VLEs are neutral about the satisfaction of customers and 2.9 percent VLEs report



being dissatisfied in the Aizawl district. In Lawngtlai District, the table indicates that 28.6 percent of VLEs reported that customers are very satisfied with the handling of CSC services, same with the Aizawl District, while 60 percent expressed satisfaction more than Aizawl District. The remaining 8.6 percent of VLEs are neutral about the satisfaction of customers and 2.8 represent VLEs report being dissatisfied. Thus, in Lawngtlai District, more than 80 percent of customers are very satisfied and satisfied combined with CSC services in comparison with Aizawl District it was only 70 percent. So, CSCs in Aizawl District need to look at this issue with seriousness.

| <b>Table 6.16: Handle customer complaints or feedback by VLE</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Aizawl</b>                                                    |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                  |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                            | Yes   | 23        | 65.7    | 65.7          | 65.7               |
|                                                                  | No    | 12        | 34.3    | 34.3          | 100.0              |
|                                                                  | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b>                                                 |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                  |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                            | Yes   | 25        | 71.4    | 71.4          | 71.4               |
|                                                                  | No    | 10        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 100.0              |
|                                                                  | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Above Table 6.16 reveals that 65.7 percent of VLEs offered a grievance box for customer complaints and responded to inquiries in the Aizawl District whereas it was 71.4 percent in Lawngtlai District. Thus, it clearly shows that VLEs in Lawngtlai District are more open towards their customers in comparison with the

VLEs of Aizawl District, by providing the mechanism of grievances redressal. However, overall in both the districts, there is a need to address this issue. Furthermore, the researcher notes that a significant portion of the feedback from the Aizawl District pertains to the durability of various services being issued, as they are unable to deliver them in a timely manner. Additionally, customers experienced a much awaited time for their turn to access services and also expressed a desire for more counters at the CSCs. In contrast, feedback from Lawngtlai District primarily focuses on inadequate internet and power supply with a request for an expanded range of services at the CSCs to ensure that customers can access everything they need at these centres.

| Table 6.17: Any significant operational challenges facing while running CSC |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                      |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                             |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                       | Yes   | 19        | 54.3    | 54.3          | 54.3               |
|                                                                             | No    | 16        | 45.7    | 45.7          | 100.0              |
|                                                                             | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                   |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                             |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                       | Yes   | 22        | 62.9    | 62.9          | 62.9               |
|                                                                             | No    | 13        | 37.1    | 37.1          | 100.0              |
|                                                                             | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Out of the 35 VLEs in Aizawl District, 54.3 percent facing operational difficulties for running their CSCs, primarily due to poor internet connectivity and insufficient power supply. Conversely, 45.7 percent of VLEs reported no issues in

running their CSCs. In Lawngtlai District, the numbers are higher than in Aizawl District with 62.9 percent facing operational challenges and their main issues are the same as that of Aizawl District with a lack of power supply and a poor internet connection, while 37.1 percent of VLEs are not facing any difficulties in operating CSCs. During the researcher visit to the CSCs in both the districts several notable operational challenges were identified. The primary issues include inadequate power supply and unreliable internet connectivity. Furthermore, the VLEs particularly those from Lawngtlai District possess outdated equipment that necessitates modernization to effectively operate the CSCs. In contrast, Aizawl District does not face significant problems as only four or five CSCs are equipped with outdated devices.

| <b>Table 6.18: Earning enough as VLE for your own livelihood</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Aizawl</b>                                                    |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                  |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                            | Yes   | 13        | 37.1    | 37.1          | 37.1               |
|                                                                  | No    | 22        | 62.9    | 62.9          | 100.0              |
|                                                                  | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b>                                                 |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                  |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                            | Yes   | 12        | 34.3    | 34.3          | 34.3               |
|                                                                  | No    | 23        | 65.7    | 65.7          | 100.0              |
|                                                                  | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Table 6.18 presented above indicates that 37.1 percent of VLEs believe their income generated from CSCs is sufficient to sustain their living expenses. On the

other hand, a significant majority, comprising 62.9 percent, perceive their income from these CSC services as inadequate in Aizawl District. In case of Lawngtlai District, only 34.3 percent of VLEs believe their earnings from CSCs are sufficient to sustain a livelihood, whereas 65.7 percent of VLEs feel that their income from CSC services is inadequate for their livelihood. Thus, in both Districts, this disparity highlights the differing perspectives among VLEs regarding the financial viability of their operations. Furthermore, discussions with the VLEs from both Aizawl and Lawngtlai, along with the researcher revealed that the income generated from the services provided by the CSCs is insufficient for sustaining a livelihood. The VLEs express a desire for increased service rates or charges and seek additional services to be offered through the CSC portal. In Mizoram, there exists a multitude of services that CSCs could potentially manage but the Government of Mizoram opts to employ temporary staff to handle these services at the departmental level (for instance, Online Ration Card, Aadhaar Services, Birth Certificate Digitalization, etc). This decision has led to a decline in the services available through the CSCs which is detrimental to the income of VLEs.

| <b>Table 6.19: VLE Satisfaction towards the Cost of the Service Charges provided by the Customers</b> |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Aizawl</b>                                                                                         |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                                       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                                                 | Yes   | 19        | 54.3    | 54.3          | 54.3               |
|                                                                                                       | No    | 16        | 45.7    | 45.7          | 100.0              |
|                                                                                                       | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b>                                                                                      |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                                       |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |

|       |       |    |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|----|-------|-------|-------|
| Valid | Yes   | 21 | 60.0  | 60.0  | 60.0  |
|       | No    | 14 | 40.0  | 40.0  | 100.0 |
|       | Total | 35 | 100.0 | 100.0 |       |

**Source: Field Study**

The data illustrated in Table 6.19 reveals that a considerable 54.3 percent of VLEs respondents voiced their dissatisfaction regarding the pricing of service charges for various services offered to customers in the Aizawl District. Conversely, 45.7 percent of the respondents asserted that they find the service charges applied to customers acceptable. This striking contrast in perceptions underscores a prevalent dissatisfaction among the majority, while simultaneously acknowledging that a significant number of respondents believe these costs are reasonable. Thus, it reflects a complex landscape of opinions concerning service charges. On the other hand, in Lawngtlai District, more than the majority of VLEs i.e., 60 percent expressed satisfaction with the service charges for various services offered to customers, whereas only 40 percent indicated dissatisfaction. Thus, it is necessary to address the issue of VLEs in both the Districts with respect to reasonable service charges.

| Table 6.20: COVID-19 Pandemic affected your Operations |           |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                 |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                        |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                  | Yes       | 13        | 37.1    | 37.1          | 37.1               |
|                                                        | No        | 21        | 60.0    | 60.0          | 97.1               |
|                                                        | Can't say | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                                        | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Lawngtlai |           |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid     | Yes       | 14        | 40.0    | 40.0          | 40.0               |
|           | No        | 17        | 48.6    | 48.6          | 88.6               |
|           | Can't say | 4         | 11.4    | 11.4          | 100.0              |
|           | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

The above mentioned data in Table 6.20 indicates that approximately 37.1 percent of VLEs experienced substantial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as they were unable to offer CSC services, primarily because of the stringent lockdown measures and the curfew implemented by both central and state government in Aizawl District. In contrast, 60 percent of VLEs responded that they did not face any significant difficulties during the pandemic. Meanwhile, a small fraction, specifically 2.9 percent of VLEs remained undecided or uncertain regarding their experiences in this context. This distribution of responses highlights the varied impacts of the pandemic on VLEs, with some facing considerable hurdles while others navigated the situation without major issues.

Similarly, in Lawngtlai District 40 percent of VLEs experienced disruptions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as they were unable to operate their CSC services because of the total lockdown and curfew. While 48.6 percent of VLEs reported no impact and 11.4 percent of VLEs can't say anything. Thus, in comparison, the VLEs in Aizawl District are in a better position than the VLEs in Lawngtlai District.

| Table 6.21: You want to operate CSC in the future |           |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                            |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                   |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                             | Yes       | 24        | 68.6    | 68.6          | 68.6               |
|                                                   | No        | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 74.3               |
|                                                   | Can't say | 9         | 25.7    | 25.7          | 100.0              |
|                                                   | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                         |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                   |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                             | Yes       | 23        | 65.7    | 65.7          | 65.7               |
|                                                   | No        | 7         | 20.0    | 20.0          | 85.7               |
|                                                   | Can't say | 5         | 14.3    | 14.3          | 100.0              |
|                                                   | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

The data in the Table 6.21 reveals that in the Aizawl District a substantial majority, specifically 68.6 percent of VLEs, express a desire to continue operating CSCs in the future. This strong inclination indicates a commitment to this service model despite challenges. On the other hand, 5.7 percent of VLEs don't want to continue this profession or CSC. Additionally, an interesting observation is that 9 VLEs, representing 25.7 percent, are unable to reach a definitive conclusion about their future intentions. This mix of responses showcases a diverse range of attitudes among VLEs from a robust enthusiasm for continued service provision to uncertainty and indecision among a notable minority.

In Lawngtlai District, same as with the Aizawl District 65.7 percent of VLEs express a desire to continue operating CSCs in the future, while 20 percent of VLEs don't want to continue with CSC. While a total of 5 VLEs representing 14.3 percent, are unable to provide a definitive response on this matter. Overall, Table 6.21 shows

that the percentage of VLEs who don't want to continue with CSC in the future is higher in Lawngtlai District in comparison with Aizawl District, whereas the percentage of VLEs who are still not sure about the future of CSC is higher in Aizawl District.

| Table 6.22: You believe your CSC has improved access to services in the locality |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                           |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                  |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                            | Strongly agree    | 10        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 28.6               |
|                                                                                  | Agree             | 20        | 57.1    | 57.1          | 85.7               |
|                                                                                  | Neutral           | 4         | 11.4    | 11.4          | 97.1               |
|                                                                                  | Disagree          | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                  | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                  | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                        |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                  |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                            | Strongly agree    | 13        | 37.1    | 37.1          | 37.1               |
|                                                                                  | Agree             | 20        | 57.1    | 57.1          | 94.3               |
|                                                                                  | Neutral           | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                  | Disagree          | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                  | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                  | Total             | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study



Table 6.22 highlights that 28.6 percent and 57.1 percent of the 35 VLEs respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ respectively that CSCs have significantly enhanced access to public services within the locality indicating a positive perception of CSCs role. Meanwhile, 11.4 percent of the respondents remained ‘Neutral’ and only one VLE, expressed disagreement regarding the idea that CSCs have improved service access in the locality. This distribution of opinions reflects a generally favorable view of CSCs among the majority. In Lawngtlai District, 37.1 percent of the respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ and 57.1 percent ‘Agree’ that the CSCs have enhanced access to services in the local area, while 5.7 percent of the respondents remained ‘Neutral’. Overall, combining both ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ VLEs percentages, then in Aizawl District 85.7 percent of VLEs and 94.2 percent from Lawngtlai Districts believe that CSCs have improved access to public services in their locality which is a good sign.

According to the findings of the researcher, it is evident that these CSCs have enhanced access to services within the local area. For example, in Aizawl District a significant number of individuals favour CSCs for obtaining e-district services as the DC office tends to be overcrowded and also necessitating long waits in queues and also incur some expenses for local transportation. Furthermore, in Lawngtlai particularly in the more remote areas of the district residents can conveniently access various services from CSCs, which ultimately conserves their time, money and energy.

### **Can you share any success stories from your CSC?**

This questionnaire is open-ended allowing VLEs to share their success stories. Among the 70 respondents, only a few VLEs from the Lawngtlai District provided an answer to this question and those VLEs are:

**1. CSC Location: Kamalnagar I**

**Name: Tarun Bikash Chakma**

**District: Lawngtlai District**

Tarun got numerous narratives within his CSC and one of the most fulfilling experiences was aiding a local farmer in accessing government schemes for subsidies and loans. Due to his support, the farmer successfully completed the necessary documentation and received financial assistance that enhanced his agricultural enterprise.

**2. CSC Location: Bajeisora**

**Name: Karuna Dev Chakma**

**District: Lawngtlai District**

He shares the success story related to e-KYC, where he assisted and guided numerous farmers in his community. As a result of the e-KYC enrollment, he conducted in his CSC farmers are now able to access the benefits of PM-KISAN schemes.

**3. CSC Location: Diltlang South**

**Name: Jacob PC Malsawmzuala**

**District: Lawngtlai District**

Mr. Jacob, in his success narratives, emphasized that CSC has instilled in him a sense of confidence and happiness, enabling him to provide optimal services to customers at a nearby location rather than requiring them to visit various offices.

| Table 6.23 : You feel that your work as a VLE is valued by the Customers |           |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                   |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                          |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                    | Yes       | 29        | 82.8    | 82.8          | 82.9               |
|                                                                          | No        | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 85.7               |
|                                                                          | Can't say | 5         | 14.3    | 14.3          | 100.0              |
|                                                                          | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                          |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                    | Yes       | 27        | 77.1    | 77.1          | 77.1               |
|                                                                          | No        | 3         | 8.6     | 8.6           | 85.7               |
|                                                                          | Can't say | 5         | 14.3    | 14.3          | 100.0              |
|                                                                          | Total     | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

In the Aizawl District, the data indicates that a notable 82.8 percent of respondents believe that customers appreciate the efforts and contributions of VLEs in their roles. This strong majority suggests that the work performed by VLEs is generally well-regarded within the community. Conversely, 2.9 percent of respondents expressed that their work is recognized by customers as a whole. This perspective raises concerns about the visibility and acknowledgment of their contributions. Furthermore, 14.3 percent of respondents stated that they are unable to comment on this matter which could reflect uncertainty or a lack of engagement with customer feedback.

In Lawngtlai District, according to Table 6.23, 77.1 percent of respondents indicated that the work performed by VLEs is appreciated by customers. Conversely, 8.6 percent reported that they do not receive any recognition or value for their work from customers, while 14.3 percent were unable to express an opinion on this issue. Overall, this data presents a mixed picture of customer perceptions regarding VLEs work with a significant majority recognizing value while a smaller segment feels overlooked.

### **What improvements would you suggest for enhancing the effectiveness of CSCs in Mizoram?**

Here are some suggestions for enhancing CSCs in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts based on the conversations with the VLEs:

- **Infrastructure Support:** Provide a better infrastructure which includes reliable electricity, internet connectivity and essential equipment like solar backup battery, Printer and Ink, Desktop Computer, Xerox Machine, CCTV etc. All this would help to ensure uninterrupted service delivery.
- **Training & Capacity Building:** More comprehensive training programmes for VLEs on new Government schemes, digital literacy and technical support would improve service delivery and efficiency.
- **Financial Assistance:** Giving financial support or subsidies for setting up and maintaining CSCs especially in remote areas would make it easier for VLEs to operate effectively.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Increasing awareness about the services available at CSCs through local media and community outreach programmes would help more people benefit from these services.
- **Technical Support:** Providing regular technical support for resolving software and hardware issues would help maintain smooth operations.

- **More Services at CSCs:** Providing more services especially government services should be available only at the CSCs portal so that VLEs can have more profit and an increase in service rate.
- **One Village One CSCs:** Some VLEs suggest implementing a “One Village, One CSC” approach. This could boost income especially since Mizoram’s small population limits transaction volume. It would also help VLEs increase their transaction rates and overall engagement.

These improvements would go a long way in strengthening the role of CSCs in serving the community of Mizoram.

| Table 6.24 : You would benefit from more training opportunities in technology and service delivery for running CSC |       |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                                                             |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                                                    |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                                                              | Yes   | 34        | 97.1    | 97.1          | 97.1               |
|                                                                                                                    | No    | 1         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                                                    | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                                                          |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                                                    |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                                                              | Yes   | 33        | 94.3    | 94.3          | 94.3               |
|                                                                                                                    | No    | 2         | 5.7     | 5.7           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                                                    | Total | 35        | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

The data shown in the Table 6.24 reveals that an overwhelming 97.1 percent of respondents believe that enhanced training opportunities in technology and service delivery would significantly benefit the operation of CSCs in the Aizawl District whereas in Lawngtlai District it was 94.3 percent. This strong consensus in both the districts highlights a collective recognition of the importance of skill development in improving service quality and efficiency. In contrast, a small minority specifically 2.9 percent and 5.7 percent in Aizawl and Lawngtlai District respectively expressed the opinion that such training opportunities would not be useful. This contrasting viewpoint raises questions about the reasons behind their skepticism. Overall, the findings underscore a clear demand for increased training initiatives, suggesting that investing in these opportunities could lead to improved operations and greater success for CSCs.

