



E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract

Information and communication technology became indispensable tools in all kinds of government and business processes. It provides easy and effective mechanism to deliver various types of government services to the citizens and business firms. At the same time, back-end computerization of office works has greatly improved the efficiency, performance and also transparency of government's activities. Many developed countries had attempted to implement e-governance systems and India is no exception to this. Government of India has taken several initiatives at the central level and expects all the states and union territories to follow suit at their respective domains. This paper highlights steps taken by Government of Mizoram towards implementation of Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent (SMART) government and discusses various e-governance initiatives undertaken by the state government.

1. INTRODUCTION

E-Governance is the use of ICT for delivering government services to its people at a affordable cost. It provides a platform for making interactions between government to government (G2G), between government to business (G2B) and government to citizens (G2C). The interactions may be in the form of providing information, making transactions such as online payments, online submission of various forms and online filing of documents, etc. It reduces cost and time required for all kinds of government processes while increasing efficiency, transparency and accountability of the government.

Recognising the increasing importance of e-Governance, National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) was formulated as the flagship e-Governance programme of the Central Government, and it was approved by the Government of India on 18th May 2006. It aims 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 realise the basic needs of the common man". Initially, NeGP comprised 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 core support infrastructure.

The major core infrastructure components are State Data Centres (SDCs), State Wide Area Networks (S.W.A.N), Common Services Centres (CSCs), National e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (NSDG), State e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG), and Mobile e-Governance Service Delivery Gateway (MSDG).

In the year 2011, 4 projects - Health, Education, PDS and Posts were introduced to make the list of 27 MMPs to 31 MMPs. Presently 23 MMPs are delivering services to the citizen.

Table 1. List of Mission Mode Projects MMPs

| Central MMPs | | State MMPs | | Integrated MMPs | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| i. | <u>Banking</u> | i. | <u>Agriculture</u> | i. | <u>CSC</u> |
| ii. | <u>Central Excise & Customs</u> | ii. | <u>Commercial Taxes</u> | ii. | <u>e-Biz</u> |
| iii. | <u>Income Tax (IT)</u> | iii. | <u>e-District</u> | iii. | <u>e-Courts</u> |
| iv. | <u>Insurance</u> | iv. | <u>Employment Exchange</u> | iv. | <u>e-Procurement</u> |
| v. | <u>MCA21</u> | v. | <u>Land Records(NLRMP)</u> | v. | <u>EDI For eTrade</u> |
| vi. | <u>Passport</u> | vi. | <u>Municipalities</u> | vi. | <u>National e-governance</u> |
| vii. | <u>Immigration, Visa and</u> | vii. | <u>e-Panchayats</u> | | <u>Service Delivery</u> |
| | <u>Foreigners Registration&</u> | viii. | <u>Police(CCTNS)</u> | | <u>Gateway</u> |
| | <u>Tracking</u> | ix. | <u>Road Transport</u> | vii. | <u>India Portal</u> |
| viii. | <u>Pension</u> | x. | <u>Treasuries Computerization</u> | | |
| ix. | <u>e-Office</u> | xi. | <u>PDS</u> | | |
| x. | <u>Posts</u> | xii. | <u>Education</u> | | |
| xi. | <u>UID</u> | xiii. | <u>Health</u> | | |

Source: NIC, Mizoram



The Common Service Centres scheme is the front-end of the National e-Governance Plan as these centres served as the access points for citizens to e-Governance services. Under this scheme, over 2,50,000 Common Service Centres (CSC) are being rolled out, which spread across over 600,000 Indian villages. The location of these CSCs has been strategically planned and spread in such a manner that each village will either have a CSC within it or close to it.

Mizoram is one of the eight North Eastern states with a population of 10,91,014 and literacy rate of 91.58 %, ranking third in India. The sex ratio is 975 females per 1000 males. About 94.46% of the state population belongs to Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste population constitute about 0.03 % of the State's population.

Mizoram covers an area of approximately 21,087 square kilometer and about 76% of the state is covered by forests. Mizoram gross state domestic product (GSDP) in 2011-2012 was about Rs. 6991 crore and Per capita income for the year 2011-12 was estimated at Rs 54,68/- .

