

Conference on “Harnessing AI and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for Viksit Bharat”

Democratising technology by making it accessible and affordable to guide the evolution of DPI across sectors

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The National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), in partnership with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India and the Directorate of IT, Government of Tripura, organised a high-level conference titled "Harnessing AI and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for Viksit Bharat" on Friday, 5th December 2025 in New Delhi. EY was the Knowledge Partner for the Conference.

The Conference brought together key policymakers, technologists, industry leaders and technology experts to deliberate on the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in strengthening governance and public service delivery across India and achieving the vision of a developed India by 2047.



The inaugural session was attended by Shri S. Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY, Govt. of India as the Chief Guest, who delivered an address on the "*Vision for a digitally empowered India and role of DPI and AI in achieving 'Viksit Bharat 2047'*". He highlighted that India's technology ecosystem works best when

government, private sector, civil society and academia collaborate. This partnership approach is essential to create technology that benefits people. Democratising technology by making it accessible and affordable will continue to guide the evolution of DPI across sectors.



Shri M. Nagaraju, Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India attended the conference as the Guest of Honor and delivered a Special Address on *“India's Digital Decade - positioning India as a global leader in digital governance”*. He emphasised that India is moving steadily toward becoming a USD 5 trillion economy and a major global economic player. Strong fundamentals, infrastructure-driven growth and resilient supply chains have been key to this progress. The last decade has been transformative, and initiatives like Jan Dhan and DPI have expanded financial inclusion from 21 percent in 2008 to over 80 percent today.

Shri Bhuvnesh Kumar, CEO, UIDAI and CEO, NISG, delivered the welcome address and highlighted how NISG's model brings together the speed of government decision-making with the efficiency of private-sector procurement and oversight. This approach has enabled it to lead DPI initiatives effectively and guide the ecosystem toward faster AI adoption.

Shri Mahaveer Singhvi, Joint Secretary, NEST Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India delivered a keynote address and emphasised that AI is no longer an abstract concept. It influences our daily lives in ways we may not even notice. For India, the question is whether we will only consume AI or also create it. Through the IndiaAI Mission, we have chosen to become creators by building our own compute capacity, datasets, foundational models, innovation centres and frameworks that reflect India's realities and priorities.

Mr. Rahul Rishi, GPS Consulting Leader, EY LLP suggested that if DPI has been a force multiplier for India over the past decade, the convergence of DPI and AI will unlock not just 10x but 100x possibilities—extending the impact of digital public infrastructure into energy, water, and every sector where India is now building the next generation of public systems.

Mr. Pankaj Khurana, Partner, EY India highlighted that over the past decade, India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) ecosystem—including Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker and other foundational layers—has established a robust basis for next-generation public service delivery. The progressive integration of artificial intelligence is now enhancing these platforms with the capability to offer services that are more anticipatory, citizen-responsive, and scalable.

Major Ranjeet Goswami (Retd.), Global Head, Corporate Affairs, TCS commented that the industry values outcomes and the real-world impact created through digital systems. DPI is trusted not because it uses advanced technology, but because 1.4 billion Indians rely on it. This trust gives India the confidence to share the DPI model globally.

A major highlight of the Inaugural Session was the official release of the NISG-EY Report. The report highlighted a strong consensus on technology's role in India's progress and how the convergence of AI and India's DPI stack will accelerate economic empowerment, improve governance, and deliver citizen-centric services at scale.

Agenda Highlights

The one-day conference featured a robust agenda designed to explore the intersection of technology and governance:

AI and DPI Ecosystems: A panel discussion featuring leaders from the EkStep Foundation, Gates Foundation, TCS, IRIS Business Services Limited and ONDC tackled challenges in scaling India's DPI and building trust and transparency.

Mr. Shankar Maruwada, Co-founder & CEO, EkStep Foundation remarked that DPI 1.0 helped address India's welfare needs. DPI 2.0, supported by AI, will help meet the aspirations of 1.5 billion Indians. This decade offers the opportunity to evolve digital public infrastructure into digital public intelligence.

Shri Srinath Chakravarthy, Senior Vice President, NISG enunciated that India does not always need large general-purpose AI models. Many high-impact use cases require focused, sector-specific models in areas like health, agriculture, finance and education. This shift will create new types of jobs, new skills and new opportunities as the nature of work moves toward higher-value roles.

Shri Saurabh K. Tiwari, Additional Secretary, Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Mission, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India asserted that AI and ML are already core to public service delivery. In Aadhaar, they help prevent duplication, detect spoofing and strengthen biometric verification. Face authentication has been a major breakthrough because it works on any smartphone and has transformed DBT delivery. Nearly 99 percent of applications now use biometric authentication, and most of these rely on face authentication.

Sectoral Case Studies: A session focusing on successful case studies in public service delivery, including agriculture and digital inclusion, with speakers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Digital India BHASHINI Division was organised.

Dr. Pramod Kumar Meherda, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India highlighted that earlier IT systems in agriculture focused mainly on administrative tasks such as transparency, monitoring and payments. Over time, it became clear that the sector needed an integrated digital ecosystem where farmer identities and records could be trusted and interoperable. This understanding led to the vision for a dedicated digital public infrastructure for agriculture.

Mr. Amitabh Nag, CEO, Digital India BHASHINI Division elaborated that for the first time, agriculture is being built around the farmer as the centre of the ecosystem. Digital public infrastructure makes it possible to create trusted and standardised data that supports personalised advisories, faster services and transparent delivery at scale. When curated data is combined with responsible AI, agriculture can move from intuition-based decisions to insight-based decisions and become more efficient, equitable and future-ready.

About NISG

National Institute for Smart Government (NISG) is a not-for-profit company set up in 2002 by the Government of India (GoI) on the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model with Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) as its Chairman. NISG is shaped as an institution of excellence in e-governance to assist governments for ushering in smart governance, process reforms and digitalization. NISG has been at the forefront of e-governance initiatives in India and contributed towards improvement in government processes and establishment of service delivery systems resulting in faster and simpler service delivery to end-users including citizens and businesses.

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