**Data Analysis for Customers of Common Service Centres in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts:**

| Table 6.25 : Age Group |                |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                 |                |           |         |               |                    |
|                        |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                  | Below 18 years | 20        | 11.4    | 11.4          | 11.4               |
|                        | 18-25          | 55        | 31.4    | 31.4          | 42.9               |
|                        | 26-35          | 69        | 39.4    | 39.4          | 82.3               |
|                        | 36-45          | 18        | 10.4    | 10.4          | 92.6               |
|                        | 46 & above     | 13        | 7.4     | 7.4           | 100.0              |
|                        | Total          | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Lawngtlai |                |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid     | Below 18 years | 18        | 10.3    | 10.3          | 10.3               |
|           | 18-25          | 65        | 37.1    | 37.1          | 47.4               |
|           | 26-35          | 46        | 26.3    | 26.3          | 73.7               |
|           | 36-45          | 21        | 12.0    | 12.0          | 85.7               |
|           | 46 & above     | 25        | 14.3    | 14.3          | 100.0              |
|           | Total          | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

The information displayed in the Table 6.25 reveals that 11.4 percent of customers are Below 18 years 31.4 percent are between the age of 18-25; 39.4 percent are within the 26-35 age bracket, 10.4 percent belong to the 36-45 age group and 7.4 percent are aged 46 & above in the Aizawl District. In case of Lawngtlai District, the data presented in the table indicates that 10.3 percent of customers belong to below 18 years age group; 37.1 percent are aged between 18-25, 26.3 percent fall within the 26-35 age range, 12.0 percent are from the 36-45 age group, and finally, 14.3 percent are aged 46 & above. The age group (Aizawl & Lawngtlai) shows varied engagement. In both areas, the most prominent age group is 18-25 years, followed by 26-35 years. This suggests that CSCs are popular among younger people.

| Table 6.26 : Gender |        |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl              |        |           |         |               |                    |
|                     |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid               | Male   | 114       | 65.1    | 65.1          | 65.1               |
|                     | Female | 61        | 34.9    | 34.9          | 100.0              |
|                     | Total  | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

| Lawngtlai |        |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|           |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid     | Male   | 94        | 53.7    | 53.7          | 53.7               |
|           | Female | 81        | 46.3    | 46.3          | 100.0              |
|           | Total  | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

According to Table 6.26 data reveals that 65.1 percent of the customers are male whereas 34.9 percent are female in Aizawl District whereas it was 53.7 percent of customers are male and 46.3 percent are female in Lawngtlai District. The Gender representation is relatively balanced in both districts but with a slightly higher proportion of males in both areas.

| Table 6.27 : Educational Qualification |                  |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------|------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                 |                  |           |         |               |                    |
|                                        |                  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                  | High School      | 57        | 32.5    | 32.5          | 32.5               |
|                                        | Higher Secondary | 35        | 20.0    | 20.0          | 52.6               |
|                                        | Undergraduate    | 50        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 81.1               |
|                                        | Postgraduate     | 32        | 18.3    | 18.3          | 99.4               |
|                                        | Other            | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 100.0              |
|                                        | Total            | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                              |                  |           |         |               |                    |
|                                        |                  | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                  | High School      | 79        | 45.1    | 45.1          | 45.1               |



|  |                  |     |       |       |       |
|--|------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
|  | Higher Secondary | 21  | 12.0  | 12.0  | 57.1  |
|  | Undergraduate    | 60  | 34.3  | 34.3  | 91.4  |
|  | Postgraduate     | 12  | 6.9   | 6.9   | 98.3  |
|  | Others           | 3   | 1.7   | 1.7   | 100.0 |
|  | Total            | 175 | 100.0 | 100.0 |       |

Source: Field Study

Table 6.27 shows the educational qualifications of the customers, 32.5 percent of the respondents have finished high school, 20 percent have achieved higher secondary education, 28.6 percent are undergraduate, 18.3 percent has obtained a master's degree and one respondent holds other technical qualifications in Aizawl District. In Lawngtlai District, the customer's educational qualifications are 45.1 percent of respondents have completed high school, 12.0 percent have attained higher secondary education, 34.3 percent are graduates, 6.9 percent have completed a master's degree and 1.7 percent possesses other technical qualifications. In both districts, a significant portion of respondents have completed high school or higher secondary education which likely reflects the accessibility and awareness of CSC services among individuals with some level of education.

| Table 6.28 : Occupation |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                  |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|                         |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                   | Student                 | 61        | 34.9    | 34.9          | 34.9               |
|                         | Government Employee     | 15        | 8.6     | 8.6           | 43.4               |
|                         | Private Sector Employee | 28        | 16.0    | 16.0          | 59.4               |

|                  |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  | Self-employed           | 30        | 17.1    | 17.1          | 76.6               |
|                  | Unemployed              | 29        | 16.6    | 16.6          | 93.1               |
|                  | Other                   | 12        | 6.8     | 6.8           | 100.0              |
|                  | Total                   | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |                         |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |                         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Student                 | 52        | 29.7    | 29.7          | 29.7               |
|                  | Government Employee     | 28        | 16.0    | 16.0          | 45.7               |
|                  | Private Sector Employee | 13        | 7.4     | 7.4           | 53.1               |
|                  | Self-Employed           | 35        | 20.0    | 20.0          | 73.1               |
|                  | Unemployed              | 10        | 5.8     | 5.8           | 78.9               |
|                  | Others                  | 37        | 21.1    | 21.1          | 100.0              |
|                  | Total                   | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

According to Table 6.28, 34.9 percent were students, 8.6 percent were government employees, 16 percent were employed in the private sector, 17.1 percent were self-employed, 16.6 percent were unemployed, and 6.8 percent were involved in other professions from the Aizawl District. In Lawngtlai District, 29.7 percent identified as students, 16 percent as government employees, 7.4 percent as private sector employees, 20 percent as self-employed, 5.8 percent as unemployed, and 21.1 percent as engaged in various other occupations. Overall, in both districts students and self-employed individuals are the most frequent users of CSCs, along with government employees and unemployed individuals also representing a notable portion of respondents.

| Table 6.29 : You are aware of the Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Mizoram |       |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                     |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                            |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                      | Yes   | 68        | 38.9    | 38.9          | 38.9               |
|                                                                            | No    | 107       | 61.1    | 61.1          | 100.0              |
|                                                                            | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                  |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                            |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                      | Yes   | 60        | 34.3    | 34.3          | 34.3               |
|                                                                            | No    | 115       | 65.7    | 65.7          | 100.0              |
|                                                                            | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

The data presented in Table 6.29 indicates that 38.9 percent of respondents are aware of Common Service Centres (CSCs), while 61.1 percent of customers in Aizawl District are not familiar with CSCs. On the other hand, the table reveals that 34.3 percent of respondents are familiar with CSCs, whereas 65.7 percent of customers lack awareness of CSCs in Lawngtlai District. The awareness of CSCs is slightly lower in Lawngtlai (34.3 percent) compared to Aizawl (38.9 percent). From the field study, the researcher found that over 60 percent of customers in both districts are unaware of CSCs and their services. Therefore, there is a clear need for awareness campaigns to increase the outreach and visibility of CSCs in these areas.

| Table 6.30 : You learned about the CSCs initially |                      |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                            |                      |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                   |                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                             | Social Media         | 73        | 41.7    | 41.7          | 41.7               |
|                                                   | Friends              | 41        | 23.4    | 23.4          | 65.1               |
|                                                   | Family               | 15        | 8.6     | 8.6           | 73.7               |
|                                                   | Government Campaigns | 2         | 1.1     | 1.1           | 74.9               |
|                                                   | Newspapers           | 43        | 24.6    | 24.6          | 99.4               |
|                                                   | Community Meetings   | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 100.0              |
|                                                   | Total                | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                         |                      |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                   |                      | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                             | Social Media         | 74        | 42.3    | 42.3          | 42.3               |
|                                                   | Friends              | 61        | 34.9    | 34.9          | 77.1               |
|                                                   | Family               | 22        | 12.6    | 12.6          | 89.7               |
|                                                   | Government Campaigns | 9         | 5.1     | 5.1           | 94.9               |
|                                                   | Newspapers           | 6         | 3.4     | 3.4           | 98.3               |
|                                                   | Community Meetings   | 2         | 1.1     | 1.1           | 99.4               |
|                                                   | Other                | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 100.0              |
|                                                   | Total                | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

According to the data presented in Table 6.30, shows that in Aizawl District 41.7 percent of respondents indicated that they became aware of CSCs via social media, 23.4 percent through friends, 8.6 percent through family, 1.1 percent through government campaigns, 24.6 percent through print media, and only 0.6 percent through community gatherings. In the case of Lawngtlai District, 42.3 percent of respondents responded that they learned about CSCs through social media, 34.9 percent through friends, 12.6 percent through family members, 5.1 percent through government campaigns, 3.4 percent through newspapers, 1.1 percent through community meetings and 0.6 percent from other sources. Thus, social media and friends are the most common methods of learning about CSCs in both districts with newspapers and family being secondary sources of information. The Government of Mizoram along with CSCs Pvt Limited should implement a more comprehensive awareness and outreach programme concerning CSCs to enhance their popularity among the citizens.

**Table 6.31: In your opinion, the publicity methods used to promote CSCs are effective**

| Aizawl |           |           |         |               |                    |
|--------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|        |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid  | Very Good | 11        | 6.3     | 6.3           | 6.3                |
|        | Good      | 97        | 55.4    | 55.4          | 61.7               |
|        | Average   | 67        | 38.3    | 38.3          | 100.0              |
|        | Poor      | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|        | Very poor | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |

|                  |           |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  | Total     | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Very good | 17        | 9.7     | 9.7           | 9.7                |
|                  | Good      | 130       | 74.3    | 74.3          | 84.0               |
|                  | Average   | 27        | 15.4    | 15.4          | 99.4               |
|                  | Poor      | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Very poor | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 100.0              |
|                  | Total     | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

As per the data presented in Table 6.31 indicates that 6.3 percent of respondents perceive the publicity strategies used to promote CSCs as ‘Very Good’, whereas 55.4 percent consider them to be ‘Good’. Furthermore, 38.3 percent assess these strategies as ‘Average’ in Aizawl District. The information provided in the above table reveals that in Lawngtlai District 9.7 percent of respondents consider the publicity methods employed to promote CSCs to be ‘Very Good’, while 74.3 percent regarded them as ‘Good’. Additionally, 15.4 percent view these methods as ‘Average’, and only one respondent perceives them as ‘Very Poor’. In comparison with Aizawl District, the respondents from Lawngtlai District are more satisfied with the publicity methods adopted to promote the CSCs.

| Table 6.32 :You are aware of the services offered by CSC |       |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                   |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                          |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                    | Yes   | 47        | 26.9    | 26.9          | 26.9               |
|                                                          | No    | 128       | 73.1    | 73.1          | 100.0              |
|                                                          | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                          |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                    | Yes   | 50        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 28.6               |
|                                                          | No    | 125       | 71.4    | 71.4          | 100.0              |
|                                                          | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Out of 175 respondents in Aizawl District, 26.9 percent are knowledgeable about the services offered by CSC, while 73.1 percent lack awareness of these services. Similarly, in Lawngtlai District 28.6 percent of respondents are familiar with the services provided by CSC whereas 71.4 percent are unaware of these services. Therefore, the above Table 6.32 clearly shows that there is a lack of awareness about the various services provided by the CSCs in both districts. Thus, it is imperative for the Government of Mizoram, CSCs Pvt Limited and the VLEs to enhance their efforts in disseminating information regarding the services available at the CSCs.

| Table 6.33: You ever used services provided by the CSC in Mizoram |       |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                            |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                   |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                             | Yes   | 168       | 96.0    | 96.0          | 96.0               |
|                                                                   | No    | 7         | 4.0     | 4.0           | 100.0              |
|                                                                   | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                         |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                   |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                             | Yes   | 162       | 92.6    | 92.6          | 92.6               |
|                                                                   | No    | 13        | 7.4     | 7.4           | 100.0              |
|                                                                   | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

According to Table 6.33, 96 percent of respondents indicated that they previously utilized the services provided by the CSC in Mizoram, while 4 percent stated that they had not taken advantage of the services offered by the CSC in Mizoram in Aizawl District. In Lawngtlai District, 92.6 percent of participants reported utilizing services offered by the CSC in Mizoram previously whereas 7.4 percent indicated that they never availed themselves of the services provided by the CSC in Mizoram. In both Districts, a high proportion of respondents used CSC services previously indicating a strong usage once people are aware of the services available.



| Table 6.34: If yes, specific services you utilized (Select whichever is applicable) |                                                          |           |         |               |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                                                                                     |                                                          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                               | E-District Services                                      | 35        | 20.0    | 20.0          | 20.0               |
|                                                                                     | Digital Literacy Campaigns                               | 3         | 1.7     | 1.7           | 21.7               |
|                                                                                     | Financial Services                                       | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 71.4               |
|                                                                                     | Certificate Issuance (e.g., Birth, Death, Caste, Income) | 86        | 49.1    | 49.1          | 70.9               |
|                                                                                     | Skill Development Programme                              | 50        | 28.6    | 28.6          | 100.0              |
|                                                                                     | Total                                                    | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                           |                                                          |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                     |                                                          | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                               | E-District Services                                      | 25        | 14.3    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|                                                                                     | Digital Literacy Programs                                | 6         | 3.4     | 3.4           | 17.7               |
|                                                                                     | Financial Services                                       | 8         | 4.6     | 4.6           | 22.3               |

|  |                                                                   |     |       |       |       |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
|  | Certificate<br>Insurance (e.g.,<br>Birth, Death,<br>Caste, Income | 75  | 42.8  | 42.8  | 65.1  |
|  | Skill<br>Development<br>Programme                                 | 5   | 2.9   | 2.9   | 68.0  |
|  | Other                                                             | 56  | 32.0  | 32.0  | 100.0 |
|  | Total                                                             | 175 | 100.0 | 100.0 |       |

**Source: Field Study**

In the Aizawl District, (Table 6.34) out of 175 respondents, 20 percent utilized e-District services, 1.7 percent has gone through CSCs for a digital literacy programme, 49.1 percent have used services for certificate issuance and 28.6 percent have registered at CSCs in the skill development programme. In the Lawngtlai District, 14.3 percent have availed e-District services, 3.4 percent gone through CSCs for digital literacy programme, 4.6 percent accessed financial services, 42.8 utilized services for certificate issuance, 2.9 percent registered in the skill development programme through CSCs and 32 percent accessed various other services. Overall, the most commonly used services in both districts are certificate issuance (e.g., birth, death, caste certificates) with other services like e-district services and skill development programmes being less frequently used.

#### **How many times do you visited CSC in the past (excluding the current visit)?**

Most customers in both districts (Aizawl and Lawngtlai) have visited CSCs multiple times and also most of the frequent customers have revisited CSCs for more than 15 times.

| Table 6.35 You are satisfied with the services offered by CSCs |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                         |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                          | Very Satisfied    | 17        | 9.7     | 9.7           | 9.7                |
|                                                                | Satisfied         | 146       | 83.4    | 83.4          | 93.1               |
|                                                                | Neutral           | 12        | 6.9     | 6.9           | 100.0              |
|                                                                | Dissatisfied      | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                | Very Dissatisfied | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                      |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                          | Very Satisfied    | 38        | 21.8    | 21.8          | 21.8               |
|                                                                | Satisfied         | 114       | 65.1    | 65.1          | 86.9               |
|                                                                | Neutral           | 20        | 11.4    | 11.4          | 98.3               |
|                                                                | Dissatisfied      | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 98.9               |
|                                                                | Very Dissatisfied | 2         | 1.1     | 1.1           | 100.0              |
|                                                                | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

The data presented in Table 6.35 indicates that 9.7 percent of customers reported a ‘Very Satisfied’ with the services provided by CSCs, while 83.4 percent expressed ‘Satisfied’. Additionally, 6.9 percent of customers remained ‘Neutral’ and there were no reports of ‘Dissatisfied’ or ‘Very Dissatisfied’ regarding the services offered by CSCs in Aizawl District. The above Table 6.35 also reveals that in Lawngtlai District 21.8 percent of customers expressed ‘Very Satisfied’ with the

services provided by CSCs, 65.1 percent reported ‘Satisfied’, 11.4 percent remained ‘Neutral’, One customer was ‘Dissatisfied’ and Two Customers were ‘Very Dissatisfied’ with the services offered by CSCs. Overall, the majority of customers in both districts are satisfied with CSC services. However, a small percentage expressed dissatisfaction particularly in Lawngtlai which needs attention from the concerned stakeholders. Based on conversations with the customers by the researcher it came to notice that customers are expressing a desire for an expanded range of services within the CSCs. For instance, in the Lawngtlai District customers have requested the inclusion of Aadhaar enrollment service in every CSC but of course due to some reasons the Government of Mizoram has not extended this service to the CSCs in the Lawngtlai District. Conversely, in Aizawl a significant number of customers are advocating for the addition of Municipal Services such as tax payment, online OPD booking and the digitalization of birth certificates to be made available at CSCs.