Industrial Development in Mizoram started lately in 1990's after attaining statehood and it is industrially backward as compared to other states. Upto 2010-11 there are only 8,088 units of small scale industries registered. It is hilly in nature and road transportation is the main mean of transportation within the state. The total length of all types of roads in Mizoram is 7537.128 kms and road density is 35.28 km/100 sq km (approx.). In spite of abundant hydro-electric power potential available in the State (4500.0MW), only 0.66% of its potential has so far been harnessed, through Small & Mini Hydel Projects.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Budhiraja and Sachdeva (2002) defined e-Readiness as the degree in which a community is qualified to participate in the Networked World. In their view, e-Readiness can have different objectives and depending on the objective, indicators for e-readiness also varied. If the objective is on e-Infrastructure then the focus should be on institutions, hardware and software. If the objective is on e-commerce then the focus should be on ICT Business. In case of e-society, the focus is on complete population whereas the main indicators for readiness of e-governance will be government process reengineering and faster delivery of government services to the citizens.

Sumanjeet (2006) in his study of e-governance in Indian context, highlighted possible benefits of properly implemented e-governance systems. The system will give citizens access to the government information and services that allows them to influence govt. operations. It will create opportunities to earn a living by learning a new skill in the knowledge based economy and opportunities to trade and banking online. It will reduce time and paperwork thereby eliminating red tapism. It will also increase transparency in judicial and administrative work.

Bhatnagar and Singh (2010) evaluated 8 mature e-government projects in India and found that the respondents (citizens and businesses) who had used both the manual and computerized systems indicated an overwhelming preference for computerized service delivery in most projects. Their research findings showed that there are no job losses among the citizen due to implementation of e-government projects as opposed to common belief in most developing countries. The study also revealed that in most cases, the cost of accessing services was reduced because the number of trips required to make to the concerned offices saw a significant reduction, and the waiting time came down by nearly 50%.

Prasad (2012) studied challenges faced by NeGP, a comprehensive programme of Govt of India for e-Governance. He found that (i) investments in and access to ICTs, (ii) capacity building to utilize e-governance services, and (iii) promoting people's participation in e-democracy are the three key challenges in stepping up e-governance in India. He opined that improved access to information and services will provide economic and social development opportunities, facilitate participation and communication in policy and decision-making processes, and promote the empowerment of the marginalized groups.

In his study of e-governance initiatives in Punjab State, Mahajan (2009) highlighted major projects undertaken by the state government. He observed that concept of e-governance is gaining popularity among the people and appreciated efforts of government agencies to revolutionise every village of the state by providing IT-enabled service centres. He expressed his concern over sustainability of already started initiatives and he also felt that compulsory computer education need to be introduced from class 6th to 12th in government schools. He emphasize use of local language i.e., Punjabi in IT implementation processes in order to enhance participation of rural masses.



Mitra (2012) stated that setting up NIC in 1985 by the Govt. of India to use IT in managing the internal processes of the government departments is a remarkable major step taken by the government toward e-governance implementation in India. He pointed out that the IT Act of 2002 is the first major impetus in recent time to recognise legally the IT based work processes and solutions making way for a whole range of e-services and e-transactions a reality. He opined that one remarkable feature of rise of e-governance in India is rapid growth of e-govt projects undertaken at the state level. In his paper, the terms e-Gov 1.0 and e-Gov 2.0 are used to denote the initial stage of e-governance in which the main focus is automation of manual processes without much participation of the citizen and an evolutionary phase towards more efficient governance through a whole lot of changes in business models and operating procedures respectively.

