

The future of e-governance

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Ravi Saxena, Additional Chief Secretary, Dept. of Science and Technology, Government of Gujarat, was the Chief Guest at the twelfth edition of the Sabha and he spoke on the future of e-governance. He began by stating out that information was the new currency. According to him, "The ICT revolution is distinct from the industrial revolution. In the industrial era, where the machine predominates in a technical and rationalized existence, life is a game against fabricated nature."

We are witnessing the ICT revolution. Our entire life is engaged around ICT. Examining ICT's impact on governance, he stated that it was going to cause a much larger divide than the industrial revolution. Life in a post-industrial society is based on services. In such a scenario, questions arise as to the impact of information on society and how people communicate.

Saxena commented, "One of the dimensions is the citizen and society. Another dimension is governance. The best governance is minimum governance. It is the ideal governance. It would mean creating a market of services."

Technology will make public service ubiquitous. Saxena stated, "There will be a democratization of innovation along with sustainable governance. Medieval governance responds to the traditional continental conception of public administration that we all know but may never have experienced."

Coining the concept of 'Consumindividualism' that means the highest consumption of technology he said that governance was at a minimum in this state as there was a lot of consumerism. He touched upon another model, that of thin or zero, open government.

A connected government is what society is seeking today. He urged members of society to come forward and collaborate with the government. Saxena said, "Faced with a changing environment, e-Governance returns power to the actors at the local level and focuses on enabling innovation and learning."

There are a lot of roadblocks on the way to a connected government. The major roadblock is around digital literacy and connectivity. He concluded the session by saying that technology was going to lead to Cloud government, green government, open government and digital empowerment.