**Table 6.36 : Your primary reason for using CSC services**

| <b>Aizawl</b> |                              |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|               |                              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid         | Convenience                  | 37        | 21.1    | 21.1          | 21.1               |
|               | Accessibility                | 54        | 30.8    | 30.8          | 52.0               |
|               | Cheaper                      | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 52.6               |
|               | Trust in Government Services | 5         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 55.4               |
|               | Recommendations from others  | 78        | 44.6    | 44.6          | 100.0              |

|                  |                              |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  | All services at one location | 0         | 0       | 0             | 0                  |
|                  | Total                        | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |                              |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |                              | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Convenience                  | 42        | 24.0    | 24.0          | 24.0               |
|                  | Accessibility                | 34        | 19.4    | 19.4          | 43.4               |
|                  | Cheaper                      | 5         | 2.9     | 2.9           | 46.3               |
|                  | Trust in Government Services | 16        | 9.1     | 9.1           | 55.4               |
|                  | Recommendations from others  | 74        | 42.3    | 42.3          | 97.7               |
|                  | All services at one location | 4         | 2.3     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|                  | Total                        | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

The data presented in Table 6.36 indicates that 21.1 percent of respondents used CSCs for their convenience, 30.8 percent mentioned accessibility as a factor, only One respondent chose for their lower rates, 2.9 percent depended on CSCs due to their trust in government services, 44.6 percent referred by others and no respondent chose CSCs because of the extensive variety of services offered at one location, which is very surprising. In the Lawngtlai District, the above table reveals that 24 percent of respondents utilized CSCs due to their convenience, 19.4 percent cited accessibility as a reason, 2.9 percent chose them for their lower rates, 9.1 percent relied on CSCs because they trusted in government services, 42.3 percent referred by others and 2.3 percent opted for CSCs due to the comprehensive range of services available at a single location. Overall, the above data illustrate that various

factors affected respondent's utilization of CSCs. In both districts, recommendation from the others is a factor for the use of CSCs by the respondents and of course accessibility and convenience factors also play an important role.

| Table 6.37: You rate the Staff assistance at CSC |           |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                           |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                  |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                            | Excellent | 15        | 8.6     | 8.6           | 8.6                |
|                                                  | Good      | 125       | 71.4    | 71.4          | 80.0               |
|                                                  | Average   | 35        | 20.0    | 20.0          | 100.0              |
|                                                  | Poor      | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                  | Very Poor | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                  | Total     | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                        |           |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                  |           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                            | Excellent | 9         | 5.1     | 5.1           | 5.1                |
|                                                  | Good      | 146       | 83.4    | 83.4          | 88.6               |
|                                                  | Average   | 18        | 10.3    | 10.3          | 98.9               |
|                                                  | Poor      | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 99.4               |
|                                                  | Very Poor | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 100.0              |
|                                                  | Total     | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

Based on the information provided in Table 6.37, 8.6 percent of the 175 respondents rated the staff assistance at CSC as 'Excellent', 71.4 percent deemed it

‘Good’, and 20 percent considered it ‘Average’, while no respondents rated it as ‘Poor’ or ‘Very Poor’. As per data provided in Table 6.37, in Lawngtlai District 5.1 percent of the total 175 respondents rated the staff assistance at CSC as ‘Excellent’, 83.4 percent rated it as ‘Good’, 10.3 percent rated it as ‘Average’, there is One respondent each rated ‘Poor’ and ‘Very Poor’ respectively. Overall, in comparison with the Aizawl District, combining both ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’, the percentage was 80 percent, whereas in Lawngtlai District it was more at 88 percent. The findings indicate that most customers receive satisfactory assistance from staff, however in certain instances customers expressed dissatisfaction with the treatment they received from the CSC staff.

| Table 6.38: You faced any challenges while using CSC services |       |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                        |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                               |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                         | Yes   | 21        | 12.0    | 12.0          | 12.0               |
|                                                               | No    | 154       | 88.0    | 88.0          | 100.0              |
|                                                               | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                     |       |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                               |       | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                         | Yes   | 34        | 19.4    | 19.4          | 19.4               |
|                                                               | No    | 141       | 80.6    | 80.6          | 100.0              |
|                                                               | Total | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Table 6.38, indicates that 12 percent of respondents faced challenges when using CSCs, while 88 percent reported no difficulties in utilizing CSC services in Aizawl District but in the Lawngtlai District the table reveals that 19.4 percent of respondents encountered difficulties in accessing CSCs, while 80.6 percent

experienced no issues while utilizing CSC services. Thus, the data itself shows that still, a few respondents reported facing challenges while using CSC services, it is basically related to accessibility and service quality, etc. The field study shows that, in Lawngtlai District the predominant challenges encountered by customers are inadequate internet connectivity and a shortage of power supply, which adversely affects their time. Meanwhile, in Aizawl, customers experienced difficulties related to the timely issuance of certificates from CSCs as the DC Online Portal occasionally crashes.

**Table 6.39: You think E-Governance or Online Services improved service delivery to the common people**

| <b>Aizawl</b>    |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Strongly Agree    | 7         | 4.0     | 4.0           | 4.0                |
|                  | Agree             | 127       | 72.6    | 72.6          | 76.6               |
|                  | Neutral           | 41        | 23.4    | 23.4          | 100.0              |
|                  | Disagree          | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Strongly Agree    | 17        | 9.7     | 9.7           | 9.7                |
|                  | Agree             | 140       | 80.0    | 80.0          | 89.7               |



|  |                   |     |       |       |       |
|--|-------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
|  | Neutral           | 18  | 10.3  | 10.3  | 100.0 |
|  | Agree             | 0   | 0     | 0     |       |
|  | Strongly Disagree | 0   | 0     | 0     |       |
|  | Total             | 175 | 100.0 | 100.0 |       |

**Source: Field Study**

Based on the information provided in Table 6.39, 4 percent of the 175 respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ that E-Governance or Online Services improved service delivery to the public while 72.6 percent ‘Agree’ with this assertion and 23.4 percent hold a ‘Neutral’ position on the issue. In the case of Lawngtlai District, according to the data presented in the table, 9.7 percent of the 175 respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ that E-Governance or Online Services enhanced service delivery to the general public while 80 percent ‘Agree’ with this statement and 10.3 percent remain ‘Neutral’ on the matter. In comparison, most respondents in both districts believe that E-Governance or Online Services improved service delivery and transparency in government services, with a significant majority in both districts ‘Strongly Agree’ and ‘Agree’ respectively.

| Table 6.40:E-Governance or Online Services made government services more transparent |                |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                               |                |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                      |                | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|                                                                                      | Strongly Agree | 18        | 10.3    | 10.3          | 10.3               |
|                                                                                      | Agree          | 136       | 77.7    | 77.7          | 88.0               |
|                                                                                      | Neutral        | 21        | 12.0    | 12.0          | 100.0              |
|                                                                                      | Disagree       | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |

|                  |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Strongly Agree    | 25        | 14.3    | 14.3          | 14.3               |
|                  | Agree             | 133       | 76.0    | 76.0          | 90.3               |
|                  | Neutral           | 17        | 9.7     | 9.7           | 100.0              |
|                  | Disagree          | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

According to Table 6.40 in Aizawl District, 10.3 percent of respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ that E-Governance or Online Services improved the transparency of government services, whereas 77.7 percent ‘Agree’ and 12.0 percent hold a ‘Neutral’ stance on this issue. In Lawngtlai District, the above table reveals that 14.3 percent of respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ that E-Governance or Online Services enhanced the transparency of government services while 76 percent ‘Agree’ and 9.7 percent remain ‘Neutral’ regarding this matter. Overall, the majority of the respondents in both districts agreed that E-Governance or Online Services made government services more transparent. It has been noted that the general public recognizes that E-Governance or Online Services improved the transparency of governmental operations as all procedures can be tracked through technological systems. Moreover, corruption can also be reduced through the use of these services. For instance in rumours, before the introduction of the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system for scholarships various College Student Bodies in Mizoram handled these

processes manually resulting in the unfair reduction of scholarships for certain students. Additionally, some institutional authorities submitted fraudulent enrollment lists to the scholarship board thereby obtaining scholarships through dishonest means. However, with the shift to an online system such practices are no longer feasible.

### **What additional services would you like to see offered at CSC?**

Below are the services that customers from both districts (Aizawl and Lawngtlai) want to be offered at CSCs.

- Adhaar Enrollment services
- Civil Hospital Online OPD service
- Aizawl Municipal Online Registration(Shops,Stall, etc)
- Digitalization of Birth Certificate at CSC
- Online Ration Card at CSC
- All Government Online Services available at CSC under one portal

### **How much distance ( Kilometre) CSC from your home?**

Many customers in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts live close to CSCs, ranging from just 1 to 15 kilometers away. The shortest distance recorded is 1 kilometer while the farthest is 15 kilometers.

**Table 6.41: You would recommend the use of CSCs to others**

| <b>Aizawl</b> |           |         |               |                    |
|---------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|               | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|               |           |         |               |                    |

|                  |        |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid            | Yes    | 168       | 96.0    | 96.0          | 96.0               |
|                  | No     | 3         | 1.7     | 1.7           | 97.7               |
|                  | May be | 4         | 2.3     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|                  | Total  | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |        |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |        | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | Yes    | 149       | 85.1    | 85.1          | 85.1               |
|                  | No     | 4         | 2.3     | 2.3           | 87.4               |
|                  | May be | 22        | 12.6    | 12.6          | 100.0              |
|                  | Total  | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

Table 6.41 highlights that, out of the 175 respondents in Aizawl District, 96 percent indicated they would recommend the use of CSCs to others (People) whereas 1.7 percent chose not to recommend and 2.3 percent were unsure about their recommendation. In the case of Lawngtlai District, among the 175 respondents surveyed, 85.1 percent of customers expressed a willingness to recommend the use of CSCs to others (People), while 2.3 percent declined to do so and 12.6 percent were uncertain about their recommendation. A high proportion of respondents in both districts would recommend the use of CSCs to others, reflecting a strong positive perception of CSC services, however, in Lawngtlai District in comparison with Aizawl District 12 percent were unsure about recommending the use of CSCs to other people which is a cause of concern.

| Table 6.42 : Your trust in government services increased due to the availability of CSC |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                                  |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                                   | Strongly Agree    | 21        | 12.0    | 12.0          | 12.0               |
|                                                                                         | Agree             | 141       | 80.6    | 80.6          | 92.6               |
|                                                                                         | Neutral           | 13        | 7.4     | 7.4           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                         | Disagree          | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                         | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                         | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| Lawngtlai                                                                               |                   |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                         |                   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                                   | Strongly Agree    | 16        | 9.1     | 9.1           | 9.1                |
|                                                                                         | Agree             | 134       | 76.6    | 76.6          | 85.7               |
|                                                                                         | Neutral           | 24        | 13.7    | 13.7          | 99.4               |
|                                                                                         | Disagree          | 1         | 0.6     | 0.6           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                         | Strongly Disagree | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                         | Total             | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

Source: Field Study

According to the data presented in Table 6.42, 12 percent of the respondents ‘Strongly Agree’ that their trust in government services increased due to the availability of the CSC, 80.6 percent ‘Agree’ with this sentiment, 7.4 percent

remained 'Neutral' and no respondents chose 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' which is a good sign.

Similarly, in the Lawngtlai District, data shows that 9.1 percent of the respondents 'Strongly Agree' that their trust in government services has increased because of the CSC, 76.6 percent 'Agree', 13.7 percent remained 'Neutral', and there was One respondent expressed 'Disagree' with the statement. Thus, in comparison, the trust in government services has notably increased due to the availability of CSCs with a majority of respondents 'Strongly Agree' and 'Agree' in both districts.

| Table 6.43: According to you, necessary improvements for the effective functioning of CSCs |                            |           |         |               |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Aizawl                                                                                     |                            |           |         |               |                    |
|                                                                                            |                            | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid                                                                                      | More Services Offered      | 23        | 13.1    | 13.1          | 13.1               |
|                                                                                            | Better Accessibility       | 119       | 68.0    | 68.0          | 81.1               |
|                                                                                            | Updated Technology         | 29        | 16.6    | 16.6          | 97.7               |
|                                                                                            | Services Charge Reasonable | 4         | 2.3     | 2.3           | 100.0              |
|                                                                                            | Better Staff Training      | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                                                                                            | Other (Please Specify)     | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |

|                  |                           |           |         |               |                    |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
|                  | Total                     | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |
| <b>Lawngtlai</b> |                           |           |         |               |                    |
|                  |                           | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid            | More Services Offered     | 40        | 22.9    | 22.9          | 22.9               |
|                  | Better Accessibility      | 85        | 48.6    | 48.6          | 71.4               |
|                  | Better Staff Training     | 2         | 1.1     | 1.1           | 72.6               |
|                  | Updated Technology        | 21        | 12.0    | 12.0          | 84.6               |
|                  | Service Charge Reasonable | 0         | 0       | 0             |                    |
|                  | Other (Please specify)    | 27        | 15.4    | 15.4          | 100.0              |
|                  | Total                     | 175       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

**Source: Field Study**

According to Table 6.43, out of 175 respondents, 13.1 percent indicated a preference for a broader array of services to facilitate the enhancement and efficient functioning of CSCs, 68.0 percent suggested ‘Better Accessibility’, 16.6 percent supported for the implementation of ‘Updated Technology’ and 2.3 percent requested the provision of ‘Service Charge Reasonable’. In case of Lawngtlai District, among the 175 respondents, 22.9 percent expressed a desire for an expanded range of services to enhance the improvement and effective operation of CSCs, 48.6 percent recommended ‘Better Accessibility’, 1.1 percent advocated for enhanced ‘Staff Training’, 12.0 percent called for ‘Updated Technology’ while 15.4 percent suggested ‘Other’ improvements which primarily focused on better electricity supply and a more reliable internet connection. Overall in both districts, respondents generally desire better accessibility and more services to be included in the CSC.

However, the challenge of Power supply and internet connection in Lawngtlai District is a cause of concern in comparison with the Aizawl District.

**Any additional comments or suggestions regarding CSC in Mizoram?**

Most of the customers from both Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts have the following comments or suggestions regarding CSCs in Mizoram which found more common among them:

- Need better guidance
- Provide better and more reliable resources to the VLEs
- Access to more services and expand the range of Government and private services offered at CSCs
- Offering more training for CSCs operators as well as educating citizens about the available services at the above centres



## **CHAPTER – VII**

### **MAJOR FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter discusses the major findings of the study based on the previous chapter results and discussion. Also, the researcher gives some suggestions based on the problems and challenges identified in the field study. Additionally, this chapter also highlights the insights and perspectives of officials, specifically the District Manager from both districts involved in CSCs examined, along with the contributions of the State Manager of CSCs in Mizoram. At last, the overall conclusion of the study was drawn.

#### **Major Findings**

The following outlines the key findings of the study:

##### **Aizawl District Common Service Centres Village Level Entrepreneurs:**

- ❖ The study found that the majority of the Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) (35 respondents) expressed a desire to incorporate additional services into the Common Service Centre (CSC) portal. They preferred the inclusion of government online services within the CSC portal rather than those managed by the relevant Departments/Organisations/Agencies.
- ❖ The researcher found that the majority of the VLEs sought consistent or equal treatment from the District Manager (DM) of the Aizawl District, as the DM has certain privileges that allow him to grant service permissions such as Aadhaar enrolment centres, exclusively to select or a few VLEs.
- ❖ The study found there was some kind of fear among the VLEs, if VLEs didn't maintain a strong and healthy relationship with the DM, chance that their CSC license could be revoked. Thus, it shows the authority or power of the DM.
- ❖ The VLEs demanded some kind of assistance from the Government or any other concerned agencies, either financial or through in-kind support. The study

revealed that, till (June 2025), only under CSC 1.0 the VLEs received support from the government, and since 2015, when CSC 2.0 implemented, no such support has been available. Therefore, VLEs expressed a need for equipment including backup batteries, more dependable internet connections, printers and computers from the government or any other concerned agencies.

- ❖ The majority of the VLEs indicate that managing CSCs does not provide sufficient income to support their families as the service charges or rates are low and have been established by the Government and they don't have any control or say in this matter. Therefore, they want the Government to increase the service charges further.
- ❖ The majority of services accessed by customers from CSCs include e-District services such as Tribal, Income and Residential Certificates as well as PAN Card applications and online form submission through the open portal. Thus, the customers prefer more Government to Citizens (G2C) services from the CSCs.
- ❖ In Aizawl District, predominantly, the VLEs are functioning as full-time CSC operators without any other job or activity.
- ❖ The e-District services experience significant delays in approval processes and the portal frequently encounters crashes. This situation causes anxiety among users, preventing them from obtaining their certificates in a timely manner or on time. Thus, it negates the main objective of providing online services.

#### **Lawngtlai District Common Service Centres Village Level Entrepreneurs:**

- ❖ The field survey indicates that various online service applications are not widely used in the Lawngtlai District except for payment transaction services, notably popular in this area.
- ❖ There is an absence of adequate signboards of CSCs at Lawngtlai District, raising concerns for customers and how to identify these centres as CSCs. Even the researcher founds it difficult to locate CSCs in the Lawngtlai district.
- ❖ The researcher found that despite the capability of an online service application to complete at CSCs, the VLEs of Lawngtlai District still required to submit a hard copy to the relevant departments/organisations/agencies.

- ❖ According to VLEs, the people of Lawngtlai District favour the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Office for accessing e-District services as it offers lower service charges in comparison to CSCs.
- ❖ The VLEs in Lawngtlai District are unable to provide Aadhaar Enrollment Services through their CSCs because the Government of Mizoram has denied this service. The main reason, according to VLEs, is the significant presence of minority groups particularly the Chakmas, migrated from Bangladesh, and apprehension that some of them are not eligible to get an Aadhaar card.
- ❖ A large number (almost 95 percent) of the VLEs in Lawngtlai District operate CSCs on a part-time basis, indicating their involvement in some other job or profession for earning their livelihood. Thus, it shows that in Lawngtlai District, CSCs are not sufficient enough to earn a livelihood for the VLEs.
- ❖ The lack of internet connectivity poses a significant challenge in this region, rendering CSCs ineffective without access to the internet. Thus, the common people's trust in the reliability of the online services provided by the CSCs is questionable.
- ❖ The VLEs sought assistance from the government in the form of material support or financial aid. Their requests included equipment such as solar backup systems, complimentary internet connections, printers and complete computer setups.

#### **Customers of Common Service Centres from Aizawl District:**

- ❖ A significant number of customers in Aizawl District expressed unhappiness, as the majority of VLEs operate with only a single counter. This limitation results in lengthy queues, causing customers to waste their valuable time and energy.
- ❖ Still, the majority of the customers feel that many services are not integrated into the CSC portal, from which they can access all the services in one place with ease. Thus, they want to include both governmental and private organisations services to be integrated into the CSC portal, enable them to

access all services through a single CSC platform.

- ❖ Customers of CSCs from Aizawl District strongly emphasize the need for reliable backup power batteries or robust network connectivity, as prolonged power outages result in significant delays, and associated issues result in wastage of time.
- ❖ The customers highlighted about lack of awareness about the services available at the CSCs, and also their utility among the people. According to them, there is a lack of publicity about the CSCs from the stakeholders. Thus, there is a need for increased awareness about CSCs, in order to make it more popularized.
- ❖ Although many online public services are provided through CSCs, however, customers want Aadhaar services to be available at all CSCs in Aizawl District. At present, only in a few CSCs is the Aadhaar service facility is available in the district.