According to Gupta *et.al.*, (2007) websites provide a cost effective way of interaction between the government and its people. In 2006, a team of researchers from Brown University evaluated 1,782 government websites in 198 countries based on two dozen criteria. The criteria includes disability access, existence of publications and data bases, presence of privacy and security policies, contact information and the number of online services. The researchers found that 94% of websites have online publications and 72 % have links to data bases, 26% show privacy policies and 14% present security policies. Based on the findings, the team rated each country on a zero to 100 point scale resulting Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, USA and Canada as the top 5 countries while India and China stood at 76th and 77th in the ranking.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

In ‘India : E-Readiness Assessment Report for States/Union Territories - 2006 & 2008’ submitted by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) to the Department of Information Technology, Government of India, Mizoram was placed in the category ‘Average Achievers’ and “Least Achievers” categories. According to these reports, the state has fall from average performer to least performers during a time span of two years. This indicates that the state is lagging behind other states in terms of e-readiness.

Table – 1, Categories of E-Readiness among the states and union territories

| Category | States | |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| | 2006 | 2008 |
| Leaders | Chattisgarh , Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu | Karnataka, Chandigarh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, |
| Aspiring Leaders | Maharashtra, Gujarat, Utter Pradesh, Goa | West Bengal, Kerala, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab |
| Expectants | Rajasthan, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand | Andaman & Nicobar, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Orissa, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Utter Pradesh, Bihar |
| Average Achievers | Mizoram, Orissa, Puducherry, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Menghalaya, Uttarakhand | Chhatisgarh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Rajasthan |
| Below Average Achievers | Assam, Nagaland, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep | Tripura, Nagaland, Puducherry, Meghalaya |
| Least Achievers | Bihar, Tripura, Manipur, Daman & Diu, Jammu & Kashmir, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Arunachal Pradesh | Manipur, Mizoram, Jammu & Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu |

Source : INDIA : E-Readiness Assessment Report 2006, Released on January 2008)
INDIA : E-Readiness Assessment Report 2008, Released on January 2010)

Dataquest, a reputed IT Magazine in India made a survey in 2013 to give ranking to the States based on e-government development in the state. States are categorised into two – Large States (with population more than 2.5 crores) and Small States (with population less than 2.5 crores). Rankings given to the states are as below:



Table – 3, Rankings for Large States

| Name of the state | Score (out of 500) | Rank |
|-------------------|--------------------|------|
| Kerala | 323.06 | 1 |
| Gujarat | 300.16 | 2 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 298.64 | 3 |
| Tamil Nadu | 290.00 | 4 |
| Maharashtra | 282.05 | 5 |

Source: <http://cmrindia.com>

Table 4. Rankings for Small States

| Name of the state | Score (out of 500) | Rank |
|-------------------|--------------------|------|
| Delhi | 335.41 | 1 |
| Goa | 310.10 | 2 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 277.67 | 3 |
| Tripura | 249.69 | 4 |
| Mizoram | 223.22 | 5 |

Source: <http://cmrindia.com>

Considering all kinds of constraints present the state, it is remarkable to see Mizoram among the top five in the small state category. The state is young and it is still lacking basic infrastructure required for industrial developments. Establishment of ICT Department to look after and monitor e-government projects as nodal department is also a recent one. In spite of this unconducive environment, the state government is struggling to implement NeGP MMPs and other projects initiated by itself.

The present study aims to give an overview of e-governance initiatives in the state and highlight obstacles faced by the state government in its implementations.

4. E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN MIZORAM

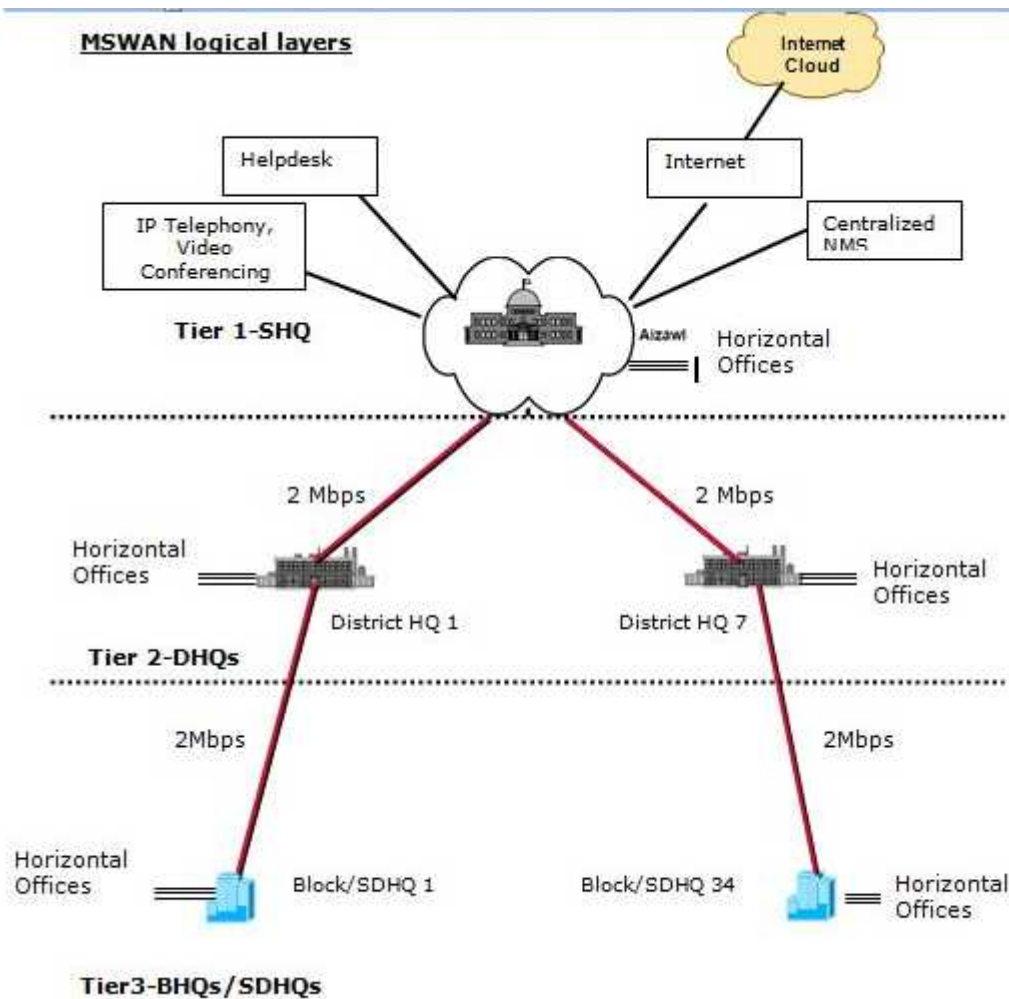
Government of Mizoram has setup three administrative bodies for implementing e-Governance projects, viz. State e-Governance Council (SeGC), State e-Governance Apex Committee (SeGAC) and State e-Governance Mission Team (SeMT). Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) is monitoring the works of e-Governance projects along with implementing agencies such as Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Ltd (ZENICS), National Informatics Centre (NIC) and Mizoram State e-Governance Society (MSeGS).

IT Cell of Planning & Programme Implementation Department was upgraded by Government of Mizoram to fully functional Department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) in 2008 in order to speed up implementation works of NeGP MMPs. Besides the projects under NeGP, the state government also initiated a number of projects for backend computerization of selected departments. The consultancy firm Price WaterHouse Coppers (PWC) was selected to prepare e-Governance Roadmap for the state and report was submitted in 2006. The report highlighted the then status of e-readiness of government departments and worked out implementation plan for the entire state.

4.1 Mizoram State Wide Area Network (MSWAN)

In order to deliver e-Governance services to the citizens and also for inter-departmental communication a reliable connectivity across the state is essential. To achieve this, MSWAN project for the state was approved in 2007 by DIT, Govt. of India with project cost of Rs. 20.59 crores. It aims to provide connectivity between State capital with District Head Quarter (DHQ) and below each District Head Quarter with the Block Head Quarters (BHQ) with minimum 2 Mbps leased line. It has 42 Point of Presence (PoPs) at DHQ and BHQ providing connectivity to various government departments.

Figure 1. Architecture of SWAN



Source :<http://swan.mizoram.gov.in/page/1>

Connectivity is provided by BSNL and ZENICS as implementing agency and DICT as nodal department. MSWAN was inaugurated on 19th June 2012 and it is now fully operational. In addition to providing connectivity, Video Conferencing and VoIP facilities are other key services provided through MSWAN, which are being extensively utilised by various departments for interdepartmental communications and also for conducting meetings.