#### **Customers of Common Service Centres from Lawngtlai District:**

- ❖ The majority of customers indicate that service charges at CSCs are higher than those at DC office, prompting customers to seek services at DC offices or their respective Block Development Office (BDO).
- ❖ The quality of internet connectivity and power supply in Lawngtlai District is significantly poor, which results in prolonged waiting times for customers.
- ❖ The prevalence of part-time VLEs in Lawngtlai District has led to customer dissatisfaction, as they often find it challenging to access services from CSCs during the scheduled office time. Many part-time VLEs open their CSCs according to their suitability, affects the accessibility for the customers.
- ❖ One interesting finding from the field study while talking with the customers is that due to the limited number of bank ATMs in Lawngtlai District, customers are compelled to visit the CSCs to withdraw their funds.
- ❖ The absence of hoardings or signboards about CSCs creates a significant challenge for customers in identifying the location of CSC in the district.
- ❖ A large number of customers are not happy with the exclusion of Aadhaar

services from the CSCs; rather, they have to travel to the DC office, and according to them, it is costly and time-consuming, especially for those people who are staying in remote and far-flung areas with poor road conditions and lack of public transport etc.

#### **District Manager of Common Service Centres in Aizawl District:**

- ❖ The researcher has found that the office space of the District Manager (DM) of Aizawl District is quite small or limited which hinders the smooth execution of operations.
- ❖ The concerns of VLEs about the abuse of authority by the DM, the latter indicated to receives strict instructions from higher authorities that the transaction volume of CSCs should increase. So, this is the reason why District Manager use a stern tone when addressing the VLEs.
- ❖ According to the District Manager, the Deputy Commissioner's office of Aizawl District has emphasized the necessity for the effective operation of CSCs in Aizawl District with more seriousness and commitment since the current state of these centres is significantly impaired.
- ❖ The District Manager emphasized that, at present, there is no proper guidelines or regulations for the conduct of VLEs, because of which he finds it difficult to regulate VLEs. Hence, DM sought appropriate guidelines or regulations regarding VLEs to ensure the effective management of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl District.

#### **District Manager of Common Service Centres in Lawngtlai District:**

- ❖ Concerning the service fees for various public services associated with the Lawngtlai District CSCs, the District Manager stated that the charges are determined by the office of the Deputy Commissioner and as District Manager of Lawngtlai CSCs can't do anything.
- ❖ Regarding providing Aadhaar Services through the CSCs for the people in

Lawngtlai District, DM expressed concerns that due to Lawngtlai location in the southern part of Mizoram bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar, there has been an influx of illegal immigrants. He fears that granting permission for Aadhaar services at CSCs could lead to the production of fraudulent documents or counterfeit certificates for outsiders potentially resulting in significant issues.

- ❖ According to the District Manager of Lawngtlai District, there should be a standardized manual and set of conduct rules for the CSC throughout Mizoram. At present, no uniform manuals and guidelines have been set; rather they vary from one district to another. Also, he further emphasized his desire to raise awareness about the significance of CSCs advocating for increased efforts from the Government itself.
- ❖ Considering that Lawngtlai District is considerably less developed in comparison with other districts including Aizawl, where the District Manager urged the government to assist CSCs in Lawngtlai either in the form of material resources or financial aid.

#### **State Manager of Common Service Centres in Mizoram:**

- ❖ The State Manager for the CSCs in Mizoram does not have a dedicated office; instead, the State Manager manages CSC operations from the Mizoram State e-Governance Society office.
- ❖ According to the State Manager of CSCs in Mizoram, there has been no financial support for CSCs in the State of Mizoram, either from the Government of India or Mizoram, as it falls under the purview of CSCs Pvt Limited. Previously, there was some kind of support under CSC 1.0 and also funding from the North Eastern Council (NEC) which was allocated to the Rural Kiosk initiative.
- ❖ The operation of CSCs in Mizoram presents significant challenges. Firstly, CSCs are privately owned entities that require support from the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS), an organization responsible for the execution

of E-Governance initiatives and policies within the state. The MSeGS operates under the Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Government of Mizoram. Additionally, for the e-District project, collaboration with the DC and their staff is essential. Therefore, there is a pressing need for a well-structured system governing CSCs in Mizoram.

- ❖ To ensure the sustainability and potential growth of CSCs in the future in the state of Mizoram, according to the State Manager of CSCs, it is imperative that the Mizoram Government invest both (Material and Financial) into CSCs; otherwise, there is a concern that it may cease to exist.

### **Comparative Study of Common Service Centres of Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts:**

#### **Similarities:**

Here given the similarities between Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts CSCs:

- ❖ The researcher found that in both districts, VLEs express a need for government support whether financial or material. For example, Aizawl VLEs want equipment like backup batteries and printers, while Lawngtlai VLEs request solar backup systems, internet connections, printers and computers.
- ❖ The Aizawl VLEs mentioned that the government-set service charges or rates are not supportive enough for their livelihood, and Lawngtlai VLEs are largely operate CSCs on a part-time basis, therefore implying CSCs alone cannot sustain their livelihood. Thus, it is clear that income from managing CSCs is insufficient in both districts.
- ❖ The study reveals that, VLEs from both districts have experienced operational challenges related to technology- Aizawl faces CSC portal crashes and delays in e-District services whereas Lawngtlai struggles with poor internet connectivity that

hampers CSC effectiveness. Also, power and internet connectivity issues affect customer experience in both districts. Aizawl customers emphasize the need for backup power and reliable networks to prevent delays caused by outages, and Lawngtlai customers face poor internet and power supply leading to long waiting times. Customers in both areas are affected by operational limitations: Aizawl faces long queues because most VLEs have only a single service counter and Lawngtlai customers are dissatisfied with part-time VLEs who are not always available when needed during office hours.

❖ The e-District services are important in both districts but are accessed through different modes: Aizawl customers commonly use CSCs for accessing e-District services while Lawngtlai residents prefer the Deputy Commissioner's office due to lower fees in comparison with CSCs.

❖ In Aizawl, the researcher found the absence of appropriate regulations, which makes it hard for the District Manager to manage VLEs and CSCs effectively. Similarly, in Lawngtlai District there is no standardized manual or uniform guideline for VLEs and CSCs. Therefore, both District Managers acknowledge and emphasize the need for proper conduct guidelines or manuals to regulate VLEs and CSCs for smooth and fair operations.

❖ The customers from both districts want Aadhaar services available at more CSCs. In Aizawl, customers want the Aadhaar services facility available at all CSCs rather than just a select few, while in Lawngtlai District, customers desire the Aadhaar services facility at CSCs to avoid costly and time-consuming visits to DC offices.

❖ Both districts suffer from limited accessibility or visibility of CSCs. While Aizawl customers want to increase awareness efforts from VLEs and the government to popularize CSCs, Lawngtlai customers struggle to identify the location of CSCs due to the absence of signboards or hoardings, along with a lack of awareness of CSCs.



**Differences:**

- ❖ Usage patterns differ in both districts. In Aizawl, VLEs predominantly operate full-time CSCs with a focus on government services integrated into the CSCs portal, while Lawngtlai VLEs mostly run CSCs part-time and are primarily used by people for payment transaction services.
- ❖ Identification and accessibility issues appear only in the Lawngtlai District, where CSCs lack adequate signboards, making it hard for the common people to locate them. Also, in Lawngtlai, hard copy document submission is still required despite the availability of online applications. Whereas, in the Aizawl District both the above-mentioned issues did not exist.
- ❖ Customers in the Lawngtlai District found that the CSC service charges higher than DC or BDO office's service charges or rates, and often prefer the latter two alternatives, unlike in Aizawl where the issue of service charges or rates higher for accessing services through CSCs is not as important for the majority of the respondents, thus they prefer to visit CSCs for accessing services rather than DC or BDO offices.
- ❖ In the Lawngtlai District, due to limited bank ATMs, there existed a cash withdrawal issue, forcing customers to use CSCs for this purpose; in contrast this is not the case in the Aizawl District.
- ❖ The issue of difficult physical access to CSCs due to poor road conditions, found in Lawngtlai District, but in contrast, Aizawl is not affected by bad road conditions for accessing CSCs in the district by the people.
- ❖ Awareness and promotion of CSCs is more of a concern for Aizawl customers, who see it as a way to increase CSC popularity, whereas Lawngtlai customers focus on more basic challenges like identifying CSC locations.
- ❖ The Aizawl District Manager faces internal operational issues such as limited office space and the challenge of maintaining authority over VLEs, including receiving warnings from higher authorities about an increase in the volume of

transactions of CSCs, which is not mentioned by the Lawngtlai District Manager for CSCs.

❖ The Lawngtlai DM raises unique security concerns tied to the district geographical location near international borders (Bangladesh and Myanmar) fearing unauthorized use of CSCs for making fraudulent documents, while a concern absent in the Aizawl context.

❖ Regarding service charges or rates, the Lawngtlai District Manager clarifies that the DC office fixes the service charges or rates for the CSCs services, and that he has no control over this, while Aizawl District Manager does not mention this service charges or rates setting issue.

### **Suggestions:**

The following suggestions have been given for making CSCs work effectively and efficiently, while focusing to overcome the problems and challenges faced by both the Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) and Customers of CSCs in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts, based on a field study:

### **Integration and Expansion of Services**

❖ ***Unify Government Services on CSC Portal:*** The researcher noted that the Government of Mizoram should ensure that all E-Governance services are integrated into the CSCs portal to avoid redirection to departmental websites, which confuses users and limits VLEs service scope.

❖ ***Expand Service Portfolio:*** The Government of Mizoram should introduce or add more relevant services (e.g., employment schemes, healthcare, and agriculture support) based on local demand to make CSCs more useful for the common people and profitable for the Village Level Entrepreneurs.

## **Strengthen Governance and Oversight**

- ❖ ***Ensure Transparency and Fair Practices:*** From the field observation, it has been explored that the Government of Mizoram or the concerned authorities should implement clear and accountable guidelines for the District Manager of CSCs in service allocation (e.g., Aadhaar centers) to prevent misuse of power or favouritism. Also, it is important to develop and disseminate a standardized VLE Code of Conduct and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across the district.
- ❖ ***Regular Monitoring:*** The Government of Mizoram should introduce third-party audits or any feedback mechanisms to ensure the fair treatment of VLEs and to discourage abuse of authority.

Furthermore, the researcher proposed that the State Government allocate a specific budget to enhance CSCs infrastructure to facilitate capacity building and promote service expansion. Additionally, the Government of Mizoram should investigate new funding opportunities through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) or central schemes. It is also recommended to establish a specialized unit within the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) to exclusively manage CSC operations, coordination, and grievance resolution while appointing dedicated personnel to offer ongoing support to VLEs.

## **Improve Financial and Material Support to VLEs**

- ❖ ***Subsidized Infrastructure Support:*** The researcher found that VLEs requested financial grants or subsidized equipment from the Government or other concerned stakeholders, such as high-speed internet connections, printers, computers and solar backup systems to all functioning at CSCs especially in remote and far-flung areas. Thus, the concerned authority needs to take up this issue seriously because basic infrastructure is a must for the efficient and effective functioning of CSCs.

- ❖ **Review and Revise Service Charges:** The Government of Mizoram or the Deputy Commissioner's office should allow flexibility in setting service charges or rates of CSCs based on the difficulty of the services, locality and operational cost to ensure CSCs remain financially viable for the VLEs.

### **Enhance Training and Capacity Building**

- ❖ **Regular Training for VLEs:** There should be periodic training on digital services, customer service and the latest government schemes (both Central and State) to keep VLEs updated and improve service delivery. Moreover, conduct regular workshops/conferences for VLEs on professional ethics, public service delivery and CSCs responsibilities.
- ❖ **Digital Literacy for Citizens:** The ICT Department of the Government of Mizoram, DC office or a CSC Pvt Limited, Mizoram should launch an awareness programme in the local language to increase public understanding and trust in CSC services. Also, try to use local language media and traditional channels or platforms like church groups, civil society, village councils, etc).

Recently, under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) scheme, the Department of ICT, Government of Mizoram, initiated a new programme focused on IT Skill Development and Training Centres. At present, efforts commenced in seven areas with a significant minority population. Among these seven areas, three Rural Development (RD) Blocks from Lawngtlai District have been selected, namely Chawngte Block, Lawngtlai Block and Bungtlang 'S' Block.

### **Strengthen Infrastructure and Connectivity**

- ❖ **Boost Internet Connectivity:** The internet connectivity is very poor, especially in the Lawngtlai District. So, there should be collaboration with telecom providers like Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and other telecom

providers with CSCs Pvt. Ltd to enhance internet access in low-connectivity zones. Moreover, under the Bharat Net Scheme, the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) has finished installing broadband connectivity in 41 villages under phase I. Under phase II, a VSAT communication system has been installed in 480 Villages and 20 more villages are to be covered. Presently, they are proposing a new project under the amended Bharat Net Scheme.

- ❖ **Reliable Backup Systems:** Power supply is another major issue in the Lawngtlai District compared with the Aizawl District. So, VLEs should be given UPS/inverters or solar-powered systems to ensure uninterrupted services during power outages.
- ❖ **Establish Additional Service Counters:** During the researcher's visits to the CSCs, particularly in the Aizawl District, individuals experience prolonged waiting periods for their turn. Therefore, it is imperative for the VLEs to enhance the number of operational counters at high-traffic CSCs in order to minimize customer waiting times and save their precious time.
- ❖ **Language Barrier:** The researcher has discovered that customers, especially in Lawngtlai and those with lower educational qualifications in Aizawl District face a language barrier due to the use of English in public services. Therefore, if it is feasible by employing a local language would be more preferable, and CSCs would likely gain greater popularity if this change is implemented.

### **Improve Service Delivery Efficiency**

- ❖ **Upgrade and Maintain Portals:** The researcher observed that during his visits to CSCs, some customers are awaiting for their certificates, which cannot be produced on time due to the portal crashing. Therefore, to mitigate these inconveniences, the Government of Mizoram should enhance the backend performance of the e-District and CSC portals to minimize system crashes and delays in certificate approvals. Also, the portal should be updated regularly,

taking into account the increasing cases of Cyber Crime attacks. It is important to remember that in this digital age a timely and faster service delivery should be the goal of any public service providers be it government or private.

- ❖ ***Track Service Timelines:*** Moreover, the VLEs expressed a desire for a service tracking system that would enable both customers and VLEs to readily ascertain the status of their services, which are demanded from the concerned authority. Consequently, CSCs Pvt Limited or the Government of Mizoram should establish a time-sensitive service delivery model that incorporates escalation procedures for instances of delayed services.

#### **Increase CSC Visibility and Accessibility**

- ❖ ***Mandatory Signboard for CSCs:*** The researcher encounters challenges in identifying CSCs, particularly in the Lawngtlai District, due to the absence of signboards outside the CSC, which also complicates the process for customers. Therefore, it is essential to implement uniform branding and advertising, including CSC signboards for all VLEs to enhance their visibility and make them easily identifiable to the public without much difficulty.
- ❖ ***Map CSC Locations Publicly:*** There is an App called CSC Locator, but it is very complicated and inaccurate for locating CSCs easily. So, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, or ICT Department, Government of Mizoram, should maintain an accurate district-wise online directory/map of all functioning CSCs for better access by users with ease in this digital age.

#### **Inclusive Policy for Marginalized Areas**

- ❖ ***Aadhaar Services in Minority Areas:*** The researcher, following discussions with VLEs and the District Manager of the CSCs, suggests that the Government of Mizoram should provide secure and legal alternatives for

delivering Aadhaar-related services through CSCs, especially in Lawngtlai District. However, if Aadhaar services are implemented in minority regions, the Government of Mizoram must enforce stringent biometric authentication and verification measures as well as work in conjunction with intelligence and security agencies, both the Central force or and the Home Department, Government of Mizoram to oversee CSCs located near international borders.

- ❖ **Promote Full-Time VLE Engagement:** As previously stated, income generated from CSCs is inadequate to sustain a livelihood, particularly in Lawngtlai District, whereas Aizawl offers better opportunities. However, if feasible the Government of Mizoram ought to consider providing incentives or a monthly stipend to VLEs, enabling them to operate on a full-time basis and ensuring the availability of consistent services especially in remote and underserved regions.

### **Limitations of the Study:**

The researcher acknowledges that the value of the study is mitigated by various limitations. To date, there have been several investigations into E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram; however, these have been conducted under the previous framework known as the National es-Governance Plan (NeGP), rather than the ongoing Digital India Programme. Theoretically, the researcher encounters challenges in sourcing secondary data, including books, journals, and particularly government records pertaining to Common Service Centres in Mizoram. Consequently, Online RTI was employed to obtain the necessary information. The topic of Common Service Centres in Mizoram remains largely unexplored by authors and scholars. Additionally, the researcher faces obstacles in identifying CSCs, as officials are unable to provide information. The researcher dedicated several months to engaging with Village Level Entrepreneurs, Customers, and the District Manager for interviews and interactions, which led to data collection for the study. Notably, in the Lawngtlai town area, many CSCs exist on paper, but on the ground only a few are operational.

**Scope for Further Research:**

This research represents in depth study of E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram, specifically focusing on a Comparative Study of Common Service Centres in the Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts. However, it is constrained by limited scope, as it only examines these two districts. Expanding the study to include additional districts within Mizoram or comparing three or more districts could yield more significant insights for academics, researchers, and the general public. Furthermore, the underrepresentation of women as VLEs presents another intriguing area for investigation, as does the common public awareness and behavior regarding E-Government initiatives which could be valuable topics for future research.

**Conclusion:**

Despite facing certain challenges, there is an overall high level of satisfaction and a growing trust in government services attributed to Common Service Centres. There exists a steady demand for the expansion of service offerings and enhancements in accessibility, particularly in rural regions such as the Lawngtlai District. The CSCs have gained popularity among young adults aged 18 to 35, particularly those who have completed at least high school, suggesting that these services resonate well with a relatively educated population. Furthermore, social media serves as the primary medium for raising awareness, highlighting its critical role in future outreach initiatives.



**APPENDICE- I**  
**GLIMPSES OF FIELD STUDY**



Pic I: CSC, Dinthar Veng, Aizawl District

Source: Field Study



Pic II: CSC, Seling, Aizawl District

Source: Field Study



Pic III: CSC, Thingsulthiah, Aizawl District

Source: Field Study



Pic IV: CSC, R.Vanhne, Lawngtlai District

Source: Field Study



Pic V: CSC, College Veng, Lawngtlai District

Source: Field Study





Pic VI: CSC, Bazar Veng, Lawngtlai District

Source: Field Study

## ***APPENDICE- II***

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR VILLAGE LEVEL ENTREPRENEURS (VLEs) OF COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN AIZAWL AND LAWNGTLAI DISTRICTS OF MIZORAM**

This questionnaire aims to collect specific data from Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) operating Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts of Mizoram. Your responses will help to understand the challenges, opportunities, and overall effectiveness of CSCs in your region. Please select the most appropriate answer for each question.

**CSC Location:**

**RD Block:**

**Name**

**Contact Number**

**Email Id**

#### **1. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

1.1 Age Group:

a. 18-25 ( ) b. 26-35 ( ) c. 36-45 ( ) d. 46-55 ( ) e. 56 & above ( )

1.2 Gender:

a. Male ( ) b. Female ( ) c. Other ( )

1.3 Educational Qualification:

a. Below 10<sup>th</sup> ( ) b. 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> ( ) c. Graduate ( ) d. Postgraduate ( ) e. Other:

#### **2. COMMON SERVICE CENTRE DETAILS**

2.1 How long has your CSC been operational?

a. Less than 1 year ( ) b. 1-3 years ( ) c. 3-5 years ( ) d. 5-7 years ( ) e. More than 7 years ( )

2.2 What type of Internet Connection is available at your CSC? (Please specify)

2.3 Number of services offered at your CSC:

a. 1-5 ( ) b. 6-10 ( ) c. 11-15 ( ) d. More than 15 ( )

2.4 What types of services does your CSC provide?

a. G2C ( ) b. G2B ( ) c. B2C ( ) d. Any Other ( )

2.5 Do you actively promote your CSC services?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

If Yes, then how?

### **3. TRAINING AND SUPPORT**

3.1 Did you receive any training before becoming a VLE?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

If Yes, from Whom?

3.2 Are you getting any support from the government?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

a) If Yes, then what kind of support you are getting from the government?

b) If No, then what kind of support do you expect from the government?

3.3 Are there sufficient resources available for you to operate effectively?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

If No, please specify

#### **4. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

4.1 How frequently do customers visit your CSC?

a. Daily ( If daily, average total number of customers = ( ) b. Weekly( If Weekly, average total number of customers = ( ) c. Monthly ( If Monthly, average total number of customers = ( ) d. Rarely ( )

4.2 Which category of services is most utilized by your customers?

4.3 Do customers find CSC service charges reasonable?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

4.4 How do you rate the overall satisfaction of your customers?

a. Very satisfied ( ) b. Satisfied ( ) c. Neutral ( ) d. Dissatisfied ( ) e. Very dissatisfied ( )

4.5 How do you handle customer complaints or feedback?

### **5. CHALLENGES FACED**

5.1 Do you experience significant operational challenges?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

If Yes, then, What are the major challenges you face in running the CSC? (please specify)

5.2 Are your earnings enough as VLE for your livelihood?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

5.3 Are you satisfied with the cost of the service charges for various services provided by you to the customers?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

5.4 Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your operations?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )



If yes, how? (this question is only for those CSCs, established before COVID Pandemic)

5.5. Do you want to operate CSC in the future also?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Can't Say ( )

## **6. IMPACT AND OUTCOMES**

6.1 Do you believe your CSC has improved access to services in the locality?

a. Strongly agree ( ) b. Agree ( ) c. Neutral ( ) d. Disagree ( ) e. Strongly disagree ( )

6.2 Can you share any success stories from your CSC?

6.3 Do you feel that your work as a VLE is valued by the customers/people?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. Can't Say ( )

## **7. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

7.1 What improvements would you suggest for enhancing the effectiveness of CSCs in Mizoram?

7.2 Would you benefit from more training opportunities in technology and service delivery for running CSC?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

### ***APPENDICE- III***

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CUSTOMERS OF COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN AIZAWL AND LAWNGTLAI DISTRICTS OF MIZORAM**

Dear Participant,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research questionnaire. Your feedback is invaluable and will help enhance the services provided by the Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts of Mizoram. Please answer the following questions honestly. Your responses will remain confidential.

**CSC Location:**

**Block:**

**Name**

#### **SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1.1 Age Group:

a. Below 18 years ( ) b. 18-25 ( ) c. 26-35 ( ) d. 36-45 ( ) e. 46 and above ( )

1.2 Gender:

a. Male ( ) b. Female ( ) c. Other ( )

1.3 Educational Qualification:

a. High School ( ) b. Higher Secondary ( ) c. Undergraduate ( ) d. Postgraduate ( ) e. Others:

1.4 Occupation:

a. Student ( ) b. Government Employee ( ) c. Private Sector Employee ( ) d. Self-employed ( )  
e. Unemployed ( ) f. Other (Please specify)

#### **SECTION 2: AWARENESS OF CSC**

2.1 Are you aware of the Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Mizoram?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

2.2 How did you first learn about the Common Service Centres (CSCs)?

a. Social Media ( ) b. Friends ( ) c. Family ( ) d. Government Campaigns ( ) e. Newspapers ( )  
f. Community Meetings ( ) g. Other (Please specify)

2.3 In your opinion, how effective are the information dissemination (Publicity) methods used to promote CSCs?

a. Very Good ( ) b. Good ( ) c. Average ( ) d. Poor ( ) e. Very Poor ( )

2.4 Are you aware of the services offered by CSC?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

### **SECTION 3: USAGE AND SATISFACTION WITH CSC**

3.1 Have you ever used services provided by the CSC in Mizoram?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

3.2 If yes, which specific services have you utilized? (Select whichever is applicable)

a. E-District Services ( ) b. Digital Literacy Programs ( ) c. Financial Services ( )  
d. Certificate Issuance (e.g., Birth, Death, Caste, Income) ( ) e. Skill Development Programs ( )  
f. Other (Please specify)

3.3 How many times do you visited CSC in the past (excluding the current visit)?

3.4 How satisfied are you with the services offered by CSCs?

a. Very Satisfied ( ) b. Satisfied ( ) c. Neutral ( ) d. Dissatisfied ( ) e. Very Dissatisfied ( )

3.5 What is your primary reason for using CSC services?

a. Convenience ( ) b. Accessibility ( ) c. Cheaper ( ) d. Trust in Government Services ( )  
e. Recommendations from others ( ) f. All services at one location ( ) f. Other (Please specify)

3.6 How would you rate the Staff assistance at CSC?

a. Excellent ( ) b. Good ( ) c. Average ( ) d. Poor ( ) e. Very Poor ( )

3.7 Have you faced any challenges while using CSC services?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( )

If yes, please specify the challenges encountered:

3.8 Do you think e-Governance or Online Services has improved service delivery to the common people?

a. Strongly Agree ( ) b. Agree ( ) c. Neutral ( ) d. Disagree ( ) e. Strongly Disagree ( )

3.9 Has e-governance or Online Services made government services more transparent?

a. Strongly Agree ( ) b. Agree ( ) c. Neutral ( ) d. Disagree ( ) e. Strongly Disagree ( )

3.10 What additional services would you like to see offered at CSC?

3.11 How much distance( Kilometre) CSC from your home?

3.12 Would you recommend the use of CSCs to others?

a. Yes ( ) b. No ( ) c. May be ( )

3.13 Has your trust in government services increased due to the availability of CSC?

a. Strongly Agree ( ) b. Agree ( ) c. Neutral ( ) d. Disagree ( ) e. Strongly Disagree ( )

#### **SECTION 4: SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF CSC**

4.1 What improvements do you think are necessary for the effective functioning of CSCs?

a. More Services Offered ( ) b. Better Accessibility ( ) c. Better Staff Training ( )  
d. Updated Technology ( ) e. Service Charge Reasonable ( ) e. Other (Please specify)

4.2 Any additional comments or suggestions regarding CSC in Mizoram?

4.3 Can you share any experiences that particularly stood out to you, either positively or negatively while using CSC?

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN AIZAWL AND LAWNGTLAI DISTRICT**

**AN ABSTRACT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF  
PHILOSOPHY**

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E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF  
COMMON SERVICE CENTRES IN AIZAWL AND LAWNGTLAI DISTRICT

By

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Submitted

In partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in Public Administration of Mizoram University, Aizawl



**Introduction:**

Information technology encompasses the tools and systems employed to collect, process, store and disseminate information. The term “Information Technology” has evolved over time, gaining prominence in the late 1970s to encompass both computer and communication technologies all of which are grounded in microelectronics and associated software. Prior to the 1970s, computers and telecommunications were regarded as distinct fields. However, after advancements in microelectronics, software and optics coupled with the convergence of telecommunications and computer technologies and have rendered this distinction increasingly obsolete. Microelectronics has been pivotal in the rapid growth and integration of computers and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). As telecommunications transitioned from analog to digital their systems began to resemble computers, incorporating more software. Numerous communication systems now function similar to computers with specific applications. Since the early 1960s, when online computer systems first emerged networking and communication technologies have significantly expanded. These developments have blurred the boundaries between telecommunications and computer technologies culminating in what is now referred to as Information and Communication Technology. In the 1990s, the ‘Internet’ gained widespread popularity, attracting users globally and these Internet users primarily communicate via e-mail, thereby utilizing Telenet to access remote hosts and transfer files from remote hosts to local sites. All this initiatives have laid the foundation for global networking and the concept of information superhighways, leading to the establishment of national and global information infrastructures. Therefore, the Internet as a central component of these infrastructures presents substantial opportunities to enhance and transform interactions among governments, citizens and businesses.

Chile, a vibrant nation from Latin America has embarked on its journey into E-Governance during the early 1970s. The seeds were sown with innovative ideas and aspirations for a digital future. However, it was the influential former United States of America (U.S.A) Vice President Al Gore who propelled this concept into

the global stage. His introduction of the “Super Highway” initiative ignited a spark of interest in E-Governance worldwide. This ambitious vision aimed to enhance the Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, particularly focusing on the expansive development of Internet Fibre Optic networks. As a result, nations began to recognize the importance of robust digital frameworks. These frameworks not only facilitate communication but also empower citizens. Moreover, the “Super Highway” concept delves deeper than mere connectivity. It emphasizes the integration of socio-economic factors within the framework of the Information Society or Knowledge Society. This holistic approach encourages governments across the world to consider how technology can bridge gaps, enhance public services, and foster inclusivity. Also, this has led to the emergence of the E-Governance concept in a well-planned and focused manner.<sup>1</sup> In essence, Chile’s early adoption of E-Governance combined with Al Gore’s visionary ideas which have paved the way for numerous countries to explore and implement similar initiatives. As nations strive towards digital transformation, the lessons learned from these pioneering efforts continue to shape the future of governance and citizen engagement.

In the 1970s the concept of E-Governance began to emerge in India, which initially concentrated on internal government applications particularly in sectors such as defence, economic observation and planning. The government also started employing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to manage data-intensive tasks, including elections, census activities and tax administration. In 1970, the Indian government established a Department of Electronics to enhance information and communication access for its citizens and by 1977 a significant progress was achieved with the establishment of the National Informatics Centre (NIC), which aimed to improve administrative efficiency and communication in the public sector. Concurrently, the government initiated the District Information System programme to computerize district offices across the country. A decade later the government introduced the National Informatics Center Network (NICNET), a satellite-based computer network as part of a new IT initiative and this ambitious project was instrumental in advancing E-Governance across the nation. By

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<sup>1</sup>Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012). *E-Governance: Concepts and Case Studies*. PHI Learning Pvt Ltd.

leveraging technology, India seeks to enhance connectivity and streamline services by ultimately promoting good governance and these foundational efforts laid the groundwork for the digital transformation of public administration. As technology becomes increasingly integrated into governance, the potential for enhanced citizen engagement and efficient service delivery has become more apparent in paving the way for a future in which technology will be central to the country's governance.

Cambridge Dictionary defines E-Governance as “the use of the internet by Governments to make it possible for people to use Government services and be involved in decision making”. E-Governance represents the strategic application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance the delivery of government services. It facilitates the efficient exchange of information enables seamless transactions and integrates previously disparate services and information portals. According to Hon'ble Prime Minister Mr.Narendra Modi, E-Governance “*is easy governance, effective governance and economic governance*”. Consequently, E-Governance has emerged as a transformative force adeptly reshaping and reimagining organizations by integrating information science and technology into the core of existing administrative and management systems.<sup>2</sup> In the 1970s the concept of E-Governance began to emerge in India, which initially concentrated on internal government applications particularly in sectors such as defense, economic monitoring and planning. The government also started employing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to manage data-intensive tasks including elections, census activities and tax administration.<sup>3</sup>

In 2003, the Government of India introduced the Electronic Governance Strategic Plan, a comprehensive framework intended to guide E-Governance from 2003 to 2007. This plan sought to establish effective governance by developing institutional frameworks and fostering integrated service levels with the objective of creating an environment that is both citizen-centric and business-friendly. The Government of India with determination has initiated the National e-Governance

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<sup>2</sup> E-Governance.<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english> accessed on 3rd March 2022.

<sup>3</sup>Yadav, Nikita & Singh, V.B. (2012). E-Governance: Past, Present and Future in India, *International Journal of Computer Application*, Vol 53, Issue No. 7, pp. 36.

Plan (NeGP) on November 6, 2003 under the leadership of the late Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. After three years of careful consideration, the NeGP was approved on May 18, 2006 comprising 27 Mission Mode Projects and 10 components with an additional four MMPs added subsequently. The primary goal of this initiative is to enhance the accessibility of public services for citizens and the Vision Statement of NeGP articulates this objective clearly: *“Make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets, and ensure efficiency, transparency, and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man”*.<sup>4</sup> This strategic approach not only aims to enhance service delivery but also signifies a commitment to empowering citizens through accessible governance.

After the 15th Lok Sabha elections in 2014 in India, a new government led by the Bhartiya Janata Party assumed power by bringing forth innovative ideas and philosophies to digitally connect India. As a result, the government introduced a flagship initiative known as ‘Digital India’ in 2015, which aims to transform India into a digitally advanced society and foster a knowledge-based economy. According to former Minister of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Ravi Shankar Prasad, *“Digital India is a transformational programme of the country, it means strengthening the youth and future of the country”*. The Digital India Programme emphasizes building a robust digital infrastructure accessible to every citizen. This initiative aims to ensure that governance and services are available on demand while empowering individuals digitally. In essence, this mission is a comprehensive initiative designed to equip India for a future dominated by knowledge with technology serving as the central element in its transformative framework.

At its core, the Digital India Programme is structured around nine fundamental pillars:

- i. **Broadband Highways:** Establishing high-speed internet connectivity across the nation.

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<sup>4</sup>Gupta, Piyush & Bagga, R.K. (2008). *Compendium of E-Governance Initiatives in India*. Universities Press Pvt Ltd.

- ii. **Universal Access to Mobile Connectivity:** Ensuring that everyone can access mobile services.
- iii. **Public Internet Access Programme:** Facilitating internet access in public spaces.
- iv. **E-Governance:** Reforming governmental process through technological advancements.
- v. **e-Kranti:** Delivering services electronically for enhanced efficiency.
- vi. **Information for All:** Promoting transparency and accessibility of information.
- vii. **Electronics Manufacturing:** Boosting domestic manufacturing of electronic goods.
- viii. **IT for Jobs:** Creating job opportunities within the IT sector.
- ix. **Early Harvest Programmes:** Implementing quick-win projects for immediate impact.<sup>5</sup>

This multi-faceted approach not only aims to revolutionize the digital landscape of India but also to foster economic growth and societal advancement.

In Mizoram, the E-Governance initiatives are managed by the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) established in 2005 under the Society Registration Act XXI of 1860. This society is dedicated to creating a comprehensive digital infrastructure that serves its citizens. It develops the necessary administrative, financial, legal and technical frameworks as well as the mechanisms and resources required to implement these digital initiatives in Mizoram. The MSeGS is responsible for the development and implementation of key E-Governance projects, including the State Data Centre (SDC), State Wide Area Network (SWAN) and Common Service Centres (CSCs) and other electronic government initiatives that contribute to a digitally empowered future.<sup>6</sup>

The Common Service Centres (CSCs) stand as a crucial component of E-Governance forming a part of the MMPs under the NeGP 2006. It began its

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<sup>5</sup> Special Edition Book on 'Digital India'. <https://www.meity.gov.in/content/digital-india-book> accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023.