4.2 State Data Centre (SDC)

SDC is considered one of the three pillars of NeGP and it houses clusters of servers used for software applications and data storage. The project was approved in 2008 with financial outlay of Rs. 30.88 crores. It is installed at the secretariat building in the state capital Aizawl and inaugurated in 22.06.2014. It is Tier 2 data centre with 99.741% expected uptime and currently, it has 12 TB SAN Storage which is scalable upto 30-40 TB. At present, there are 64 servers installed at the Centre which include application servers for CCTNS, SSDG & SP and e-District project. For connectivity, National Knowledge Network (NKN) connection with 1Gbps bandwidth is provided to the centre. It is proposed that the Centre will host database servers of various departments and it will become the main hub for all IT activities of the entire state.



4.3e-District

E-District is one of the 31 MMPs under NeGP and it primarily aims at electronic delivery of high volume citizen centric services, at district and sub-district level. The e-District MMP is to be implemented in all 640 districts of the country and 41 districts (across 16 States) were selected for pilot implementation.

In Mizoram, Aizawl District was selected for pilot project and the project was approved on 28.03.2008 with project cost of Rs 3.15 Crores. The e-District Center became Go-live on 4th March 2011 and STQC testing was completed on January 2012. e-District service is now rolled out to Aizawl District (on 13th October 2014), Kolasib District (on 20th October, 2014) and Champhai District (on 30th October 2014). Currently, the following 31 services which are grouped into 10 service categories, are available for public access through CSC.

- i) **Certificates**
 - ✓ Application for Income Certificate
 - ✓ Application for OBC/SC/ST Certificate
 - ✓ Application for Permanent Residence Certificate
 - ✓ Application for Inner Line Pass
- ii) **Employment Services**
 - ✓ Application for Enrollment in Employment Exchange
 - ✓ Application for Change of Name/address/age in Employment card
 - ✓ Application for Transfer of Enrollment to other district
 - ✓ Application for surrender of Employment Exchange card
- iii) **RTI & Grievance**
 - ✓ Application for Submission of Right to Information (RTI)
- iv) **Social Welfare**
 - ✓ Application for Disbursement of widow pension
 - ✓ Application for Disbursement of Old Age Pension
 - ✓ Application for Disbursement of disability Pension
- v) **Public Distribution Systems (PDS)**
 - ✓ Application for Issuance of New Ration Card
 - ✓ Application for Addition/DELETION/CHANGE of Name in Ration Card
 - ✓ Application for Surrender of Ration Card
 - ✓ Application for Renewal of Ration Card
- vi) **Land Revenue and Settlement Services**
 - ✓ Application for new LSC
 - ✓ Application for transfer of ownership of LSC
 - ✓ Application for re-demarcation / correction of LSC
 - ✓ Application for re-issue / extension of LSC
 - ✓ Application for partition of LSC
 - ✓ Application for Complaint/verification of LSC
 - ✓ Application for House Pass
- vii) **Utility bills**
 - ✓ Water Bill
- viii) **PHE Department services**
 - ✓ Applying for new Water connection
 - ✓ Complaint regarding water connection
- ix) **Revenue Dues & Recovery Services**
 - ✓ Application for House Loan
 - ✓ Land Tax payment
- x) **Commercial Taxation**
 - ✓ E-Registration – for P-TAN (Professional Tax Assesse Number) P-TDN
 - ✓ (Professional Tax Deductor Number)
 - ✓ E-filing of return of Professional Tax
 - ✓ Payment of Professional Tax



Figure 1. Login page for e-District Portal



source: <https://edistrict.mizoram.gov.in/mizoeda/login>

4.4 Computerization of Land Record

The Land Records Computerization Project was initiated by the Department of ICT, Government of Mizoram and Serchhip district was selected for the pilot project. The main objective of this project is to automate the current manual processes for submission of application and issuance of house pass, land settlement certificate and land lease certificate. The implementation task of the pilot project has been completed and it is ready for state roll out.