<sup>6</sup>Lalduhawmi, Tracy. (2018). Developmental Impact of E-Governance, *International Journal of Science and Engineering*, Vol 3, Issue No. 2, pp.1-4.

operations on July 16, 2009 under the MeitY (Government of India) with the goal of bridging urban and rural India through a nationwide network of CSCs that offer a variety of e-services at the grassroots level.<sup>7</sup> The CSCs have been revamped to CSC 2.0 which is also a part of the Digital India Programme. In Mizoram, numerous CSCs have been set up to deliver various public services, strategically located to ensure easy access for the common people. The significance of CSCs in a state like Mizoram is undeniable due to its difficult geographical terrain and infrastructure challenges. It is crucial to provide various public services directly to the people, ensuring they are readily available nearby. This research study examines the operation of CSCs in Mizoram, where there is currently a lack of sufficient literature on this subject. There is a clear research gap concerning the impact and effectiveness of CSCs in Mizoram.

### **Review of Literature:**

To gain a better understanding of the present study, a comprehensive Review of Literature has been done. This review encompasses books, articles, a reports and documents sourced from various organisations including the government relevant to the study.

Bholane, P. Kishor. (2025) in his article titled *Digital India: Issues and Concerns* highlight its transformative potential in bridging the digital divide and enhancing service delivery through technology. The articles emphasize the projected benefits by including job creation, widespread internet access, and digital empowerment. However, challenges such as resource constraints, coordination issues and the need for institutional restructuring (e.g., NIC modernization) are noted. Researcher argues that while Digital India can drive socio-economic growth, its success depends on factors like literacy, infrastructure and regulatory support. References from government portals and academic sources underscore the

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<sup>7</sup>Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021). An overview of Common Service Centre with Special Reference to Mizoram, *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, Vol 8, Issue No. 1, pp.155-160.

programme ambitious scope and the necessity for sustained commitment to achieve inclusive development.<sup>8</sup>

Doumuanlal et., al. (2025) in their article titled *Digital Divide and Job Search Behaviour: An Empirical Study of Educated Urban Youth in Aizawl, Mizoram* highlights significant disparities in digital access and literacy, particularly in developing regions. Studies emphasize that digital literacy and internet accessibility are critical determinants of employability as online platforms increasingly dominate job markets. Research in Mizoram and other northeastern states of India reveals structural challenges such as poor digital infrastructure, low awareness of online job portals and reliance on intermediaries which hinder effective job searches. The Periodic Labour Force Survey (2020) and Economic Survey of Mizoram (2022) further underscore the need for targeted interventions to bridge these gaps. Moreover, this paper also highlights the socio-economic barriers including gender disparities and sectoral imbalances, which compound the challenges faced by urban youth. This study builds on these findings by examining the specific case of Aizawl, where digital exclusion persists despite government initiatives like the hnainpui.com portal has reinforcing the urgency of digital literacy programmes and infrastructure improvements to enhance labour market participation.<sup>9</sup>

Sahu, Raja. (2024) in his article titled *Role of Common Service Center in Rural Development* highlights that Common Service Centers (CSCs) are a vital part of India's NeGP, which aimed at delivering government and private services digitally to rural populations, thus bridging the digital divide. He also mentions that CSCs provide essential services like Aadhaar enrollment, utility payments, banking, health and education locally, reducing traditional barriers such as corruption and delays. The article shows that CSCs enhanced access and digital literacy, especially in states like Bihar, but challenges like infrastructure gaps, security concerns and uneven awareness remain. This paper recommends citizen-focused service design,

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<sup>8</sup> Bholane, P. Kishor (2025). Digital India: Issues and Concerns. *International Conference on Recent Trends in Commerce and Management*, pp. 121-125.

<sup>9</sup> Doumuanlal et., al. (2025). Digital Divide and Job Search Behaviour: An Empirical Study of Educated Urban Youth in Aizawl, Mizoram. *International Journal of Research in Social Science & Humanities (IJRRS)*, Vol. 6, Issue No. 5, pp. 52-57.

public-private partnerships and continuous awareness efforts to improve reach and effectiveness making CSCs a crucial but evolving tool for rural development.<sup>10</sup>

Heeks, Richard. (2022) in his article titled *Digital Inequality beyond the Digital Divide: Conceptualizing Adverse Digital Incorporation in the Global South* has traditionally focused on the digital divide by emphasizing exclusion from digital technologies as the primary driver of inequality. Early perspectives highlighted disparities in access to devices and internet connectivity while later researchers expanded to include divides in adoption, usage and contextual social inequalities such as gender, income and geography. However, as digital inclusion grows a newer study reveal that inequality persists even among those integrated into digital systems such as gig workers, small businesses on digital platforms and communities subjected to digital surveillance. In the field of development studies, the author introduces the compelling concept of ‘adverse digital incorporation’. This notion illustrates how digital systems rather than serving as equalizers which can become platforms where the privileged derive disproportionate advantages over the less privileged. Through mechanisms such as exploitation, commodification and legibility and these systems enable the advantaged to accrue significant benefits at the expense of the disadvantaged. This shift from exclusion to inclusion underscores the urgent necessity to address the power imbalances, structural inequalities and systemic injustices inherent in digital landscapes particularly in the Global South to facilitate genuine digital justice.<sup>11</sup>

Sadashivam,T et.,al. (2022) in their article titled *Digital India: A Journey Towards People’s Empowerment* highlights the transformative role of ICTs in governance has emphasizes their potential to bridge the gap between governments and citizens. The Digital India Programme launched in 2015 is a flagship initiative aimed at creating a digitally empowered society through key components like CSCs and the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan (PMGDISHA). The

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<sup>10</sup>Sahu, Raja (2024).Role of Common Service Center in Rural Dvelopment.*International Journal of Business Economics and Management Research*,Vol 15, Issue No. 5, pp. 1-7.

<sup>11</sup> Heeks, Richard. (2022). Digital inequality beyond the digital divide: conceptualizing adverse digital incorporation in the global South. *Information Technology for Development*, Vol 28, Issue No. 4, pp. 688-701.



CSCs serve as rural service delivery hubs offering over 400 digital services and significantly expanding access with a four-fold increase in their numbers from 2014 to 2021. The PMGDISHA focuses on digital literacy, targeting rural households to reduce the digital divide with over 5.46 crore candidates registered by 2021. This article also notes India's improvement on E-Government Development Index (EGDI) rankings, reflecting progress in digital governance though challenges remain in sustaining momentum and ensuring equitable access. The programme underscores a shift toward 'Minimum Government, Maximum Governance' by leveraging ICTs for transparency, efficiency and citizen empowerment.<sup>12</sup>

Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021) in his article titled *An Overview of Common Service Centres with Special Reference to Mizoram* examines the origins and development of CSCs across the nation by detailing the various services they offer. He further discusses the operational challenges faced by CSCs in Mizoram including insufficient road infrastructure, a lack of skills among Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), poor maintenance of hardware, connectivity issues and unreliable power supply and all of these has hinder the effectiveness of these centres in the state.<sup>13</sup>

Kharche, PB. (2020) in his book *Digital India* discusses the Digital India initiative, started in 2015 with an aim to convert India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-based economy. Kharche outlines the vision, objectives and essential components of the initiative, intending to offer a conceptual framework, practical advice and insights drawn from diverse projects both within India and internationally.<sup>14</sup>

Gayatri et., al. (2020) in their article titled *Usability of Urban Local Body Websites and Service Quality of E-Services* explore the transformative impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on the relationship between citizens and their government has heralded a new era of E-Governance that

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<sup>12</sup> Sadashivam,T et.al. (2022) Digital India: A Journey Towards People's Empowerment. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol LXXXIII, Issue No. 3, September-November, 2022, pp. 473-478.

<sup>13</sup>Vanlalkulhpuia, C. (2021). An overview of Common Service Centre with Special Reference to Mizoram. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, Vol 8, Issue No. 1, pp.155-160..

<sup>14</sup>Kharche, P.B. (2020).*Digital India*. International Publications.

transcends traditional governance models. This digital transformation has propelled by the substantial investments of the Digital India programme initiated in 2015 facilitated the development of innovative E-Government projects. The authors investigate the usability of Municipal or Urban Local Body websites by critically evaluating the quality of services they provide. Employing a meticulously developed framework they have assessed four Indian cities evaluating the user-friendliness of municipal E-Government websites. Citizens who are integral to this digital ecosystem have engaged with services such as lodging complaints by paying property and professional taxes, registering births and deaths with the convenience of digital access.<sup>15</sup>

Annual Report (2020-21) of E-Governance Service India Ltd. details that in the fiscal year 2020-21, the Company established 13,004 new CSCs nationwide by resulting in an increase in the total number of operational CSCs from 360,873 in March 2020 to 373,877 by the end of March 2021. Furthermore, the report emphasizes the introduction of new initiatives and services available through the CSCs National Portal including the establishment of one CSC in each village, the Ghar Tak Fibre Project in Bihar, the Grameen E-Store, Aadhaar Seva Kendras at both State and District levels, demographic updates via UCL, the Grameen Job Portal, the PM Street Vendor scheme, Atmanirbhar Nidhi, Rural E-Mobility, renewable energy setups and Ayur Sanjeevani Kendras at CSCs. Consistent with its previous efforts the company also mobilized its CSC Network to execute several national flagship programmes for the Government, such as PMGDISHA, the Aspirational Districts Project and the Digital Village Project, etc.<sup>16</sup>

Dua, Bindu. (2018) in her article titled *Digital India: Challenges and Suggestions for Implementation* discusses how Digital India represents a culmination of numerous innovations and technological progress. She identifies three fundamental pillars supporting this digital framework namely the establishment of a

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<sup>15</sup>Gayatri et. al (2020) Usability of Urban Local Body Websites and Service Quality of E-Services. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 66, Issue No. 4, pp. 19-24.

<sup>16</sup>CSC: E-Governance Service India Ltd Annual Report 2020-2021 (2022). <https://cscspv.in/assets/docs/Annual-Report-3-Mar-22.pdf> accessed on 22nd May 2022.

robust digital infrastructure, the efficient delivery of governance and services through digital means and the empowerment of citizens through digital platforms. Dua emphasizes Digital India's objective of transforming the nation into a knowledge-driven economy and a society characterized by digital empowerment. This ambitious initiative aims to achieve effective governance by enhancing public accountability through improved synchronization and coordination. By digitally bridging gaps and facilitating the delivery of government programmes and services seeks to leverage information technology in various government departments.<sup>17</sup>

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (2018) published a report titled '*Digital North-East Vision 2022*', a strategic document reflecting the Government of India's comprehensive plan to integrate digital advancements across the northeastern region of India. This report outlines a future where digital initiatives are systematically implemented to transform and expedite progress within the broader Digital India Programme. The vision serves as a detailed framework guiding each initiative with the ultimate aim of transforming and empowering the daily lives of citizens in the northeastern region. Through the establishment of Digital North-East Vision 2022, the Government of India aspires for the region to play a crucial role in realizing India's trillion-dollar digital economy.<sup>18</sup>

Lalduhawmi, Tracy. (2018) in her article titled *Developmental Impact of E-Governance* highlights the relations between ICT and Development where the absence of the former can cause a drawback in the development process of the government. This article analyzes some of the E-Governance projects in Kolasib District of Mizoram and examines various challenges that are related to the implementation of E-Governance projects in Kolasib District. Lastly, she found out that accessibility and proper functioning of the projects and e-readiness are among

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<sup>17</sup>Dua, Bindu. (2018). Digital India: Challenges and Suggestions for Implementation. *Review of Research*, Vol 8, Issue No. 1, pp. 1-7.

<sup>18</sup>Ministry of Electronics Information and Technology (2018) Report on: *Digital North-East Vision 2022*.

the government employees as well as the citizens which have a positive impact on the development process.<sup>19</sup>

Pardhasaradhi, Y & Kaur,Ravinder. (2017) in their article titled *Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and E-Governance: An Indian Experience* examines the significant transformation in public administration brought about by the integration of ICTs and collaborative governance models particularly in the context of India. The authors note that scholars like Furukawa (2004) emphasize the disruptive impact of ICTs on traditional bureaucratic frameworks by fostering networked governance and enhancing citizen-focused service delivery. The World Bank and the Government of India characterize E-Governance as a mechanism for promoting transparency, efficiency and accountability but its application differs markedly between developed and developing nations with India focusing on automation and the United States on interactive platforms. Collectively, the literature supports the notion that PPPs serve as a driving force for E-Governance while also emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive frameworks to tackle issues of equity, sustainability and adaptive governance in varied contexts such as India.<sup>20</sup>

Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012) in his book *E-Governance: Concept and Case Studies* discusses the development and progression of E-Governance within governmental administration. He elaborates on its scope, current status and global growth. Furthermore, he outlines various E-Governance models, infrastructure initiatives and strategies essential for the successful execution of these projects while also addressing the challenges and issues associated with E-Governance.<sup>21</sup>

Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary. (2010) ‘Mizoram Citizen Services Electronic Governance Rules of 2010’ here the rules established under Section 90 in conjunction with Section 6 of the IT Act of 2000, are enacted by the Government of Mizoram to facilitate electronic governance within the state. The regulations specify

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<sup>19</sup>Lalduhawmi, Tracy. (2018). Developmental Impact of E-Governance. *International Journal of Science and Engineering*, Vol 3, Issue No. 2, pp.1-4.

<sup>20</sup>Pardhasaradhi, Y &Kaur,Ravinder (2017). Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and e-Governance: An Indian Experience. *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol 54, Issue No. 3, pp. 550-565.

<sup>21</sup>Prabhu, C.S.R. (2012).*E-Governance: Concepts and Case Studies*. PHI Learning Pvt Ltd.

that Village Level Entrepreneurs are to be selected by the Service Centre Agency (SCA) as part of the CSC schemes initiated by the Government of Mizoram. Furthermore, the rules delineate the establishment of the District E-Governance Society a non-profit entity led by the Deputy Commissioner of the respective district, which is constituted under the Registration of Societies Act. This society is tasked with providing comprehensive guidelines and ensuring the efficient operation of e-district services and CSCs within the district. The rules also define the responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner, who is authorized to inspect any Authorized Citizens Service Centre and to request relevant records or information. Additionally, the Deputy Commissioner has the authority to direct the suspension of an Authorized Citizens Services Agent's appointment if their performance is deemed unsatisfactory.<sup>22</sup>

Gupta, Piyush & Bagga, PK. (2008) in their book *Compendium of E-Governance Initiatives in India* highlighted the emergence of NeGP which includes different Government projects at the Centre, State and other integrated projects. He also highlighted various initiatives taken by the Government of India in terms of Infrastructural Projects and Capacity Building.<sup>23</sup>

Second Administrative Reforms Committee Report. (2008) *Eleventh Report on Promoting E-Governance-The Smart Way Forward* mainly focuses on fostering an effective E-Governance here the government must first cultivate a willingness to change internally. It should identify and prioritize projects that address citizen needs, allocating 2-3 percent of the plan budget accordingly. Business processes, forms, and structures need redesigning to fit E-Governance supported by necessary legal and institutional reforms. Capacity building is essential for both organizations and individuals involved, alongside awareness campaigns. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation throughout implementation ensure projects meet their goals, with independent assessments of success. State governments must mandate governance reforms before launching E-Governance initiatives including procedural and

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<sup>22</sup>The Mizoram Gazette Extra Ordinary (2010). 'Mizoram citizen services electronic governance rules 2010', Vol XXXIX, Issue No. 406, Government of India.

<sup>23</sup>Gupta, Piyush & Bagga, R.K. (2008). *Compendium of E-Governance Initiatives in India*. University Press Pvt Ltd.

structural changes. Finally, a clear legal framework and knowledge management roadmap should guide a phased transformation of citizen-government interactions to fully digital modes by 2020 by ensuring coordination across government levels and adapting to varied local contexts.<sup>24</sup>

Sinha, R.P.(2006) in his book *E-Governance in India: Initiatives and Issues* articulates the definitions of Governance and E-Governance has emphasizing various governance parameters such as accountability, political stability, the rule of law and corruption control. He also examines the legal frameworks surrounding governance and provides an overview of the global landscape of E-Governance. Furthermore, he underscores the initiatives undertaken by the Government to foster the development of the IT sector within the nation while addressing the challenges and issues related to IT and governance which ultimately proposing solutions for enhancement.<sup>25</sup>

Panneervel, P. (2005) in his book *E-Governance: A Change Management Tool* elucidates the concept of E-Governance by defining and examining the transformative processes within governance that alter management practices. He emphasizes the analytical development and execution of the smart card-based driving license system implemented in the State of Gujarat, which was recognized as the first of its kind globally when introduced by the Government of Gujarat in 1999. Furthermore, he discusses how the change management process was effectively achieved through e-application and proposes recommendations for enhancing E-Governance applications.<sup>26</sup>

Bhatnagar, Subhash.(2004) in his book *E-Government: From Vision to Implementation* provides an understanding of E-Government, how it emerged and for what reason it has been used in third-world countries like India. It includes services to citizens such as transactions involving obtaining land deeds, certificates, permits, taxes, different licenses relating to customs and business sections. The methods used in delivering services differ from country to country. He also explores the impact and

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<sup>24</sup>Second ARC Report (2008), Eleventh Report on Promoting e-Governance-The smart way forward, Department of Administrative Reforms and Personnel and Grievances, Government of India.

<sup>25</sup>Sinha, R.P. (2006).*E-Governance in India: Initiatives and Issues*. Concept Publishing Company.

<sup>26</sup>Panneervel, P. (2005). *E-Governance, A Change Management Too*. Rawat Publications.

benefits of E-Governance on good governance, empowerment and eradicating poverty.<sup>27</sup>

Sharma, Pankaj (2004) in his book *E-Governance* explores the domain of E-Governance. He highlights the substantial challenges that governments encounter when initiating E-Government projects such as cultural disparities, the significant digital divide, the slow progression of IT literacy and the diversity of languages. The book also examines various initiatives undertaken by different states in the field of E-Governance and ICT projects while elucidating the legal complexities of Information Technology (IT). Finally, the authors investigate a range of models and developments through detailed case studies providing insights into the ongoing evolution of E-Governance projects.<sup>28</sup>

Shefali, Kalia. (2004) in her book *Good Governance and Development* emphasized the significance of E-Governance in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative operations across various governmental departments. She discussed several E-Governance models including the Computational Intelligence and Data Mining (CIDM) which provides citizens with insights into governmental functions via the internet the CIDM which focuses on delivering essential information to specific audiences or the broader public and the Advocacy Model (AD) which facilitates civil society's involvement in governmental decision-making and the Interactive Service Model (ISM) which allows citizens to engage in governmental processes and transactions. Kalia identified four fundamental components of E-Governance: information, technology, processes and people also she also addressed the applications of E-Governance across different sectors.<sup>29</sup>

### **Research Gap:**

The significance of E-Governance in delivering various public services is undeniable. This is particularly true for states like Mizoram, where geographical

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<sup>27</sup>Bhatnagar, Subhash. (2004). *E-Government*. Sage Publications Pvt Ltd.

<sup>28</sup>Sharma, Pankaj. (2004). *E-Governance*. ABH Publishing Corporation.

<sup>29</sup>Shefali, Kalia, (2004). *Good Governance and Development*. New Century Publications.

challenges and other factors complicate access to essential services. E-Governance acts as a remedy by facilitating the delivery of vital public services to individuals residing in remote and isolated areas. While there have been some studies focusing on E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram, however that one was under the previous programme called NeGP(National e-Governance Plan) and not under the Digital India Programme which is currently going on.

In light of the existing literature, it is evident that apart from the studies previously referenced there has been a notable absence of research focusing on CSCs in Mizoram from the dual perspectives of both Customers (who avail the public services) and Village Level Entrepreneurs (who operate these centres). This oversight is particularly significant given the crucial role that CSCs play as part of the Digital India Programme. The CSCs are designed to act as front-end service delivery points by facilitating access to a variety of public services for individuals living in far-flung areas. Their importance cannot be overstated especially in a state like Mizoram where geographical and infrastructural challenges hinder the effective delivery of essential services. The CSCs are intended to bridge the gap between the government and the populace, yet there has been little focus on understanding the experiences and needs of those who utilize these services, as well as those who provide them. The lack of comprehensive studies on this topic leaves a significant gap in understanding of how CSCs function in Mizoram. It is essential to explore the perspectives of customers to gauge their satisfaction, the challenges they face, and how effectively their needs are being met. Simultaneously, examining the viewpoints of VLEs operating these CSCs is crucial for understanding the operational challenges, economic viability and sustainability of these centers. Therefore, this research aims to fill this existing research gap by conducting a thorough examination of both customers and VLEs perspectives regarding CSCs in Mizoram. By doing so, it seeks to provide valuable insights that can form policy decisions, improve service delivery and enhance the overall effectiveness of the Digital India Programme within the state of Mizoram.



**Statement of the Problem:**

Even in this modern age certain aspects of government administration still need focused attention such as public service delivery, reducing corruption, making officials accountable, etc. While India is rapidly advancing in ICTs the challenge lies in effectively utilizing this ever-evolving technology to empower the common masses. Across the nation, enhancing governance is crucial and the common people who are the real rulers of the country are often encounter difficulties accessing even basic public services. So with the help of ICTs the most common issue of the public relating to the delivery of public services can ultimately improve accessibility and efficiency for all.

Among the various policies and programmes adopted by the Government of India in the field of E-Governance CSCs stand out as a significant component of it. These centres started initially in NeGP and later under the Digital India programme have been established nationwide including in Mizoram. Through its network of CSCs it provides a diverse array of online public services at the grassroots level. Mizoram is one of the four tribal-majority states in the North Eastern Region (NER), with over 47.89 percent (2011 Census) of its population residing in rural areas. Accessing various public services poses a significant challenge due to the regions geographical terrain and inadequate infrastructure, including roads and highways. Additionally, many residents struggle with poor transport and communication connectivity. In this context, CSCs implemented in Mizoram serve as crucial front-end delivery points by facilitating access to various public services for people in convenient locations. The present study holds great importance as it aims to examine the functioning of these CSCs where an area that currently lacks systematic and scientific research. Two key aspects of this study are particularly vital: first, assessing the perspectives of CSC customers (the public) and second by understanding the viewpoints of the entrepreneurs operating these CSCs. Both perspectives will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges faced by the CSCs as an important E-Governance initiative in Mizoram.

This study aims to assess the success or failure of CSCs in Mizoram, identifying what measures can be taken to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. In the 21st century, successful implementation of E-Governance is crucial. It not only facilitates the delivery of various public services to citizens more transparently and effectively but also empowers them to align with the goal of Good Governance. By assessing the strengths and weaknesses of CSCs this research outcome can offer a realistic perspective with practical insights to enhance service delivery and ultimately benefit the community.

### **Scope of the Study:**

This study discusses the concept of E-Governance, its types, various models, and its evolution at the Global, National and Mizoram level. It also highlights the differences between E-Governance and E-Government. The study covers the various E-Governance initiatives taken up at the national and different state levels in India with a special focus on E-Governance initiatives in the state of Mizoram (Past and Present). It deliberates on the main stakeholders for implementing E-Governance and Common Service Centres in India in the form of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India and the National e-Governance Division at the Central Government Level, whereas at the Mizoram State Level i.e., the Department of Information & Communication Technology and the Mizoram State e-Governance Society. Apart from the above mentioned it focuses on a comprehensive study of CSCs, its objectives, implementation framework and various services offered by them. It also highlights recent initiative by the Government of India through the Digital India Common Service Centres Project by underscoring the dedication to digital transformation in the country.

Additionally, the research aims to elucidate the complexities of public service delivery by examining the challenges that may impede the effective functioning of Common Service Centres. By identifying these obstacles, the study endeavors to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of public service delivery

through CSCs in Mizoram. It ultimately offers a series of suggestions and recommendations designed to enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of CSCs. Such enhancements could lead to better service experiences for customers and a more sustainable operational framework for entrepreneurs managing CSCs in Mizoram.

**Objectives of the Study:**

1. To study the genesis and conceptual aspect of E-Governance.
2. To examine various E-Governance initiatives at the National Level.
3. To study E-Governance initiatives implemented by the Government of Mizoram.
4. To assess the impact of the Common Service Centres in providing E-Governance services to the people in Mizoram.
5. To find out the problems and challenges in the implementation of Common Service Centres and the possible solutions and remedial measures.

**Research Questions:**

1. How E-Governance has evolved and its conceptual framework?
2. What are the various E-Governance initiatives implemented at the National Level?
3. What are the various E-Governance initiatives undertaken by the Government of Mizoram?
4. What is the role of Common Service Centres in providing E-Governance services to the people?
5. What are the problems and challenges in the implementation of Common Service Centres in Mizoram?

**Methodology:**

The present study is descriptive in design. Both primary and secondary sources of data are used for the study. The study area of this research is the

comparative study of Aizawl and Lawngtlai districts of the state of Mizoram. The reason behind Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts are selected for the comparative study, as they have the highest number of CSCs, according to the report from the Common Service Centre office in Mizoram. Primary data is collected by employing two important tools: a Questionnaire and Observation. The Semi-Structured Questionnaire and the Simple Random Sampling method (Probability Sampling) used to draw sample respondents for the study from selected CSCs of the mentioned districts (i.e., Aizawl and Lawngtlai). The two separate questionnaires are prepared: one aimed at Village Level Entrepreneurs who manage the CSCs, and another directed towards the Customers who utilize various public services offered at these centres. This dual approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between service providers and service users. In total, this comparative study includes 420 sample respondents, with 175 customers from each district, namely, Aizawl and Lawngtlai. Furthermore, there are 35 VLEs from each district who participated in the research study, providing insight into the operational aspects of the CSCs. In addition to the interviews, the research employs a non-participatory Observation tool. This tool allows researchers to observe the day-to-day functioning of the CSCs, their infrastructure, etc in both districts without interfering with the operations. Such observations are crucial for understanding the practical challenges, service interactions and overall environment within the CSCs. By integrating both the Questionnaire and Observation tool this study aims to gather rich, multifaceted data that reflects the realities of both Customers and VLEs engaged in the CSCs in Mizoram.

The secondary sources include books, journals, articles, government and non-government documents (policy papers, reports, documents, etc), unpublished works and web sources related to the study (directly or indirectly). For analyzing the data collected from primary sources, the researcher adopts the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for generating data in the form of simple percentages and frequency distributions.

**Significance of the Study:**

In an incredibly brief period, ICTs revolutionized the lives of individuals across the globe, marking a transformative era in human history. One significant area where the impact is profoundly felt is in the delivery of public services. The advent of ICTs introduced innovative methods for providing these services efficiently and effectively, moving away from traditional manual systems that had long dominated public service delivery. E-Governance has emerged as a pivotal mechanism through which governments and other stakeholders can offer various public services online. This shift allows for greater accessibility, convenience, and speed in service delivery. Citizens no longer have to navigate complex bureaucracies or endure long waiting times associated with manual processes. Instead, they can access services electronically, which not only streamlines operations but also enhances transparency and accountability in government dealings.

This research study on “E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram: A Comparative Study of Common Service Centres in Aizawl and Lawngtlai District” aims to make a substantial contribution to the field of E-Governance by focusing specifically on the functioning of CSCs. These centres offer the public, to access essential services, making them integral to the overall success of E-Governance initiatives. The significance of this study is underscored by the notable lack of systematic or scientific research on the topic of CSCs within the context of Mizoram. While various studies explored E-Governance, a targeted examination of CSCs from the perspectives of both customers (the general public) and VLEs (the individuals operating these centres) is largely absent. This gap in research is critical, as both groups are fundamental stakeholders in the E-Governance framework. Understanding the experiences and challenges faced by customers accessing services through CSCs is vital for assessing the effectiveness of these centres. Simultaneously, insights from VLEs who run CSCs can shed light on the operational challenges they encounter, the viability of their business models and their perspectives on how to improve service delivery. By addressing this gap, the study not only enriches the academic discourse surrounding E-Governance but also holds practical implications for policymakers and practitioners. The findings help to make strategies to enhance the functionality and reach of CSCs ultimately leads to improved public service delivery for the

citizens of Mizoram. Recommendations derived from the study guide the development of more effective E-Governance policies, ensuring that public services are not only accessible but also responsive to the needs of the community. Therefore, this study on the E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram focusing on CSCs is significant for its potential to provide a holistic understanding of the interplay between technology and public service delivery.

### **Chapterization:**

The entire thesis is organized into seven chapters.

The *first chapter* serves as an *Introduction*, outlining the background of the study and emphasizing the significance of E-Governance in enhancing administrative efficiency. Additionally, it includes a review of relevant literature, identification of the research problem, discussion of the research gap, delineation of the study scope, articulation of the study objectives, formulation of research questions, description of the methodology and an explanation of significance of the study.

The *second chapter*, titled '*E-Governance: A Conceptual Framework*' examines the theoretical aspects of E-Governance, providing definitions, various types and models associated with it. Additionally, it offers a concise overview of the global evolution of e-governance as well as its development specifically within India and the state of Mizoram.

The *third chapter* focuses on '*E-Governance Initiatives in India*' with a particular focus on the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) introduced in 2006 and the Digital India Programme that commenced in 2015. Furthermore, it analyzes the Digital North East Vision 2022 which outlines a digital strategy for the Northeastern states, and highlights key E-Governance initiatives undertaken by different states across the country.

The *fourth chapter*, titled '*E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram*', examines the operations of the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS) in relation to the implementation and execution of significant IT programmes and policies. Also, this chapter aims to highlight the various ongoing schemes and initiatives undertaken by the Department of Information and Communication Technology, Government of Mizoram.

The *fifth* chapter on the ‘*Common Service Centres (CSCs) in India and Mizoram*’ aims to explore the initiatives associated with CSCs, their objectives and goals. Also, the chapter emphasizes the various services provided by CSCs and their transactions.

The *sixth* chapter, titled ‘*Results and Discussion*’ presents an analysis of field data obtained through the Semi-Structured Interview Schedule and Observation method from both the Village Level Entrepreneurs and Customers of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts of Mizoram with the help of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for generating data in the form of simple percentages and frequency distributions.

The *seventh* chapter discusses about the major findings of the research study based on the previous chapter results and discussion. Also, the researcher gives some suggestions based on the problems and challenges identified in the field study. At last, the overall conclusion of the study was drawn.

### **Major Findings:**

The following outlines the key findings of the study:

#### **Aizawl District Common Service Centres Village Level Entrepreneurs:**

- ❖ The study found that the majority of the Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) (35 respondents) expressed a desire to incorporate additional services into the Common Service Centre (CSC) portal. They preferred the inclusion of government online services within the CSC portal rather than those managed by the relevant Departments/Organisations/Agencies.
- ❖ The researcher found that the majority of the VLEs sought consistent or equal treatment from the District Manager (DM) of the Aizawl District, as the DM has certain privileges that allow him to grant service permissions such as Aadhaar enrolment centres, exclusively to select or a few VLEs.
- ❖ The study found there was some kind of fear among the VLEs, if VLEs didn’t maintain a strong and healthy relationship with the DM, chance that their CSC license could be revoked. Thus, it shows the authority or power of the DM.
- ❖ The VLEs demanded some kind of assistance from the Government or any other

concerned agencies, either financial or through in-kind support. The study revealed that, till (June 2025), only under CSC 1.0 the VLEs received support from the government, and since 2015, when CSC 2.0 implemented, no such support has been available. Therefore, VLEs expressed a need for equipment including backup batteries, more dependable internet connections, printers and computers from the government or any other concerned agencies.

- ❖ The majority of the VLEs indicate that managing CSCs does not provide sufficient income to support their families as the service charges or rates are low and have been established by the Government and they don't have any control or say in this matter. Therefore, they want the Government to increase the service charges further.
- ❖ The majority of services accessed by customers from CSCs include e-District services such as Tribal, Income and Residential Certificates as well as PAN Card applications and online form submission through the open portal. Thus, the customers prefer more Government to Citizens (G2C) services from the CSCs.
- ❖ In Aizawl District, predominantly, the VLEs are functioning as full-time CSC operators without any other job or activity.
- ❖ The e-District services experience significant delays in approval processes and the portal frequently encounters crashes. This situation causes anxiety among users, preventing them from obtaining their certificates in a timely manner or on time. Thus, it negates the main objective of providing online services.

#### **Lawngtlai District Common Service Centres Village Level Entrepreneurs:**

- ❖ The field survey indicates that various online service applications are not widely used in the Lawngtlai District except for payment transaction services, notably popular in this area.
- ❖ There is an absence of adequate signboards of CSCs at Lawngtlai District, raising concerns for customers and how to identify these centres as CSCs. Even the researcher found it difficult to locate CSCs in the Lawngtlai district.
- ❖ The researcher found that despite the capability of an online service application to complete at CSCs, the VLEs of Lawngtlai District still required to submit a hard copy to the relevant departments/organisations/agencies.



- ❖ According to VLEs, the people of Lawngtlai District favour the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Office for accessing e-District services as it offers lower service charges in comparison to CSCs.
- ❖ The VLEs in Lawngtlai District are unable to provide Aadhaar Enrollment Services through their CSCs because the Government of Mizoram has denied this service. The main reason, according to VLEs, is the significant presence of minority groups particularly the Chakmas, migrated from Bangladesh, and apprehension that some of them are not eligible to get an Aadhaar card.
- ❖ A large number (almost 95 percent) of the VLEs in Lawngtlai District operate CSCs on a part-time basis, indicating their involvement in some other job or profession for earning their livelihood. Thus, it shows that in Lawngtlai District, CSCs are not sufficient enough to earn a livelihood for the VLEs.
- ❖ The lack of internet connectivity poses a significant challenge in this region, rendering CSCs ineffective without access to the internet. Thus, the common people's trust in the reliability of the online services provided by the CSCs is questionable.
- ❖ The VLEs sought assistance from the government in the form of material support or financial aid. Their requests included equipment such as solar backup systems, complimentary internet connections, printers and complete computer setups.

#### **Customers of Common Service Centres from Aizawl District:**

- ❖ A significant number of customers in Aizawl District expressed unhappiness, as the majority of VLEs operate with only a single counter. This limitation results in lengthy queues, causing customers to waste their valuable time and energy.
- ❖ Still, the majority of the customers feel that many services are not integrated into the CSC portal, from which they can access all the services in one place with ease. Thus, they want to include both governmental and private organisations services to be integrated into the CSC portal, enable them to access all services through a single CSC platform.
- ❖ Customers of CSCs from Aizawl District strongly emphasize the need for

reliable backup power batteries or robust network connectivity, as prolonged power outages result in significant delays, and associated issues result in wastage of time.

- ❖ The customers highlighted about lack of awareness about the services available at the CSCs, and also their utility among the people. According to them, there is a lack of publicity about the CSCs from the stakeholders. Thus, there is a need for increased awareness about CSCs, in order to make it more popularized.
- ❖ Although many online public services are provided through CSCs, however, customers want Aadhaar services to be available at all CSCs in Aizawl District. At present, only in a few CSCs is the Aadhaar service facility is available in the district.