4.5 Computerization of Property Registration

This project has been successfully implemented in Aizawl district. The objective is to reduce court cases on land fraud, better system of land evaluation by issuance of non-encumbrance and valuation certificate, transparent in land transaction, better monitoring of revenue collection, faster delivery of registration certificates and uniform registration process for the entire state. The system is ready for state roll out.

4.6 Common Service Centre (CSC)

Common Service Centre (CSC) is meant for enabling the citizens to access public services at places near their residences. The primary objective of CSC is to promote rural entrepreneurship, build rural capacities and livelihoods, and enable community participation and collective action for social change –through a bottom-up model with focus on the rural citizen. MSeGS as implementing agency and ZENICS as Service Centre Agency, the Government of Mizoram has setup 136 CSC across the state. The project was approved on 15.01.2008 with project outlay of Rs. 4.94 Crores (Rs. 7500/- per CSC p.m. for 4 years). Location of CSC has been selected in such a way that a cluster of 5-6 villages can share one CSC. Each CSC is now equipped with VSAT for reliable internet connectivity. Currently, services under e-District project are available through CSCs in Aizawl District and Kolasib District. In the remaining 6 districts, B2C services such as mobile recharges, air ticket booking, etc. can be availed from these centres.

In line with CSC, 300 Rural Information Kiosk (RIK) centre were also introduced in the state. The project was initiated by DICT, Mizoram and the financial requirement of Rs 56,30,000/- is funded by North Eastern Council (NEC), Shillong.

With a total number of 436 front end service outlets, it is expected that all G2C services provided by e-governance projects of the state government would be accessible to the citizen at their locality.



Figure 3. Online form for applying Income Certificate

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Application No | <input type="text"/> | <input type="button" value="VIEW"/> | Submission Date | 00/12/2014 |
| * Applicant Name | Appellation <input type="text"/> | | * Date of Birth | dd/mm/yyyy |
| * Gender | <input type="text" value="-- Select --"/> | | Birth type | <input type="text" value="-- Select --"/> |
| Email | <input type="text"/> | | * Mobile No | <input type="text"/> |
| * Relationship to display in certificate | <input type="text" value="-- Select --"/> | | | |
| * Enter Name | <input type="text"/> | Date of Birth | <input type="text" value="dd/mm/yyyy"/> | |
| * Present Address | | * Permanent Address | | |
| <input type="text" value="Enter Door No"/> | <input type="text" value="Enter Location"/> | <input type="text" value="Enter Door No"/> | <input type="text" value="Enter Location"/> | |
| <input type="text" value="-- Select District --"/> | <input type="text" value="-- Select SubDistrict--"/> | <input type="text" value="-- Select District --"/> | <input type="text" value="-- Select SubDistrict--"/> | |
| MIZORAM | <input type="text" value="Enter Pincode"/> | MIZORAM | <input type="text" value="Enter Pincode"/> | |
| INDIA | | INDIA | | |
| <input type="text" value="-- Select Police Station--"/> | <input type="text" value="-- Select Post Office--"/> | <input type="text" value="-- Select Police Station--"/> | <input type="text" value="-- Select Post Office--"/> | |
| * Education | <input type="text" value="-- Select Education --"/> | * Occupation | <input type="text" value="-- Select Occupation --"/> | |
| * Father Occupation | <input type="text" value="-- Select Occupation --"/> | * Father Income | <input type="text"/> | |
| * Mother Occupation | <input type="text" value="Select Occupation"/> | * Mother Income | <input type="text"/> | |
| Other Income Source | <input type="text"/> | Other Income | <input type="text"/> | |
| * Religion | <input type="text" value="-- Select Religion --"/> | * Annual Income | <input type="text" value="0"/> | |
| * Purpose for Income Certificate | <input type="text"/> | | | |
| <input type="button" value="SUBMIT"/> <input type="button" value="RESET"/> <input type="button" value="CANCEL"/> | | | | |

4.7 State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) & State Portal (SP)

State Service Delivery Gateways (SSDG) is a messaging service initiative under NeGP. It is a standard-based messaging switches and provide seamless interoperability and exchange of data across the departments. SSDG will act as hub for all the interactions between service seekers (the citizen and businesses) and various service providers (Government Departments) and even among Government Departments. It will also provide a gateway messaging system between state and central departments.