#### **Customers of Common Service Centres from Lawngtlai District:**

- ❖ The majority of customers indicate that service charges at CSCs are higher than those at DC office, prompting customers to seek services at DC offices or their respective Block Development Office (BDO).
- ❖ The quality of internet connectivity and power supply in Lawngtlai District is significantly poor, which results in prolonged waiting times for customers.
- ❖ The prevalence of part-time VLEs in Lawngtlai District has led to customer dissatisfaction, as they often find it challenging to access services from CSCs during the scheduled office time. Many part-time VLEs open their CSCs according to their suitability, affects the accessibility for the customers.
- ❖ One interesting finding from the field study while talking with the customers is that due to the limited number of bank ATMs in Lawngtlai District, customers are compelled to visit the CSCs to withdraw their funds.
- ❖ The absence of hoardings or signboards about CSCs creates a significant challenge for customers in identifying the location of CSC in the district.
- ❖ A large number of customers are not happy with the exclusion of Aadhaar services from the CSCs; rather, they have to travel to the DC office, and according to them, it is costly and time-consuming, especially for those people who are staying in remote and far-flung areas with poor road conditions and

lack of public transport etc.

**District Manager of Common Service Centres in Aizawl District:**

- ❖ The researcher has found that the office space of the District Manager (DM) of Aizawl District is quite small or limited which hinders the smooth execution of operations.
- ❖ The concerns of VLEs about the abuse of authority by the DM, the latter indicated to receive strict instructions from higher authorities that the transaction volume of CSCs should increase. So, this is the reason why District Manager use a stern tone when addressing the VLEs.
- ❖ According to the District Manager, the Deputy Commissioner's office of Aizawl District has emphasized the necessity for the effective operation of CSCs in Aizawl District with more seriousness and commitment since the current state of these centres is significantly impaired.
- ❖ The District Manager emphasized that, at present, there is no proper guidelines or regulations for the conduct of VLEs, because of which he finds it difficult to regulate VLEs. Hence, DM sought appropriate guidelines or regulations regarding VLEs to ensure the effective management of Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Aizawl District.

**District Manager of Common Service Centres in Lawngtlai District:**

- ❖ Concerning the service fees for various public services associated with the Lawngtlai District CSCs, the District Manager stated that the charges are determined by the office of the Deputy Commissioner and as District Manager of Lawngtlai CSCs can't do anything.
- ❖ Regarding providing Aadhaar Services through the CSCs for the people in Lawngtlai District, DM expressed concerns that due to Lawngtlai location in the southern part of Mizoram bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar, there has been an influx of illegal immigrants. He fears that granting permission for Aadhaar services at CSCs could lead to the production of fraudulent documents or counterfeit certificates for outsiders potentially resulting in

significant issues.

- ❖ According to the District Manager of Lawngtlai District, there should be a standardized manual and set of conduct rules for the CSC throughout Mizoram. At present, no uniform manuals and guidelines have been set; rather they vary from one district to another. Also, he further emphasized his desire to raise awareness about the significance of CSCs advocating for increased efforts from the Government itself.
- ❖ Considering that Lawngtlai District is considerably less developed in comparison with other districts including Aizawl, where the District Manager urged the government to assist CSCs in Lawngtlai either in the form of material resources or financial aid.

#### **State Manager of Common Service Centres in Mizoram:**

- ❖ The State Manager for the CSCs in Mizoram does not have a dedicated office; instead, the State Manager manages CSC operations from the Mizoram State e-Governance Society office.
- ❖ According to the State Manager of CSCs in Mizoram, there has been no financial support for CSCs in the State of Mizoram, either from the Government of India or Mizoram, as it falls under the purview of CSCs Pvt Limited. Previously, there was some kind of support under CSC 1.0 and also funding from the North Eastern Council (NEC) which was allocated to the Rural Kiosk initiative.
- ❖ The operation of CSCs in Mizoram presents significant challenges. Firstly, CSCs are privately owned entities that require support from the Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS), an organization responsible for the execution of E-Governance initiatives and policies within the state. The MSeGS operates under the Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Government of Mizoram. Additionally, for the e-District project, collaboration with the DC and their staff is essential. Therefore, there is a pressing need for a well-structured system governing CSCs in Mizoram.
- ❖ To ensure the sustainability and potential growth of CSCs in the future in the state of Mizoram, according to the State Manager of CSCs, it is imperative

that the Mizoram Government invest both (Material and Financial) into CSCs; otherwise, there is a concern that it may cease to exist.

### **Comparative Study of Common Service Centres of Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts:**

#### **Similarities:**

Here given the similarities between Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts CSCs:

- ❖ The researcher found that in both districts, VLEs express a need for government support whether financial or material. For example, Aizawl VLEs want equipment like backup batteries and printers, while Lawngtlai VLEs request solar backup systems, internet connections, printers and computers.
- ❖ The Aizawl VLEs mentioned that the government-set service charges or rates are not supportive enough for their livelihood, and Lawngtlai VLEs are largely operate CSCs on a part-time basis, therefore implying CSCs alone cannot sustain their livelihood. Thus, it is clear that income from managing CSCs is insufficient in both districts.
- ❖ The study reveals that, VLEs from both districts have experienced operational challenges related to technology- Aizawl faces CSC portal crashes and delays in e-District services whereas Lawngtlai struggles with poor internet connectivity that hampers CSC effectiveness. Also, power and internet connectivity issues affect customer experience in both districts. Aizawl customers emphasize the need for backup power and reliable networks to prevent delays caused by outages, and Lawngtlai customers face poor internet and power supply leading to long waiting times. Customers in both areas are affected by operational limitations: Aizawl faces long queues because most VLEs have only a single service counter and Lawngtlai customers are dissatisfied with part-time VLEs who are not always available when needed during office hours.
- ❖ The e-District services are important in both districts but are accessed through different modes: Aizawl customers commonly use CSCs for accessing e-District

services while Lawngtlai residents prefer the Deputy Commissioner's office due to lower fees in comparison with CSCs.

❖ In Aizawl, the researcher found the absence of appropriate regulations, which makes it hard for the District Manager to manage VLEs and CSCs effectively. Similarly, in Lawngtlai District there is no standardized manual or uniform guideline for VLEs and CSCs. Therefore, both District Managers acknowledge and emphasize the need for proper conduct guidelines or manuals to regulate VLEs and CSCs for smooth and fair operations.

❖ The customers from both districts want Aadhaar services available at more CSCs. In Aizawl, customers want the Aadhaar services facility available at all CSCs rather than just a select few, while in Lawngtlai District, customers desire the Aadhaar services facility at CSCs to avoid costly and time-consuming visits to DC offices.

❖ Both districts suffer from limited accessibility or visibility of CSCs. While Aizawl customers want to increase awareness efforts from VLEs and the government to popularize CSCs, Lawngtlai customers struggle to identify the location of CSCs due to the absence of signboards or hoardings, along with a lack of awareness of CSCs.

### **Differences:**

❖ Usage patterns differ in both districts. In Aizawl, VLEs predominantly operate full-time CSCs with a focus on government services integrated into the CSCs portal, while Lawngtlai VLEs mostly run CSCs part-time and are primarily used by people for payment transaction services.

❖ Identification and accessibility issues appear only in the Lawngtlai District, where CSCs lack adequate signboards, making it hard for the common people to locate them. Also, in Lawngtlai, hard copy document submission is still required despite the availability of online applications. Whereas, in the Aizawl District both the above-mentioned issues did not exist.

❖ Customers in the Lawngtlai District found that the CSC service charges higher than DC or BDO office's service charges or rates, and often prefer the latter two alternatives, unlike in Aizawl where the issue of service charges or rates higher for accessing services through CSCs is not as important for the majority of the respondents, thus they prefer to visit CSCs for accessing services rather than DC or BDO offices.

❖ In the Lawngtlai District, due to limited bank ATMs, there existed a cash withdrawal issue, forcing customers to use CSCs for this purpose; in contrast this is not the case in the Aizawl District.

❖ The issue of difficult physical access to CSCs due to poor road conditions, found in Lawngtlai District, but in contrast, Aizawl is not affected by bad road conditions for accessing CSCs in the district by the people.

❖ Awareness and promotion of CSCs is more of a concern for Aizawl customers, who see it as a way to increase CSC popularity, whereas Lawngtlai customers focus on more basic challenges like identifying CSC locations.

❖ The Aizawl District Manager faces internal operational issues such as limited office space and the challenge of maintaining authority over VLEs, including receiving warnings from higher authorities about an increase in the volume of transactions of CSCs, which is not mentioned by the Lawngtlai District Manager for CSCs.

❖ The Lawngtlai DM raises unique security concerns tied to the district geographical location near international borders (Bangladesh and Myanmar) fearing unauthorized use of CSCs for making fraudulent documents, while a concern absent in the Aizawl context.

Regarding service charges or rates, the Lawngtlai District Manager clarifies that the DC office fixes the service charges or rates for the CSCs services, and that he has no control over this, while Aizawl District Manager does not mention this service charges or rates setting issue

**Suggestions:**

The following suggestions have been given for making CSCs work effectively and efficiently, while focusing to overcome the problems and challenges faced by both the Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) and Customers of CSCs in Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts, based on a field study:

***Integration and Expansion of Services***

- ❖ *Unify Government Services on CSC Portal:* The researcher noted that the Government of Mizoram should ensure that all E-Governance services are integrated into the CSCs portal to avoid redirection to departmental websites, which confuses users and limits VLEs service scope.
- ❖ *Expand Service Portfolio:* The Government of Mizoram should introduce or add more relevant services (e.g., employment schemes, healthcare, and agriculture support) based on local demand to make CSCs more useful for the common people and profitable for the Village Level Entrepreneurs.

***Strengthen Governance and Oversight***

- ❖ *Ensure Transparency and Fair Practices:* From the field observation, it has been explored that the Government of Mizoram or the concerned authorities should implement clear and accountable guidelines for the District Manager of CSCs in service allocation (e.g., Aadhaar centers) to prevent misuse of power or favouritism. Also, it is important to develop and disseminate a standardized VLE Code of Conduct and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across the district.
- ❖ *Regular Monitoring:* The Government of Mizoram should introduce third-party audits or any feedback mechanisms to ensure the fair treatment of VLEs and to discourage abuse of authority.

Furthermore, the researcher proposed that the State Government allocate a specific budget to enhance CSCs infrastructure to facilitate capacity building and promote service expansion. Additionally, the Government of Mizoram should investigate new funding opportunities through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) or central schemes. It is also recommended to establish a specialized unit within the Mizoram State e-



Governance Society (MSeGS) to exclusively manage CSC operations, coordination, and grievance resolution while appointing dedicated personnel to offer ongoing support to VLEs.

### ***Improve Financial and Material Support to VLEs***

- ❖ *Subsidized Infrastructure Support:* The researcher found that VLEs requested financial grants or subsidized equipment from the Government or other concerned stakeholders, such as high-speed internet connections, printers, computers and solar backup systems to all functioning at CSCs especially in remote and far-flung areas. Thus, the concerned authority needs to take up this issue seriously because basic infrastructure is a must for the efficient and effective functioning of CSCs.
- ❖ *Review and Revise Service Charges:* The Government of Mizoram or the Deputy Commissioner's office should allow flexibility in setting service charges or rates of CSCs based on the difficulty of the services, locality and operational cost to ensure CSCs remain financially viable for the VLEs.

### ***Enhance Training and Capacity Building***

- ❖ *Regular Training for VLEs:* There should be periodic training on digital services, customer service and the latest government schemes (both Central and State) to keep VLEs updated and improve service delivery. Moreover, conduct regular workshops/conferences for VLEs on professional ethics, public service delivery and CSCs responsibilities.
- ❖ *Digital Literacy for Citizens:* The ICT Department of the Government of Mizoram, DC office or a CSC Pvt Limited, Mizoram should launch an awareness programme in the local language to increase public understanding and trust in CSC services. Also, try to use local language media and traditional channels or platforms like church groups, civil society, village councils, etc).

Recently, under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) scheme, the Department of ICT, Government of Mizoram, initiated a new programme focused on

IT Skill Development and Training Centres. At present, efforts commenced in seven areas with a significant minority population. Among these seven areas, three Rural Development (RD) Blocks from Lawngtlai District have been selected, namely Chawngte Block, Lawngtlai Block and Bungtlang 'S' Block.

### ***Strengthen Infrastructure and Connectivity***

- ❖ *Boost Internet Connectivity:* The internet connectivity is very poor, especially in the Lawngtlai District. So, there should be collaboration with telecom providers like Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and other telecom providers with CSCs Pvt. Ltd to enhance internet access in low-connectivity zones. Moreover, under the Bharat Net Scheme, the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) has finished installing broadband connectivity in 41 villages under phase I. Under phase II, a VSAT communication system has been installed in 480 Villages and 20 more villages are to be covered. Presently, they are proposing a new project under the amended Bharat Net Scheme.
- ❖ *Reliable Backup Systems:* Power supply is another major issue in the Lawngtlai District compared with the Aizawl District. So, VLEs should be given UPS/inverters or solar-powered systems to ensure uninterrupted services during power outages.
- ❖ *Establish Additional Service Counters:* During the researcher's visits to the CSCs, particularly in the Aizawl District, individuals experience prolonged waiting periods for their turn. Therefore, it is imperative for the VLEs to enhance the number of operational counters at high-traffic CSCs in order to minimize customer waiting times and save their precious time.
- ❖ *Language Barrier:* The researcher has discovered that customers, especially in Lawngtlai and those with lower educational qualifications in Aizawl District face a language barrier due to the use of English in public services. Therefore, if it is feasible by employing a local language would be more preferable, and CSCs would likely gain greater popularity if this change is implemented.

### ***Improve Service Delivery Efficiency***

- ❖ *Upgrade and Maintain Portals:* The researcher observed that during his visits to CSCs, some customers are awaiting for their certificates, which cannot be produced on time due to the portal crashing. Therefore, to mitigate these inconveniences, the Government of Mizoram should enhance the backend performance of the e-District and CSC portals to minimize system crashes and delays in certificate approvals. Also, the portal should be updated regularly, taking into account the increasing cases of Cyber Crime attacks. It is important to remember that in this digital age a timely and faster service delivery should be the goal of any public service providers be it government or private.
- ❖ *Track Service Timelines:* Moreover, the VLEs expressed a desire for a service tracking system that would enable both customers and VLEs to readily ascertain the status of their services, which are demanded from the concerned authority. Consequently, CSCs Pvt Limited or the Government of Mizoram should establish a time-sensitive service delivery model that incorporates escalation procedures for instances of delayed services.

### ***Increase CSC Visibility and Accessibility***

- ❖ *Mandatory Signboard for CSCs:* The researcher encounters challenges in identifying CSCs, particularly in the Lawngtlai District, due to the absence of signboards outside the CSC, which also complicates the process for customers. Therefore, it is essential to implement uniform branding and advertising, including CSC signboards for all VLEs to enhance their visibility and make them easily identifiable to the public without much difficulty.
- ❖ *Map CSC Locations Publicly:* There is an App called CSC Locator, but it is very complicated and inaccurate for locating CSCs easily. So, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, or ICT Department, Government of Mizoram, should maintain an accurate district-wise online directory/map of all functioning CSCs for better access by users with ease in this digital age.

### ***Inclusive Policy for Marginalized Areas***

- ❖ *Aadhaar Services in Minority Areas:* The researcher, following discussions with VLEs and the District Manager of the CSCs, suggests that the Government of Mizoram should provide secure and legal alternatives for delivering Aadhaar-related services through CSCs, especially in Lawngtlai District. However, if Aadhaar services are implemented in minority regions, the Government of Mizoram must enforce stringent biometric authentication and verification measures as well as work in conjunction with intelligence and security agencies, both the Central force or and the Home Department, Government of Mizoram to oversee CSCs located near international borders.
- ❖ *Promote Full-Time VLE Engagement:* As previously stated, income generated from CSCs is inadequate to sustain a livelihood, particularly in Lawngtlai District, whereas Aizawl offers better opportunities. However, if feasible the Government of Mizoram ought to consider providing incentives or a monthly stipend to VLEs, enabling them to operate on a full-time basis and ensuring the availability of consistent services especially in remote and underserved regions.

### **Limitations of the Study:**

The researcher acknowledges that the value of the study is mitigated by various limitations. To date, there have been several investigations into E-Governance initiatives in Mizoram; however, these have been conducted under the previous framework known as the National es-Governance Plan (NeGP), rather than the ongoing Digital India Programme. Theoretically, the researcher encounters challenges in sourcing secondary data, including books, journals, and particularly government records pertaining to Common Service Centres in Mizoram. Consequently, Online RTI was employed to obtain the necessary information. The topic of Common Service Centres in Mizoram remains largely unexplored by authors and scholars. Additionally, the researcher faces obstacles in identifying CSCs, as officials are unable to provide information. The researcher dedicated several months to engaging with Village Level Entrepreneurs, Customers, and the District Manager for interviews and interactions, which led to data collection for the study. Notably, in

the Lawngtlai town area, many CSCs exist on paper, but on the ground only a few are operational.

#### **Scope for Further Research:**

This research represents in depth study of E-Governance Initiatives in Mizoram, specifically focusing on a Comparative Study of Common Service Centres in the Aizawl and Lawngtlai Districts. However, it is constrained by limited scope, as it only examines these two districts. Expanding the study to include additional districts within Mizoram or comparing three or more districts could yield more significant insights for academics, researchers, and the general public. Furthermore, the underrepresentation of women as VLEs presents another intriguing area for investigation, as does the common public awareness and behavior regarding E-Government initiatives which could be valuable topics for future research.

#### **Conclusion:**

Despite facing certain challenges, there is an overall high level of satisfaction and a growing trust in government services attributed to Common Service Centres. There exists a steady demand for the expansion of service offerings and enhancements in accessibility, particularly in rural regions such as the Lawngtlai District. The CSCs have gained popularity among young adults aged 18 to 35 particularly those who have completed at least high school, suggesting that these services resonate well with a relatively educated population. Furthermore, social media serves as the primary medium for raising awareness by highlighting its critical role in future outreach initiatives.

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