The State Portal is envisioned as an informative, interactive, integrated and trusted service delivery channel for all the Government to Citizens (G2C), Government to Business (G2B) Services of the State and its constituent departments. Thus, the State Portal and SSDG are an integral part of the G2C service delivery architecture at the State level.

The project was approved on 24.06.2010 with financial outlay of Rs. 8.836 Crores. MSeGS is implementing agency while M/s TCS act as implementing partner. Hardware required for SSDG & SP project has been delivered at the installation site and State Portal development is in progress. Initially it is proposed to cover 7 departments viz. Agriculture, FCS & CA, Health & Family Welfare, Higher & Technical Education, Rural Development, Labour & Employment and Social Welfare and 31 services will be accessible online for the common mass.



4.8 Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)

CCTNS is one of the Central Mission Mode Project under NeGP and it aims to connect 14000 police stations and 6000 police offices across India. It will provide a reliable network for sharing data and information about criminal records between police stations. Through this online system, the citizen will be able to log FIR against any criminal activities against them. It is an ambitious project of Ministry of Home Affairs with total financial outlay of Rs 2000 crores. M/s Wipro has developed Core Application Software (CAS) for CCTNS, which will be utilised by all the states.

In Mizoram, it was proposed to connect 40 Police Stations and 54 Police Offices and connectivity is provided by BNSL. The total financial outlay for the project is Rs.454 lakhs. M/s Wipro was selected as SMPC and Rolta India Ltd., act as System Integrator. The CCTNS was launched on 23.01.2013 and it is now fully operational. Application server is installed at State Data Centre and the system is now extensively used by a number of police stations. In the near future, CCTNS services will be made accessible to the citizen on public domain.

4.9 Initiatives taken by Some Departments

A few departments had taken initiative for computerization of their own departmental works. Those departments include Account & Treasuries Department, Taxation Department and Transport department. These departments approached various NIC units and made use of their software package after necessary customizations. COMPACT software suite has been installed and used at three Treasuries Offices in Mizoram while VATSOFT software is used by Taxation department. In Transport department, VAHAN and SARATHI software are being used for vehicle registration processes and for processing driving licenses applications.

4.10 Web Presence of the Government Departments

The first stage involve in e-governance is providing government information to the public through department websites. To realise this, state government has launched Mizoram State portal viz. www.mizoram.gov.in which has links to all department websites. As of now, most of these websites contains department information along with downloadable forms but lacking transactional features. Only a few departments like Taxation is providing online interactive features in their website viz. www.zotax.nic.in for citizens and business firms. Zoram Electronics Development Corporation Limited (ZENICS) has developed a website content management system (CMS) for use of all departments and this has made the task of website updates easy for all departments.

5. CONCLUSION

As it was highlighted in the paper, the state now has successfully implemented the core infrastructures, which are called the three pillars of NeGP viz. State Data Centre, State Wide Area Network and Common Services Centres. This will help all the stakeholders in rapid implementation of future e-governance projects in the state. The reasons for delayed developments in the past in state's IT sector include unreliable Internet connectivity, lack of commitment among politicians and decision makers, non-availability of adequate fund from state government. The study found that majority of the initiatives are based on centrally funded projects and no substantial implementations had been made out of the state fund. As the state government is not generating significant revenue, it has to depend entirely on fund received from various agencies such as DIT, NEC, etc. This will always be a major hindrance in taking new initiatives and also lack of maintenance cost for the running systems may result in service disruptions after the expiry of free service period for those projects.

In spite of those limitations, Mizoram has advantage of being highly conducive for spreading e-government services to the people. It has a high literacy rate and the people are generally tech-savvy. It also has a good ICT penetration in terms of computer literacy and numbers of household owning ICT devices. There are opportunities in the state but challenges are much more.

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